



*The
Greatest
Gift*

ADVENT 2018

4. "Perfect Love"

A top-down view of a desk with a dark wood grain. In the upper left, a portion of a white keyboard is visible, showing keys for 'alt', 'ctrl', and 'shift'. To its right is a white computer mouse. A brown pencil lies diagonally across the center. In the upper right, a white coffee cup filled with dark liquid sits on a bright blue saucer.

Dear Ladies,

We know you mean well. We know you think you know best. But enough is enough. We have suffered in silence for too long. Having shared our pain with one another, we husbands hereby step out of the shadows and open our hearts. This year as you shop for our Christmas gifts, please don't buy us what we need.

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We know we need to smell better and look nicer. We know you like us in warm pajamas and new underwear. But we do not know what to say when we open these gifts. How can you fake enthusiasm over house slippers? How can you look happy holding a nose-hair trimmer? We've lied long enough. For the sake of integrity on Christmas morning, we offer this guidance. As you look at any potential gift, ask yourself these questions: Can he play with it? Does it swing, bounce, shuffle, cast, or roll?

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Does it have a big screen and a remote control? If it does, buy it. Doesn't matter that he already has one. This is no time to be practical.

When considering an item of men's apparel ... we offer these two questions. Does it make him look cute? Does it make him look like a hunk? If the clothing makes him look cute, drop it immediately. If it makes him look like a hunk, buy two.

A top-down view of a desk with a dark wood grain. In the upper left, a white keyboard is partially visible with keys for 'alt', 'ctrl', and 'shift'. To its right is a white mouse. A brown pencil lies diagonally across the center. In the upper right, a white coffee cup filled with dark liquid sits on a bright blue saucer.

In closing we extend this offer. If you will buy us what we want, we will do the same for you. Without revealing any details we will tell you this. A large vacuum cleaner company has offered us a group discount. (And you thought we were insensitive.)

