

GOD'S DEPTH OF LOVE FOR US

(from "Love to the Uttermost" by John Piper)

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8)

As I have pondered the love of Christ for us, and the different ways that the Bible presents it to us, I have seen four ways that the depth of Christ's love is revealed.

First, we know the depth of someone's love for us by what it costs him. If he sacrifices his life for us, it assures us of deeper love than if he only sacrifices a few bruises. So we will see the depth of Christ's love by the greatness of what it cost him.

Second, we know the depth of someone's love for us by how little we deserve it. If we have treated him well all our life, and have done all that he expects of us, and then when he loves us, it will not prove as much love as it would if he loved us when we had offended him, and shunned him, and disdained him. The more undeserving we are, the more amazing and deep is his love for us. So we will see the depths of Christ's love in relation to how undeserving are the objects of his love.

Third, we know the depth of someone's love for us by the greatness of the benefits we receive in being loved. If we are helped to pass an exam, we will feel loved in one way. If we are helped to get a job, we will feel loved another way. If we are helped to escape from an oppressive captivity and given freedom for the rest of our life, we will feel loved another way. And if we are rescued from eternal torment and given a place in the presence of God with fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore, we will know a depth of love that surpasses all others (1 John 3:1-3) *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*

So we will see the depth of Christ's love by the greatness of the benefits we receive in being loved by him.

Fourth, we know the depth of someone's love for us by the freedom with which they love us. If a person does good things for us because someone is making him, when he doesn't really want to, then we don't think the love is very

deep. Love is deep in proportion to its liberty. So if an insurance company pays you \$40,000 because you lose your spouse, you don't usually marvel at how much this company loves you. There were legal constraints. But if your Sunday School class makes all your meals for a month after your spouse dies, and someone calls you every day, and visits you every week, then you call it love, because they don't have to do this. It is free and willing. So we will see the depth of Christ's love for us in His freedom: *"No one takes my life from me; I lay it down of my own accord"* (John 10:18).

To push this truth to the limit, let me quote for you a psalm that the New Testament applies to Jesus (**Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will."** Hebrews 10:9). It refers to his coming into the world to offer himself as a sacrifice for sin: *I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.*" (Psalm 40:8). The ultimate freedom is joy. He rejoiced to do his redeeming work for us. The physical pain of the cross did not become physical pleasure. But Jesus was sustained through it all by joy. He really, really wanted to save us. To gather for himself a happy, holy, praising people. He displayed his love like a husband yearning for a beloved bride (Ephesians 5:25-33).
*25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,
27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.
28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.
29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church--
30 for we are members of his body.
31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."
32 This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church.
33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

The Mt Zion Support Group met on January 1st at Blue Ribbon Diner to start the New Year off. We only had 4 but it was a great time of fellowship and good food. We will meet on February 5th at Fisherman's Cove at 11:30am. Come and join us!

Libby Atkins

Happy Birthday

- 2/2 Morgan Neurhor, Claude Lynch Jr (Butch)
Russ Alvis
- 2/3 Harry James
- 2/4 Chase Gentry
- 2/5 Olivia Chilton, Beth Danford, Judy Evans
- 2/7 Brantley Leach, Kaci Kirby Turner
- 2/8 Max Thompson, Hallie Glasgow
- 2/9 Cynthia Davis, Megan Powell, Tyler Yeatts
- 2/11 Connie Yeatts, Justin Lynch
- 2/12 Vickey Barnett
- 2/14 Bonnie Mitchell, Tammy Dixon, Andrew Day,
Thomas Powell
- 2/15 Alex Winchester
- 2/16 Brandon Tate
- 2/17 Candy Johnston
- 2/18 Sarah Moran
- 2/19 Diane Young, Paisley Loy, Landon Wheeler
- 2/21 Margaret Walker
- 2/22 Mack Riley
- 2/24 Craig Carter, Cynthia B Greer, Heather L Burns
- 2/25 Virginia Rimer, Rhonda VanDusen
- 2/26 Laura M Stanfield
- 2/28 Teresa Tate, Mac Culler

Happy Anniversary

- 2/8 Danny & Wanda Gentry
- 2/11 Junior & Rhonda Kernodle
- 2/14 James & Betty Horner, Paul & Joy Toellen
- 2/15 Mark & Carolyn H Graham
- 2/19 Roger & Diane Young
- 2/24 Rev Dave & Jo Gilbert



