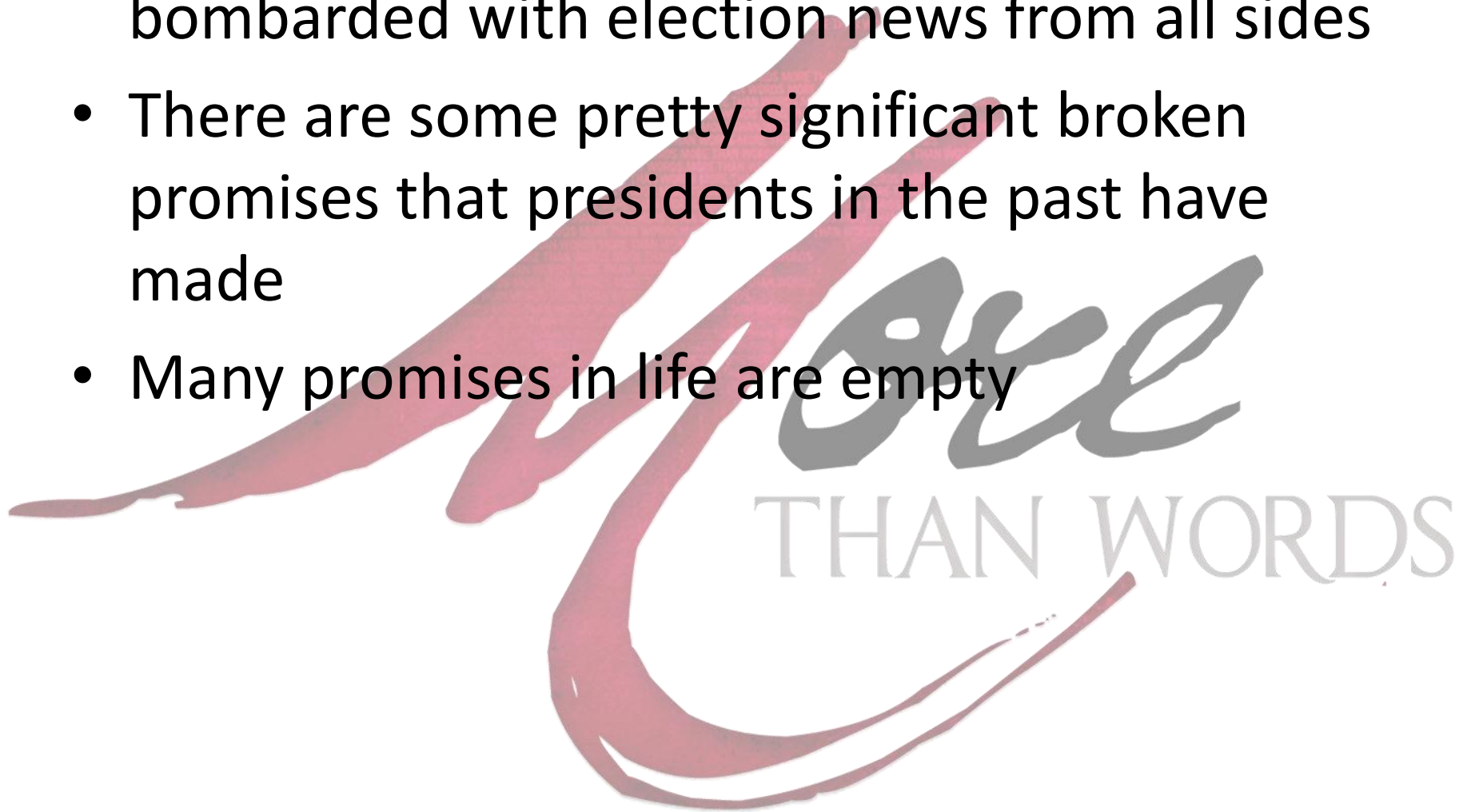


A large, stylized graphic of the word "Love" in red, written with a thick, textured brushstroke. The letters are fluid and connected, with a long, sweeping tail on the 'e' that curves downwards and to the right.

Love
THAN WORDS

- This is the season of life when we are bombarded with election news from all sides
- There are some pretty significant broken promises that presidents in the past have made
- Many promises in life are empty



- As Christ-followers, we must live by more than words, because our faith is based on something more than words
- We do not just say that we are converts... we live like it
- True faith should result in life change
- Growth Goals help us to put our faith into action
- Convert, Growing, Missional, Giving, Praying, Committed, Reproducing, Loving, Worshipping
- If our faith is going to be worth anything (authentic) then we must bear more than words

- The Lord is a keeper of His promises
 - **Micah 7:9** English Standard Version
 - ⁹ I will bear the indignation of the LORD because I have sinned against him, until he pleads my cause and executes judgment for me. He will bring me out to the light; I shall look upon his vindication.

