

February 3, 2002

How Christ proved his Love  
Eph 5:25

I mentioned last Sunday that the message had three parts, and I only used the first: 1) How does Christ love the church.

So this Sunday, I would like to use the second and third:

2) How Christ proved his love by giving himself for the church

3) How shall we think of this wondrous love of Christ.

Briefly, **Christ loved the church so much that he gave himself for it.**

He was born into this world in the most humble of circumstances, in the virgin's womb, born in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes.

**Swaddle** became a technical term for wrapping of an infant in the Orient or elsewhere. The child wore swaddling cloths for about a year, and, according to Ezekiel 16:4, the omission of swaddling-clothes was a token that the child had been abandoned.

The Creator and God of heaven and earth lay all of His power and authority aside to lie as an infant in the manger.

*John 13:1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

Because He loved His own, He took on a body of flesh, and He became one with His creation. He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, so He could die in our place. He took on all the infirmities of our flesh, without the sinful nature.

He did nothing for himself. Everything He did was for the benefit of His church. He gave His whole life for her **example**, for her **teaching** and for her **life**. He loved His church with no thought of Himself. He thought only of the **glory of the Father** and of the salvation of **his own**.

Christ **gave up** His body for His own people. He gave His **hands** and **feet** to the **nails**, and His **heart** to the spear. He **suffered** the dread of being forsaken by God, crying out, ***My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?***

He suffered and died in our stead as a propitiation and atonement for our sins. He loved us so much as to die for us. He could not have died without becoming a man.

*1 John 4:7 - 13 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; **for God is love.** 9 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. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

V. 8, *God is love.* This small sentence holds a wealth of meaning. Though sin, sadness and sorrow seems to reign in the world today, we must **by faith** believe that God sincerely desires the good of **his own people**. By faith, we understand that those things that seem dark to us are designed for the welfare of **his own people**. Though sorrows and disappointments come our way, we place our **well-being** and **destiny** in God's hands.

V. 9, God proved His love for His bride by coming to this earth and dying in our place. Now He lives for evermore to make intercession for **His own**.

V. 10, love was instigated by God, and love is shown by the price He paid for our sins.

Christ proved His love for **his own** by dying and raising from the dead. Ephesians 2:6 tells us that because He rose from the dead, we are now seated with Him in heavenly places. John 14:3 tells us that Christ will further prove His love for us by coming again to take us home with Him and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thes. 4:17.)

We see how Christ proved his love by giving himself for the church

Now, **number three**,

HOW SHALL WE THINK OF THE WONDROUS LOVE OF CHRIST?

**First**, we think of Christ's wondrous love **With deepest gratitude**.

Psalms 103

How do we **bless** the Lord?

To **bless the Lord** means to thank Him for His mercies and goodness:

Psalms 145:1 ¶ <<David's Psalm of praise.>> I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. 2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

**Second**, we think of Christ's wondrous love **With our obedience**.

Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. The other side of the command is that wives are to **revere** and **obey** their husbands in everything lawful. (Eph. 5:22ff., Colossians 3:18, Titus 2.)

Colossians 3:18 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.*

The command is given to the wife regardless of what kind of a man she is married to. The command is given to us whom Christ loves, but He is **fully worthy** of our **complete** love and obedience. Thus, we prove our gratitude to Christ by **complete obedience** to Him.

1 John 5:1 *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

And **how do we show** our love to the Lord?

John 14:15 *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

John 15:10 *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

(It is interesting that in the Old Testament, **keep my commandments** is said 10 times. So when Christ said **keep my commandments**, His hearers who knew the Old Testament realized He was referring to the commandments and statutes He gave back there.)

**In other words, if human husbands are worthy of complete submission by their wives in all things lawful,**

**then how much more is the perfect Husband, Jesus Christ, worthy of complete submission?**

Love for the Lord seeks to please Him and glorify God. Love one for another seeks to help the other person in any way possible.

**1 John 4:13**, *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

We know that we are His because His new Spirit gives us a **love for His commandments**. See CHS in Bulletin.

We see here that when a wife **knows** that her husband **loves her** and that he is **willing** to give himself for her, then **she delights in doing** the things that please him. She delights in doing the **lawful things** he wants her to do. His commandments **are not grievous** to her.

We know that our husband loves us and has given Himself for us, so we delight in doing all the things that are pleasing in His sight.

When we see His commandments as **grievous**, then we just do not understand the love the Lord has for us.

The song goes, STAND UP STAND UP FOR JESUS. How much do we stand up for Him in our daily walk?

HOW SHALL WE THINK OF THE WONDROUS LOVE OF CHRIST?

**Third**, we should seek to be like Him.

Christ obeyed the Heavenly Father at every point in word, thought and deed. He never deviated from the Father's will in any area. He had **perfect obedience to the heavenly Father**. In fact, His food was to do the Father's will.

*John 4:31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

How much satisfaction do we find in doing the Father's will?

We should seek to be like Christ - How much are we like Christ?

**Christ was holy as the Father is holy**; so we should strive to be holy even as the Father is holy as commanded of us in Leviticus 20:7, and in 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

When we think of Christ's love for **his own**, and when we remember that we are part of **his own**, we should strive after **sanctification**:

*2 Timothy 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*

We become like those with whom we occupy our minds.

Let us occupy our minds with Christ and the love He has for **his own** and how He showed that love to us. Read the story of His life and death often. Spend time in the word of God, so that it runs through your mind. (Three chapters a day will put you through it in about a year.)

If there be any praise, if there be any virtue, think on these things.

And then we will be ready to love and serve Him with all our heart, soul and strength.