

Devotion on the Miracles of Christ (His Love) – 9 April 2014, Anno Domini (In the Year of our Lord)



The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. (Luke 4:18-19)

The Love of Christ

Let us address a great Miracle of Christ that is not so specifically designated in Scripture – that is, His immeasurable love for those who were yet enemies to God.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8)

The Love of God is just as INFINITE as every other aspect of His Nature. He is Omnibenevolent, and all-Loving for that which accords with His Will. He does hate sin, and He hates prideful natures. But His love for those whom He has chosen exceeds all understanding. It is not in the nature of man to love an enemy that has done all in his power to destroy us, yet God knows those whom He will draw to His heart and He loves them while they are yet enemies. He knows they will come to Him in the process of time. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”* (Romans 8:29-30) This great truth is a countervailing wind to the thoughts of man, but true nonetheless.

Please consider the Love of Christ for us in agreeing to come and pay the penalty (death) for our sins while we were yet unborn. That is a Love that sees, not only across every distance, but every measurement of time as well. After all, He is the Great I AM

who knows no limits to distance or time. The kind of love that will sacrifice all for a friend is definitely a rare form of love. But what of that Love of Christ who would die for those who are presently enemies of God?

Love itself is a miracle of God. Whatever miracle of Love we have in our hearts is a tiny atom of that element imparted by God to us. It is best represented in the Love that a mother has for a little child, but that is only a small example of the Love our LORD has for us.

John is the Apostle of Love and for whom Christ harbored a special love. His Gospel and His Epistle are sown throughout with those tiny seeds of love that burst forth into a hundredfold harvest of love when sown in our hearts.

The one, powerful verse that sums up all the others is this: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16) We often miss the amazing love the Father has for us in giving His only Begotten Son as a ransom for our sins. But He did, and it was only Love that compelled the Gift. The Apostle John (that disciple whom the Lord loved) records, in a greater detail the Love of Christ, than all other of the disciples combined. I believe it is because his heart responded as an echo to that love which Jesus imparted to him. John was as a purchaser of fine gems in hearing, particularly, all that Jesus said about love. *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* (John 13:34-35) Do we keep this commandment? Do we truly love one another as Christ loved us and gave His life for us? We love to quote it, but do we abide by it? If we do, all men will; know that we are the disciples of Jesus, too. This is a miracle whose powers Jesus imparted to each of us, but, sadly, the one miracle we least exercise. All others are pointless without this one miracle of love incorporated in each (1 Cor 13).

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:12-13) I have heard men, even ministers, claim that they are SLAVES of Christ! How far have they missed the meaning of love! Love sets free, yet compels obedience at the same time. If we obey God out of love for Him, there is no compulsion, but rather liberty of action, involved. *"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."* (John 15:15) What meaning does the word, HENCEFORTH, take on when spoken by the Alpha and Omega, and the Great I AM? I believe, unless I have missed my logic, that it means from this point forward and forevermore! If we are truly disciples of Christ, we are not SLAVES because a slave obeys his master out of fear and compulsion; but a friend obeys out of love and care for the object of his love.

We may believe ourselves good and wise in choosing Christ as our Lord, but perhaps we may be mistaken about which came first – our choice, or His! *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another."* (John 15:16-17) It was His love that first drew us, and it is His Love that we may feel for others. That is the love of Christ as exemplified by His life and His words: *"And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast*

loved me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:26)

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." (1 John 4:10-11) John has discerned clearly that the catalyst for our love is first, and foremost, God's Love for us. I compared recently the love of God for us to the love a mother feels for her new-born baby. Many mothers would lay down their lives for that newborn bundle of troubles and messy leaks. But the newborn baby does not love the mother yet. It does not even know what a mother is. Yet the gentle love of the mother for the baby will be felt and reciprocated in the process of time just as the love of God for us will be felt and reciprocated if we hear His Voice. *"We love him, because he first loved us."* (1 John 4:19) The mysteries of God are amazing are they not? I will not use the doctrinal assertions of men such as Calvin or Arminius to prove God's Word. I prefer to allow God's Word to prove itself. If God did not love us first, we could never know or love Him. If our Lord did not choose us first, we could never have chosen Him.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph 2:4-8) A dead man (one who is physically alive, yet walking about dead spiritually) cannot do ANYTHING to come to God. He must be awakened and quickened by the Holy Ghost. It is grace and not our own merits that saves us. Being dead, our hearts and souls are quickened, just as was that of Lazarus, to that incomparable Voice of our Lord: "Lazarus, come forth!" or "Jerry, Betty, Charles, Roy, etc – COME FORTH!" Only that love that survives all death can beckon to us in such a manner. Love is the strongest power we can know on earth.

If we are dead to the flesh, we are alive in the Spirit, and, if are alive in the flesh, we are dead in the Spirit. But the love of Christ calls across the vast abyss of death to our dead ears and awakens us to newness of life – a life that is eternal: *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 8:35-39)

Do you have the Miracle of the Love of Christ dwelling in your own heart today, Reader?