No need to thank us,

Your husbands







Matthew 1:21

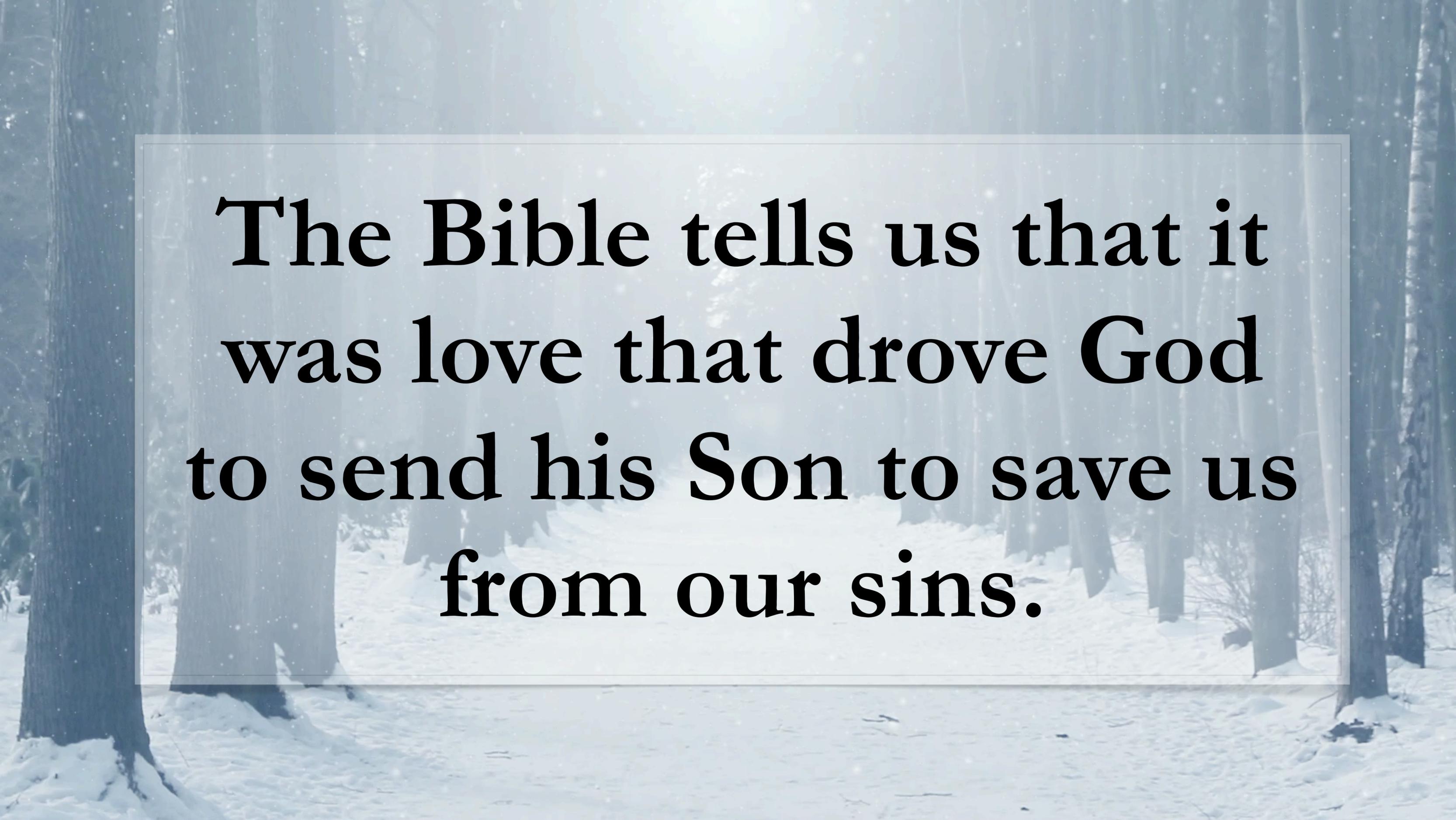
She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.





