

THE LOVE OF A MAN

I remember hearing the story about two young boys. They had run off from home one day to play. In the midst of their playing, they came across an old abandoned church building. They went inside and noticed that it wasn't in use any longer and decided that it wouldn't hurt anybody if they used that old abandoned building to play in. Eventually they made it up into the belfry (attic) of the building. In the midst of their running and jumping and playing, the old beams began to bend under the pressure of their weight. After several minutes of playing, the pressure got to be too much for the floor and it began to break. The floor began to fall and so did the two boys. Luckily the younger of the two was able to grab on to a support beam that hadn't broken up. The older brother was able to grab his brother's legs in the midst of falling thus preserving their lives for a bit longer. Try as he could, the younger boy was not strong enough to pull himself up with his brother holding on. Recognizing their predicament, the older brother asked, "Could you pull yourself to safety if I weren't weighing you down." The younger boy replied, "I believe I could." Without a moment's hesitation, the older brother let go and fell to his death. From there the remaining brother pulled himself to safety and ran home.

John once wrote in I John 4:7ff, "*Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*" But why is it that God is love? Would God be a loving God if He allowed the world to die lost in their sins without any chance otherwise? I couldn't once believe that God is just if man never had a chance to be saved in eternity. So how is it that God is love? John answers that very question in the next verse. "*In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*" God's love was manifested toward us through the shedding of blood.

Shed blood is a common theme throughout scripture. The first instance of blood being shed that we are aware of in scripture is Abel's sacrifice to the Lord. We know that under the Patriarchal Law animal sacrifice was made. We know that under Mosaic Law animal sacrifice was made through the shedding of blood and the sacrifice of the flesh. The book of Leviticus is quite clear concerning blood sacrifices for the sins of the people. The Day of Atonement is probably the most recognized of those occasions of blood offerings. On that day each year, Aaron, the high priest, went through a number of customs given by command of God to atone the people's sins. This, however, was only a temporary solution for their problem of sin. As the writer of Hebrews properly penned through inspiration, "*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*" (Hebrews 10:4).

However, "*without the shedding of blood there is no remission*" (Hebrews 9:22). With this sobering thought in mind, we understand that something had to be offered as "*propitiation for our sins*" (I John 2:2). As stated above, God's love toward mankind would not allow us to die lost in our sin without any hope for eternal life. Sin requires an offering to be omitted. It has been true in all history of the Lord's people as clearly recorded in scripture. The offering had to be perfect and one without blemish. The purity of its blood would wash the souls of all in obedience and make them whiter than snow. Only one being that has ever existed could qualify and that was Jesus Christ.

Friend, have you ever considered what Christ, the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16) has done for you? Have you ever heard of the healing power found in His blood? Have you ever been found in obedience to His will? If not let me tell you about what my Master has done for those who love Him and those who hate Him.

First, Christ, the Messiah, departed His home in the splendors of Heaven to come to a sin stricken earth. John 1:1 records, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" John continues to pen through inspiration in vs. 14, "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*" That Word that has been with the Father since everlasting is the one whom we know to be Christ. Christ dwelt with the Father in

Heaven. However He left that beautiful bliss to come to earth and “*be tempted in all points like as we...*” (Hebrews 4:15). My Master has a love that to the extent of which He would sacrifice personal pleasure.

Secondly, Christ, the Messiah, lived a life in denial of sin. In the aforementioned verse (Hebrews 4:15) we noticed that Christ was tempted in all points that we as members of humanity will be faced with, “...*yet without sin.*” Jesus Christ denied Himself the pleasures of the flesh (I John 2:16) so that He might remain pure to sufficiently redeem us of our sins.

Thirdly, Christ the Messiah, lived a life of emotional abuse. Many represent this aspect of the life of Christ only at the Calvary scene. However, Christ suffered much throughout His life, even before His murder. The Pharisees were a common group of people that attempted to reprove Christ. They would mock his covenantal claims of His Deity. They would mock his doctrinal disputes with them. They would attempt to demean and belittle my Master, but He arose victorious. His emotional distress would no doubt bring the normal man to the knees of desperation, but my Master stood strong in the face of dispute.

Fourthly, Christ, the Messiah, died the death of an infidel. Was Christ an infidel? Not by any stretch of the imagination. However, the death He died was modeled after that administered to thieves, murderers, rapists, and others of similar idiocy. My Master suffered physical pain beyond the understanding of man. He was by force, arrested after being betrayed by His chosen follower. He was beaten bloody and raw by a scourge. He was mocked as the physical King of the Jews while being plaited with a crown of thorns that dug into His tender brow. He was made to bear His cross to Golgotha on a back beaten so raw that it appeared as raw hamburger meat. He was then nailed to a tree (the cross) and hung there to die the death of an infidel. When He stated He thirsted, He was given vinegar to drink. It was on that cross that He bore the full burden of the sins of the entire world for all time. And when He cried unto all within the sound of his voice, “*it is finished,*” my Master gave up the ghost and died.

Finally, however, Christ, the Messiah, arose victorious from the grave. For those who loved Him, He arose victorious. For those who mocked Him and ridiculed Him, He arose victorious. And for those who hung Him upon the cross, He arose victorious.

The love of a man allowed all of mankind to have the ability to inherit salvation with God for all eternity. Christ did this out of love for those that love Him. Christ did this out of love for those who don't know Him. Christ did this out of love for those who ridicule and mock Him. Christ did this out of love for those who blaspheme Him. Christ did this out of love for those who hate Him. Friend, whatever condition your soul is in, my Master gave His life so that you can be saved. Give heed to His warning, give heed to His love.

-Andy Brewer