LOVE

E C A E P Y F H U N G E R D G
 S K N A H T R E T A E R G I I
 J E S U S I C K N E S S O N F
 S R P I D R C D A E R B O N T
 E F I L N A O G T A M U D E H
 R C R M E H N B I S E I D R Y
 V O I E I C D S H E A V E N S
 I M T R R R E V I G V E E S E
 C F G C F D M F R U I T F U L
 E O L I V I N G W A T E R T F
 D R A F S S E N D N I K N R M
 E T B U N T D R A B I D E A E
 N O O L A O I W E V I E C E R
 V S R H O N P E O P L E S H C
 Y O J F K R O O P Y L I A D Y

Abide, Bread, Charity, Comfort,
 Condemned, Daily, Dinner, Drink,
 Endureth, Enemies, Envy, Feast, Food,
 Freely, Friends, Fruitful, Gift, Giver, God,
 Good, Greater, Hate, Heart, Heaven,
 Hunger, Jesus, Joy, Kindness, Labor,
 Life, Living water, Merciful, Mercy,
 Neighbors, Peace, People, Poor,
 Raised, Receive, Service, Sickness,
 Spirit, Thanks, Thyself, Want

After you have found all the words, put the leftover letters in the correct order to form the *mystery answer*.
 Last month's answer: METHUSALAH

Activities for February 2020

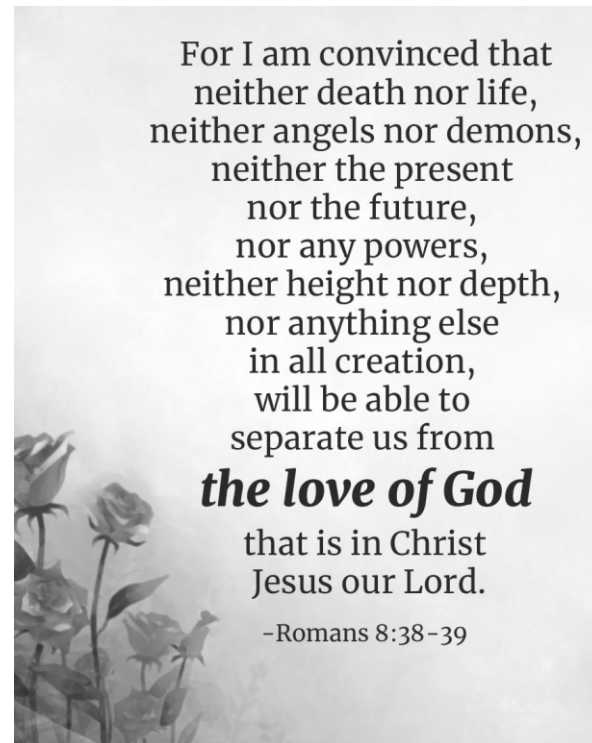
Each Wednesday Night-----Youth &Adult Bible Study
 @ 6:30PM

- 2/1 Ladies Bible Study @9AM
- 2/2 SOUPer Bowl Soup Cook Off/Flower Fund---SS
- 2/3 Ladies Circle Meets @ 6:30PM
- 2/5 Mt Zion Support @Fisherman's Cove 11:30am
- 2/10 BOCE/Deacons/Deaconesses Meet @ 6:30PM
- 2/14 Valentine's Day
- 2/16 Love Feast with Communion after Service
- 2/23 Deacon's Fund Collection
- 2/29 Men's Prayer Breakfast

The Men's Prayer breakfast got New Year started on January 25th. There were 14 men gathered to enjoy warm fellowship and a wonderful breakfast. We prayed for the sick and hurting in our church family, our own families and our community. Those attending were: Asie Glasgow, Doug Atkins, Cecil Shue, Jim Stephenson, Lewis Baker, Johnnie Parker, Pete Enroughty, Gary Moran, Max Thompson, Haywood Shue, Jerry Lane, Robert Bridges, Rick Webster and Anthony Cole.

Please join us on February 29th for our next breakfast.

Jerry Lane



For I am convinced that
 neither death nor life,
 neither angels nor demons,
 neither the present
 nor the future,
 nor any powers,
 neither height nor depth,
 nor anything else
 in all creation,
 will be able to
 separate us from
the love of God
 that is in Christ
 Jesus our Lord.

-Romans 8:38-39

In one of my many emails today I came across this phrase:

"When all else seems to fail, we can turn to prayer"

It hit me like a brick! I thought why wait to pray after things fail? We should pray first and let God handle it. HE never fails!