

CHRIST'S LOVE FOR US

Galatians 2:20

Intro: We all know of passages which speak of the death of Christ as the supreme expressions of *God's love for us*, such as John 3:16, and Romans 5:8. And we know of passages which speak of our Lord's willingness to do the Father's will, knowing that the Father had sent Him to be the Savior of the world. Cf. John 6:38; Luke 22:42. I think that these statements reveal our Lord's love for the Father. But the question that I want to consider with you tonight is, What was the Son's attitude toward those for whom He died?

Galatians 2:20 is one verse where we find that answer, when the Apostle speaking of Christ, said, "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." But we have the same truth presented in Ephesians 5:1 and 2:

- 1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;
- 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

And then reading on in that same chapter to verse 25 we have this same truth stated again in Ephesians 5:25-27:

- 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;
- 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,
- 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

And then a final passage which I would point out is in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, chapter 1, and verse 5. But it is a part of the Apostle John's greetings to the seven church of Asia to whom the book of the Revelation was originally sent, and so I want to begin reading with verse 4 so we will see how verse 5, the latter part, fits into it:

- 4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;
- 5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,
- 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to

him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (Rev. 1:4-6).

We can also cite that familiar verse in 2 Corinthians 8 which speaks of “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” which is closely related to His love, and points out that Christ died for our sakes. Listen that what the verse says:

9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

So our love was motivated to die for us, first, by His love for the heavenly Father and, second, by His love for us. We have no problem understanding the Son’s love for the Father, but it ought to be amazing to us that the Lord was also motivated by His love for us!

So when we come to the Lord’s table, and are reminded that the Lord said that we should observe this Supper “in remembrance of Him,” we should know that we are to remember:

- 1) Who He was Whom we are remembering. And, of course, “Who He was” is *Who He still is!*
- 2) What He did. There is one answer here.
- 3) For whom He did it. There are two answers here.
- 4) And *why* He did it.

The Bible gives us the answer to all of these.

I. “IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.”

Who was He?

In 1 Cor. 11: 23-25 we read these words:

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me (1 Cor 11:23-25).

When we come to the Lord’s Table we need to remember Who it is that

we are thinking about? It is the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, the Creator of us and the universe in which we live. He was Christ incarnate, the only begotten Son, the great "I am." And yet as He sat at the table His disciples saw Him as a Man. He was made in the likeness of our sinful flesh. He was the Sinless Son of God. He was the One typified by the Passover Lamb. He was the subject of Psalms 22 and 23 and 24. He was the One about Whom Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 53. He is the unchanging One, One Who had no beginning, and will never have an ending. He was, and is, the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. WHAT DID HE DO?

He did many things. With the Father and the Holy Spirit, He created the world. Since creation He had been upholding all things by the word of His power. But He became a Man, one like His creatures who were made in His image, but not with their sin. He healed all kinds of diseases. He raised the dead. He was the greatest Teacher the world has ever known. And all of this, and much more, is good for us to remember.

But when we come to the Lord's table we are to remember one thing: That is that *He died!* And the proof that He died was that He was buried. His enemies knew that He had died. And so did the multitude around the Cross. His disciples knew it. There is no question about it. Even those who deny His bodily resurrection, believe that He died.

But if He was the Son of God, and had never committed any sin, then why did He die? It is only the wages of sin that is death.

Then we must ask,

III. FOR WHOM DID HE DIE?

There are two answers to this question, but the answers are completely different.

A. He died in obedience to God, His Father.

He came to do the Father's will. As the men came to arrest the Lord, Peter took out his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus. The Lord rebuked Peter, saying, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He came to do the Father's will. As He died, He said, "It is

finished.” He did always those things that pleased the Father, and this was His assignment from the Father.

But there is another answer to this question.

B. He died “for us.”

He died for His sheep. He died for those whom the Father had given to Him. He gave Himself for the elect. But all of these were sinners, deserving of nothing but the full judgment of God. A holy God could not just overlook their sins. Either the sinners must die, or someone who did not deserve to die, must die for them. This is what Paul meant when he said that Christ “gave Himself for us.” He died, as Peter said, “the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God . . .” Cf. Isa. 53:6. Our Lord was the Lamb without blemish and without a spot of sin upon Him. But He became our Mediator and reconciled us to God by His death.

But our last point is:

IV. WHY DID HE DO IT?

Why would the Son of God die for guilty sinners who fully deserved nothing but eternal judgment? If God is so holy that He cannot look upon sin, why would God send His Son to earth to die in their place, and why would His Son come to bear that awful burden? And let us always remember as we take the bread and drink the grape juice from the cup, that there was suffering our Lord experience which was not visible to the eyes of men when, as Isaiah predicted, His soul was made an offering for sin.

Why would God send Him on such a terrible mission, why would He send His only begotten Son, His Son in Whom He found all of His delight, why would He send Him to die for worthless, defiled sinners?

There is just one answer to the question, and the answer for the Father is the same as for the Son. God sent His Son because of His love for sinners throughout the whole world. And the Lord Jesus came, suffered, and died in complete humiliation, because He loved those sinners too.

I think that it was D. L. Moody who said that the greatest word in the Bible was the little word “so” in John 3:16.

If you ever thought that Jesus came just because of His love for the Father and His desire to do the Father's will, but not because He was willing to come, I hope you have it straightened out from what we have seen tonight. Jesus came because the Father loved us, but Jesus came also because He loved us with the very same love that the Father had for us.

Concl: (Read #647 in our Trinity Hymnal.)

Our security rests not in our love for the Lord, but in His love for us. It is an everlasting love, a love that not only never changes, but a love that will never vanish away. We can grieve Him with our sin, but we can never do anything that will make Him stop loving us. As we observe the Lord's Supper tonight, let us keep in our minds the One we are remembering, what He did, who He did it for, and why. If anything will put praise in our hearts, these truths will.