1 Peter
1:18-20

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

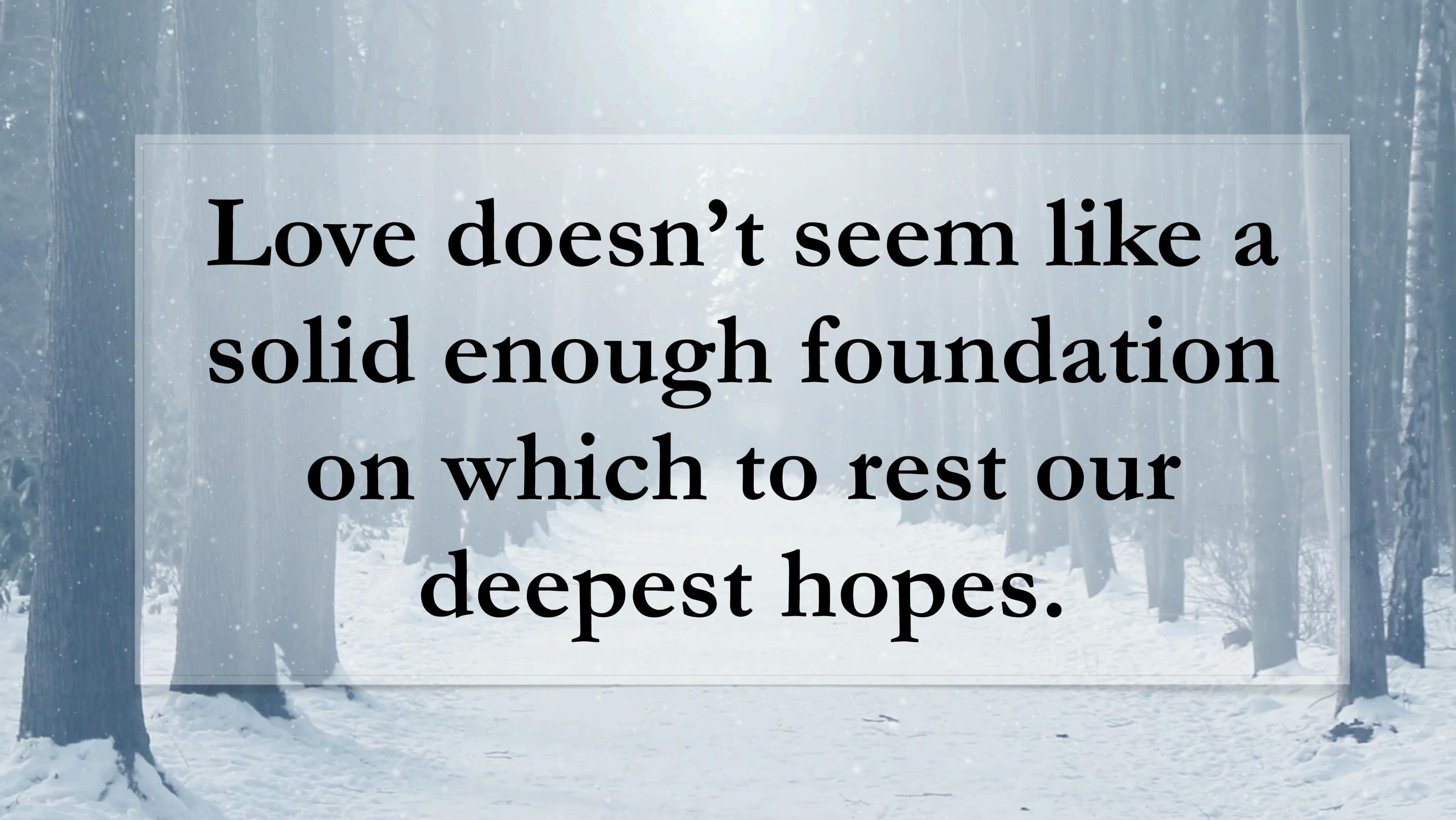
A serene winter scene featuring a snow-covered forest floor and several tall, thin trees. The background is softly blurred, and a gentle snowfall is visible. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text.

**The Bible tells us that it
was love that drove God
to send his Son to save us
from our sins.**



John
3:16

For God **so loved** the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

A serene winter scene featuring a snow-covered forest floor and several tall, slender trees. The background is softly blurred, creating a sense of depth. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text. The overall color palette is cool, dominated by whites, blues, and greys.

**Love doesn't seem like a
solid enough foundation
on which to rest our
deepest hopes.**





Jeremiah
31:3

The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.

