

The Gospel of John

The Selfless Love of Christ

John 19:25-27

INTRODUCTION:

Over the past few weeks we have looked at how the scriptures were written by more than 40 men from all walks of life during a period of over thousands of years. Considering all of this diversity we would expect chaos as the outcome when it comes to writing about a God Who is outside our realm and is explaining spiritual things beyond our own personal experience and how He is interacting with us. Yet the more we read God's Word we find a unity of design and harmony in all of its statements.

We saw that there are hundreds of Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament and they were all fulfilled by Jesus. This would be impossible from a human standpoint, especially when you consider the fact that many of them would have required divine intervention. Such as...

1. He would be born of a virgin.
2. He would have to figure out how to be born in Bethlehem.
3. He had to be both God and Man.
4. He would heal the lame, make the blind to see, and raise people from the dead.
5. His body would be glorified in front of men.
6. He would live a **sinless** life.
7. He would be a perfect sacrifice for mankind and take on all of our sins.
8. He would bring salvation to mankind.
9. He would have an everlasting Kingdom.
10. He would raise from the dead.

How could you possibly place odds on each of those 10 prophecies?

The odds confirm that these prophecies had to be given by the inspiration of God and God had to interact with man to allow them to happen.

Jesus must TRULY be the Messiah!

Remember last week concerning the messianic Psalm 22 that was written over a thousand years before Jesus came to this earth? In our passage this morning Jesus is hanging on the cross fulfilling one of those prophecies from that passage in verse 16.

"They pierced my hands and my feet."

On this side of the cross, we now know that Psalm 22:16 was telling us that Jesus would hang on a cross.

Isaiah 49:6 prophesied that the Messiah would bring salvation to the ends of the earth.

We now know **how** Jesus accomplished that feat!

God sent His Son to the world to introduce us to His Father, teach us concerning His kingdom, and to die on the cross as a perfect sacrifice for all mankind. John describes it in chapter 3.

John 3:16-17 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

So we see that God chose to save us because of His love for us. **This was the ultimate example of love!** We did not deserve His love toward us or His salvation! It was by God's grace (giving us something that we did not deserve) and mercy, (withholding the punishment we did deserve) that God provided a means of salvation for mankind by sending His Son to die on the cross for our sins.

I am sure that you realize that since Jesus was the Messiah, He was both God and man. The scriptures tell us that He came to "**Seek and save those who are lost**".

Luke 19:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

We were all lost at one time, and because Jesus loved us, He came after us. If He had not been willing to do His Father's will and die on the cross for us, no one could be saved.

John tells us how Jesus and the Father work together to save us.

John 6:44-47 (NASB)

⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets: ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who believes has eternal life.

So we see the selfless love of Christ and His desire to save us. With this in mind let us read our passage of scripture this morning.

Stand and Read Scripture

John 19:25-27 (NASB)

²⁵ Now beside the cross of Jesus stood His mother, His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ So when Jesus saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He *said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” ²⁷ Then He *said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own *household*.

Prayer

BODY:

I. THE SELFLESS LOVE OF CHRIST.

In our passage, we see that Jesus knew that mankind needed a savior because mankind could not save themselves from their sins. And now the time had come for Jesus to die for our salvation. Because of His love for us **our passage** has Him hanging on the cross. Even as Jesus was dying on the cross, bearing man's sin and God's wrath, He selflessly cared for those whom He loved by caring for His own mother.

Evidently His earthly father, Joseph, was already dead. The Lord could not commit Mary into the care of His half brothers, the children of Mary and Joseph, since they were not yet believers. They did not become believers in Jesus until after His resurrection.

The scriptures tell us that the mindset of Jesus was to love His own to the very end.

John 13:1 (NASB)

13 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that His hour had come that He would depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

Jesus' love can be briefly stated as His willingness to act in our best interest, especially in meeting our greatest need, even though it cost Him everything and even though we were the least worthy of such love.

Since Jesus was God, He had existed from the beginning of time with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. He willingly left His throne in heaven to become a man and live a **sinless** life in order that He could pay the penalty for all our sin. Thus we would not have to pay for it ourselves by spending all of our eternity separated from God and His glory. Since our sins have been paid for by our **sinless** Savior Jesus Christ, God who is just and holy can now forgive our sins when we accept Christ's payment as our own.

Thus, Christ's love is shown in His leaving His home in heaven, where He was deservedly worshiped and honored to come to earth as a man only to be rejected, mocked, betrayed, beaten, and crucified on a cross. All for the purpose of paying the penalty for our sin. He rose from the dead on the third day to prove that all that He taught and claimed to be was of God and had received God's approval. His love for us and His mission to save us was more important than His own comfort and life that He was experiencing in heaven.

Philippians 2:5-8 (NASB)

⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, as He *already* existed in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself *by* taking the form of a bond-servant *and* being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death: death on a cross.

Sometimes people may give their lives willingly for ones they deem as worthy—a friend, a relative, other “good” people—but Christ's love goes beyond that. Christ's love extends to those most unworthy of it. He willingly took the punishment of those who tortured Him, hated Him, rebelled against Him, and cared nothing about Him. He suffered for those who were most undeserving of His love.

This love which He demonstrated toward us on the cross is just the beginning. When we place our trust in Him as our Savior, He makes us God's children, heirs to His Kingdom! He comes to dwell within us through His Holy Spirit, promising that He will never leave us or forsake us. He has promised to love us to the end. Thus we have a loving companion

for life. And no matter what we go through, He will be there, and His love is ever available to us.