THAN WORDS

- Oracles of doom followed by oracles of salvation
- This is the arrangement of other Minor Prophets
- There is a reason that the book is arranged like this:
 - By placing oracles of salvation AFTER the oracles of doom, the writer intends to give them more weight
 - **GOD'S MERCY IS STRONGER THAN HIS WRATH**
- We must keep in mind that God's mercy is intimately tied to His wrath
- Both are part of His single purpose: Glorifying Himself

- Understanding the Christmas Message
- We must not focus only on God's mercy and forget about His wrath
- His mercy is more fully understood when we seek to more fully understand His wrath
- Focusing on one without the other creates a truncated and distorted view of God

THAN WORDS

- Seeing God Rightly
- In the Micah passage, this is clearly displayed:
- God's Wrath
- Because of the sin that we have committed, we are under His wrath
- Indignation - Rage, storming
- The same word is used here as in Jonah referring to the sea's "raging"
- It is also used in Isaiah 30:30 - "furious anger"
- It is justified
- Punishment would be completely warranted

- God's Mercy
- In His Goodness, He brings me into the light
- He vindicates me - removes the imperfections
- He makes me whole and cleans me up so I can be in His presence



more
THAN WORDS

- This passage is a prophecy that pointed to and is fulfilled in Christ
- We should see that He is the only one who has power to redeem
- This verse proved to be MUCH more than words
- Going beyond Words, God used the person and work of Jesus to fulfill His promise

More
THAN WORDS

- Getting the Whole Christmas Picture:
- Two general thoughts/feelings as we near Christmas Day
 - 1. We have all grievously sinned against the Lord, and punishment is due
 - 2. We have been sent a Savior in the form of a baby, who will bear the full weight of that punishment

More
THAN WORDS

- THIS is the story of Christmas
- These things cannot be divorced from one another
- Wrath/Mercy



- God's Reason for Sending Christ
- God sent that Baby into the world because He demands blood
- Last week Pastor Joe mentioned Adam and Eve - Sin caused the death of an animal
- Sin is committed, blood is required



THAN WORDS

- Jesus was born into this world to be crushed
- When we see the manger scenes, we need to see the One on whom all of God's anger and wrath would be dumped out upon
- Falsely accused, wrongly convicted, brutally beaten and flogged, mercilessly mocked, and excruciatingly executed
- All of this because because of our sin offending a pure and holy God

THAN WORDS

- Strengthened and Qualified
- **Colossians 1:11-14** English Standard Version
 - ¹¹ May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.
 - ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- When God enters human history as a baby:
- We can be:
- v. 11 - Strengthened with all power - To walk in holiness
- v. 12 - Qualified - Able to share in the inheritance of Christ
- v. 13 - Delivered - Rescued from the permanent clutches of the evil one and evil things; Plucked out of darkness and into light
- v. 14 - Redeemed - Sin taken away - forgiven

more
THAN WORDS

- Strengthened with all power - v. 11
- Strengthened not for our own purposes, but for HIS
- God's desire is for His followers to attain to the Christian virtues, to persevere in the faith, to resist sin, temptation and heretical teaching, and ultimately to know the Joy of the Lord

THAN WORDS

- Qualified - v. 12
- This is Old Covenant language used regarding the Jewish people
- Literally means to: “Make sufficient for”; “to render fit”; or “To equip one with adequate power to perform duties”
- This leaves us without an excuse when we refuse to walk in holiness
- This qualification also equips us to partake in the inheritance with the saints
- It is the Lord’s doing

more
THAN WORDS

- Delivered - v. 13
- He pulls us into His chest, as a mother would shield her child from injury
- This renders the things that tie us up impotent, God throws them off
- It is dealt with at the Cross of Jesus
- Transferred into the Kingdom of Jesus
- We are adopted...
- Never cast away, never rejected, forever secure in Him

More
THAN WORDS

- Redeemed - v. 14
- We have been “Liberated or released because of the payment of a ransom”
- The Lord does not pay off Satan, or owe Satan anything
- The “ransom” that is paid releases us from God’s wrath
- Jesus’ death fulfilled the payment that satisfied God’s wrath
- He is our propitiation

THAN WORDS

- How have you seen Christmas wrongly?
- How will you seek to prepare rightly for this amazing, day where the wrath of God comes head to head with the mercy of God?
- God is not some crooked politician making promises that he never intends to keep; He uses More than Words
- He promised wrath, and that wrath was delivered onto His Son
- He promised mercy, and that mercy was delivered THROUGH His Son

More
THAN WORDS



McAllen Mission Trip

PRAY FOR THE TEAM~We
leave @ 8 AM on 12.28

If you can't be in McAllen,
bring your *food & clothing*
donations by 12.25...

Let's share the love of Christ
this Christmas!



Christmas Day &

New Year's Eve:

Bring the whole family

for these two great

services at 10:30!