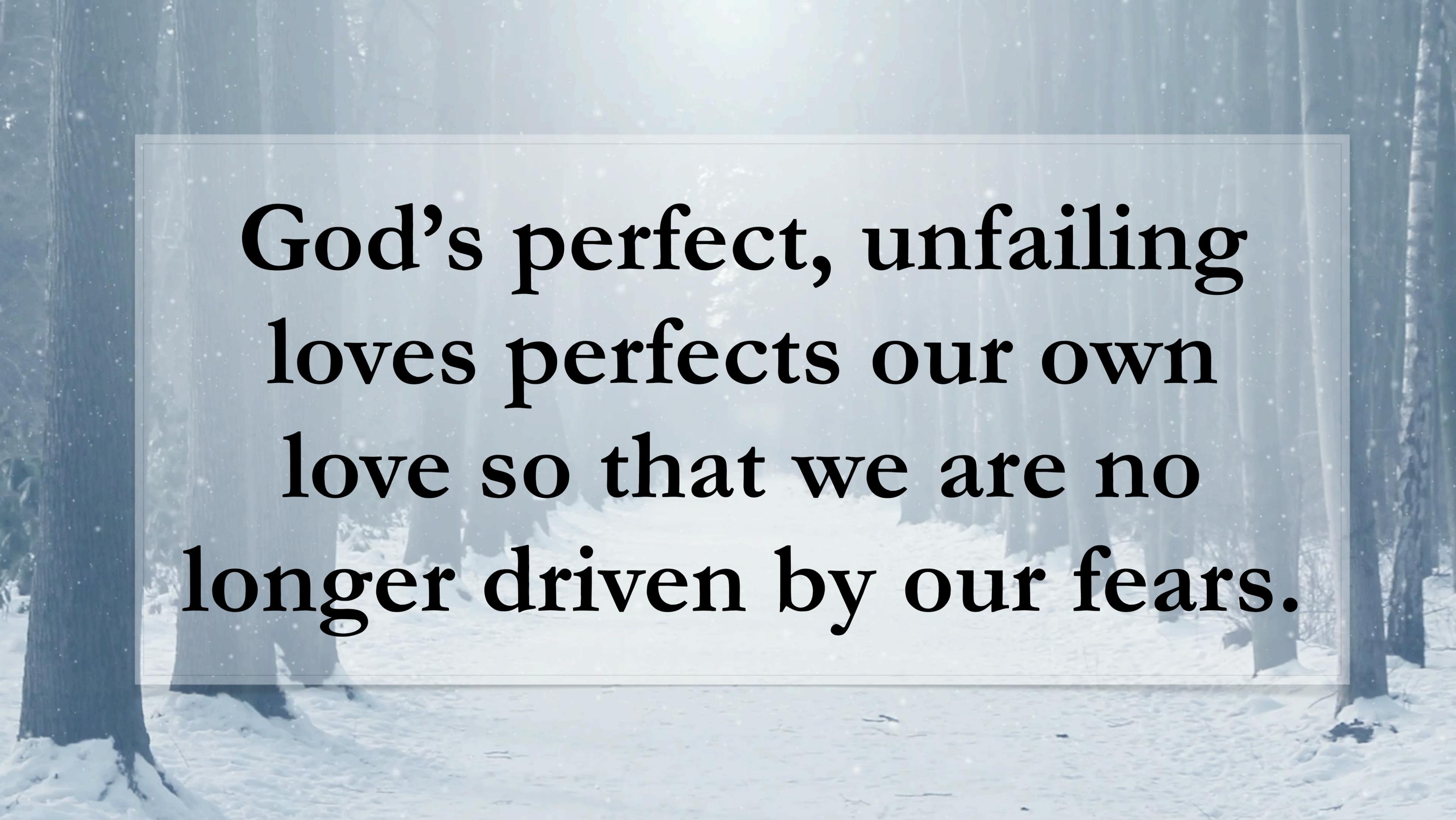


1 John
4:8-10,
18-19

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

1 John
4:8-10,
18-19

... There is no fear in love. But **perfect love** drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.

A serene winter scene featuring a snow-covered forest floor and several tall, thin trees. The background is softly blurred, creating a peaceful atmosphere. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text in a black serif font.