Listen once again to Paul.

Romans 8:38-39 (NASB)

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

II. WHY DOES GOD LOVE US?

You may ask " **WHY DOES GOD LOVE US?**"

This is a very profound question! One thing is certain, God does **not** love us because we are lovable or because we deserve His love. If anything, the opposite is true. The state of mankind since the fall is one of rebellion and disobedience. Our innermost beings are so corrupted by sin that we do not even realize the extent to which sin has tainted us.

Here is how Paul quotes from the Psalms of those who are "of the world" and do not believe in God and are living by the "deeds of the flesh".

Romans 3:10-12 (NASB)

¹⁰ as it is written:

“There is no righteous person, not even one;
¹¹ There is no one who understands,
There is no one who seeks out God;
¹² They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt;
There is no one who does good,
There is not even one.”

How then is it possible for a holy, righteous, and perfect God to love such creatures?

To understand this we must understand something of the nature and character of God.

I John 4:8 and 16 tell us that “God is love.” God doesn’t **just** love; He **is** love. Since it is God’s essential nature to love, He demonstrates His love by lavishing it on undeserving people who are in rebellion against Him. God’s love is not a sappy, sentimental, romantic feeling. Rather, it is a Godly love, the love of self-sacrifice. He demonstrated this sacrificial love by sending His Son to the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. When we truly believe in Christ, God draws us to Himself by forgiving us of our rebellion against Him, and sends His Holy Spirit to dwell within us. He did this in spite of the fact that we did not deserve it.

Romans 5:8 (NASB)

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God's love is personal. He knows each of us individually and loves us personally. His is a mighty love that has no beginning and no end. It is this experiencing of God's love that distinguishes Christianity from all other religions.

Why does God love us?

It is because of who He is: "God is love."

III. HOW COULD A LOVING GOD WIPE OUT ENTIRE GROUPS OF PEOPLE?

This was brought up in Bible study Thursday night and I thought it good to briefly touch on it this morning.

1 Samuel 15:1-3 (NASB)

15 Then Samuel said to Saul, "The Lord sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel; now therefore, listen to the words of the Lord. ²This is what the Lord of armies says: 'I will punish Amalek *for* what he did to Israel, in that he obstructed him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. ³ Now go and strike Amalek and completely destroy everything that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.'"

We must recognize that we are incapable of fully understanding a sovereign, infinite, and eternal God. Paul quotes from Isaiah to help us with difficult issues such as this one.

Romans 11:33-36 (NASB)

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! ³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? ³⁵ Or who has first given to Him, that it would be paid back to him? ³⁶ For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen.

Unlike us, God knows the future. God knew what the results would be if Israel did not completely eradicate the Amalekites. If Israel did not carry out God's orders, the Amalekites would come back to trouble the Israelites in the future. Saul claimed to have killed everyone except the Amalekite king, Agag. Obviously, Saul was lying. Just a couple of decades later, there were enough Amalekites to take David and his men's families captive. After David and his men attacked the Amalekites and rescued their families, 400 Amalekites escaped. If Saul had fulfilled what God had commanded him, this never would have occurred. Several hundred years later we read in the book of Esther that a descendant of Agag, named Haman, tried to have the entire Jewish people exterminated. So, Saul's incomplete obedience almost resulted in Israel's destruction. God knew this would occur, so He ordered the extermination of the Amalekites ahead of time.

Probably the most difficult part of these commands from God is that God ordered the death of children and infants as well. Why would God order the death of innocent children? God knows the past, present, and future. He knew that these children would have grown up practicing the evil religions of their parents and resenting the Israelites for the "unjust" treatment of their parents. This would have caused them to seek revenge against them.

We must remember that God looks at things from an eternal perspective and that His ways are higher than our ways. God is just, righteous, holy, loving, merciful, and gracious.

How His attributes work together can be a mystery to us – but that does not mean that He is not Who the Bible proclaims Him to be.

CONCLUSION:

The second part of our passage this morning gives us an example of what our response should be for the selfless love that Christ gave to all of us. John was asked to care for Mary.

John 19:27 (NASB)

*27 Then He *said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own household.*

John gave love in return to Christ by fulfilling His request to care for Mary. Godly love is not based on emotion but on the will. Thus, Jesus repeatedly taught the disciples that “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments*”.

He was teaching that loving Him would require action, not an emotional feeling. If Jesus is to be loved as He commanded, then a conscious choice must be made to serve Him, not ourselves. Disobedience is evidence of a lack of love.

John 14:24 (NASB)

24 The one who does not love Me does not follow My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.

Therefore, to love Jesus is to willfully act in such a way that our devotion to Him is proved through our actions toward Him and our obedience of Him. Our obedience is not a **duty** that we perform but a **desire** to serve Christ considering all that He has done for us. We love Him because He first loved us!

John 13:34-35 (NASB)

34 I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another.”

In order to love God and others as we have been commanded to do, we must surrender ourselves fully to God. When we surrender ourselves to Christ we die to our "old self" and begin to "walk in a newness of life" due to our love for Christ.

I would like to finish this morning by reading how this transformation occurs.

Romans 6:3-7 (NASB)

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for the one who has died is freed from sin.

He is Lord!