**God's perfect, unfailing
loves perfects our own
love so that we are no
longer driven by our fears.**



Romans

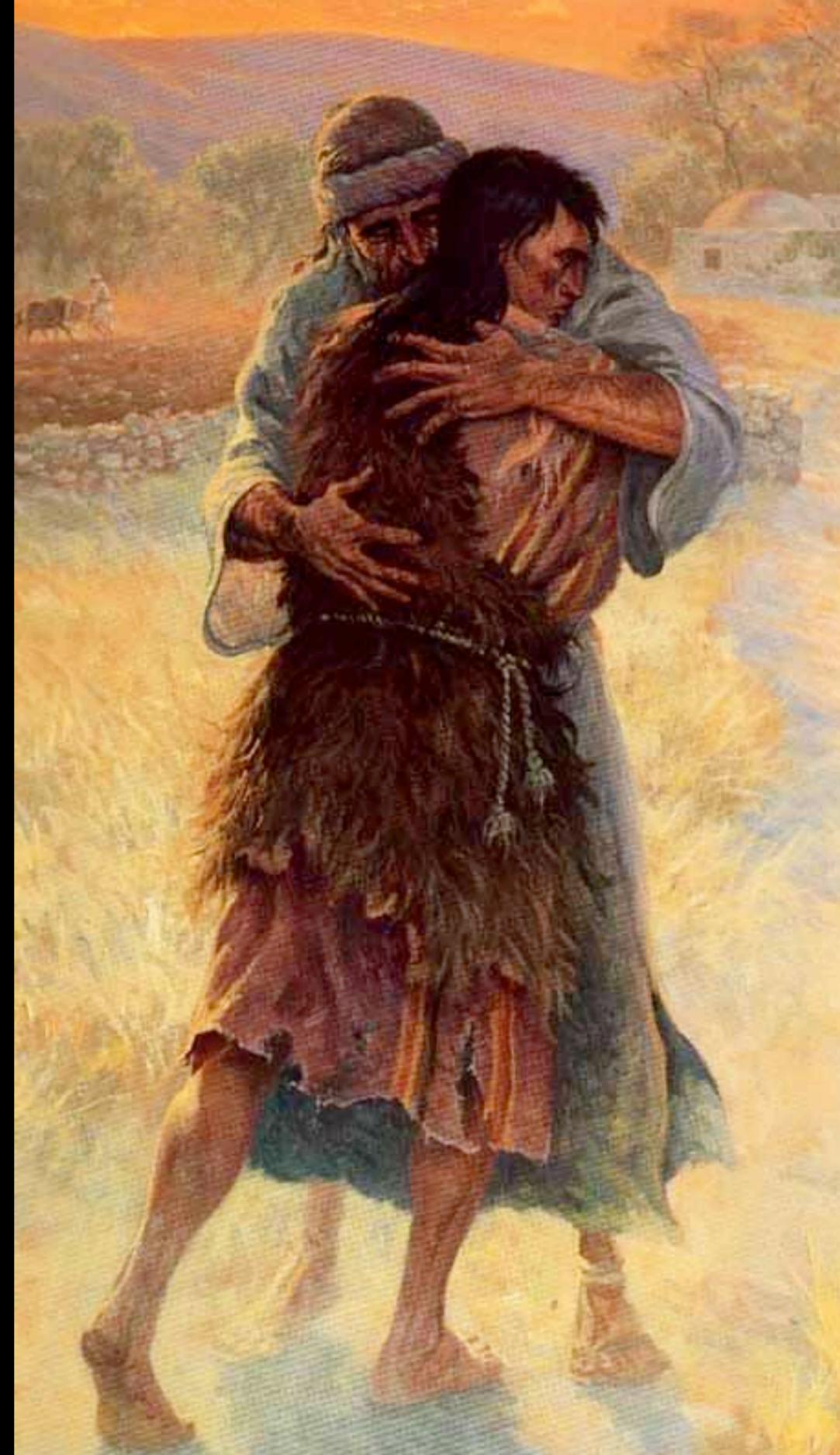
5:8

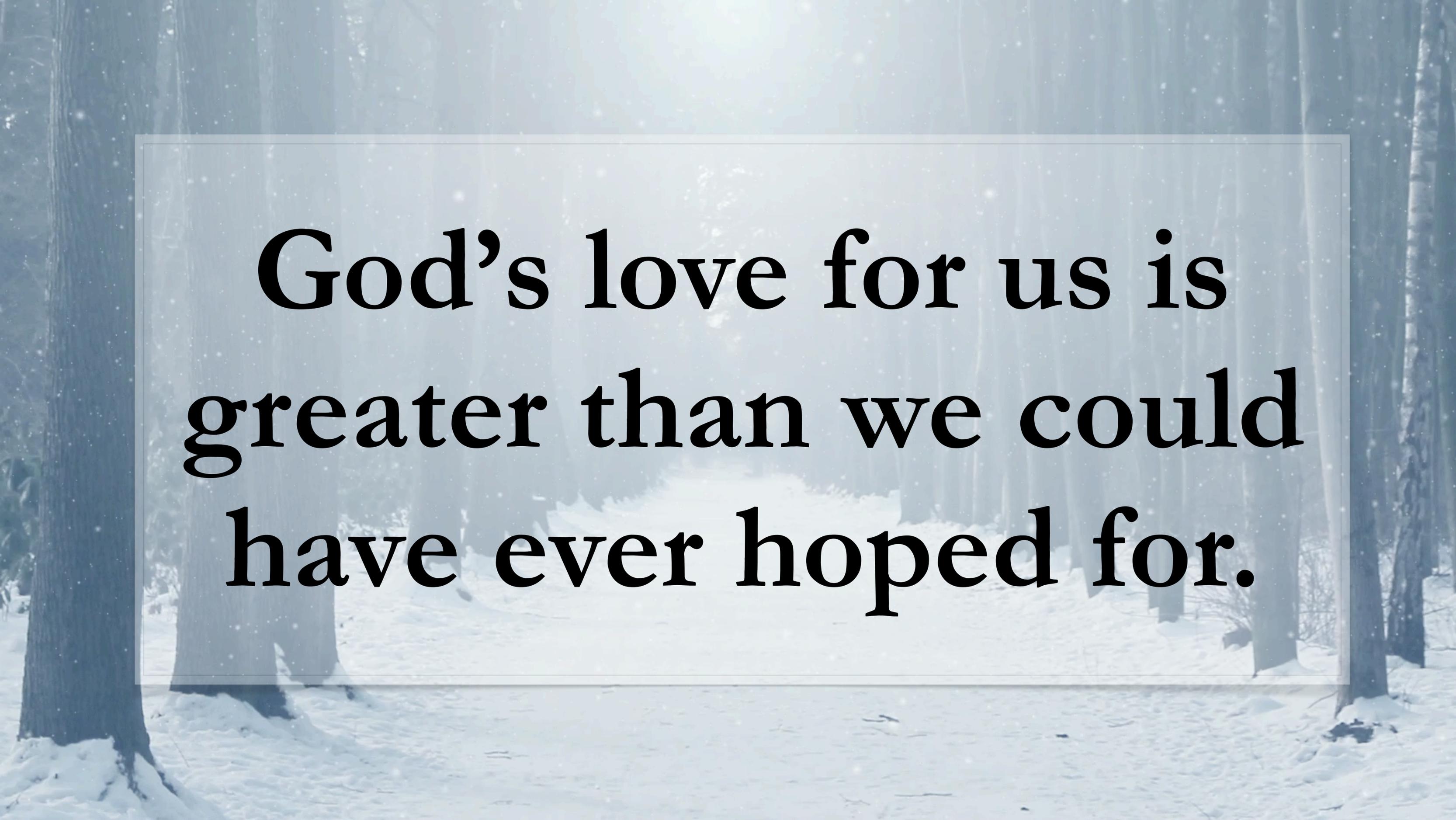
But God demonstrates his
own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners,
Christ died for us.

1 Cor
13:4-7

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.





A serene winter scene featuring a snow-covered forest floor and several tall, thin trees. The background is a soft, hazy blue, suggesting a misty or snowy atmosphere. The text is centered in a white rectangular box with a thin border.

**God's love for us is
greater than we could
have ever hoped for.**



Isaiah 49:13-16

Shout for joy, you heavens;
rejoice, you earth; burst into
song, you mountains! For the
LORD comforts his people
and will have compassion on
his afflicted ones.

But Zion said, “The LORD
has forsaken me, the Lord has
forgotten me.”



Isaiah 49:13-16

“Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands”



The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Zephaniah 3:17

