

Christ's Love for Us

by Thomas Brooks

Thomas Brooks emphasizes the unparalleled love of Christ for sinners and calls believers to respond with a superlative love in return.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:4, John 1:18, John 10:17-18, John 14:1-4, Romans 5:6-10, Romans 8:17, Ephesians 3:18-19, Philippians 2:5-8, Hebrews 2:10, Revelation 12:11

Topics: "The Love of Christ", "Responding to God's Love"

Description

Thomas Brooks emphasizes the astonishing love of Jesus Christ for sinners, noting that Christ chose to die for humanity rather than for angels, showcasing a love that surpasses all understanding. He reflects on the depths of Christ's suffering and the lengths He went to save the wretched, highlighting that this love is not only for the righteous but extends to the ungodly and rebellious. Brooks urges believers to respond to such love with a superlative love of their own, prioritizing their devotion to Christ above all else. He calls for a heartfelt admiration of Christ's sacrifice, encouraging Christians to let the reality of His love ignite a passionate response in their lives. Ultimately, Brooks challenges the congregation to reflect on the magnitude of Christ's love and to let it transform their hearts and actions.

Transcript

Let us stand still, and admire and wonder at the love of Jesus Christ to poor sinners; that Christ should rather die for us, than for the angels. They were creatures of a more noble extract, and in all probability might have brought greater revenues of glory to God: yet that Christ should pass by those golden vessels, and make us vessels of glory, Oh, what amazing and astonishing love is this! This is the envy of devils. and the admiration of angels and saints.

The apostle, being in a holy admiration of Christ's love, affirms it to pass knowledge, Eph. iii. 18, 19; that God, who is the eternal Being, should love man when he had scarce a being, Prov. viii. 30, 31, that he should be enamored with deformity, that he should love us when in our blood, Ezek. xvi., that he should pity us when no eye pitied us, no, not our own. Oh, such was Christ's transcendent love, that man's extreme misery could not abate it. The deploredness of man's condition did but heighten the holy flame of Christ's love. It is as high as heaven, who can reach it? It is as low as hell, who can understand it? Heaven, through its glory, could not contain him, man being miserable, nor hell's torments make him refrain, such was his perfect matchless love to fallen man. That Christ's love should extend to the ungodly, to sinners, to enemies that were in arms of rebellion against him, Rom. v. 6, 8, 10; yes, not only so, but

that he should hug them in his arms, lodge them in his bosom, dandle them upon his knees, and lay them to his breasts, that they may suck and be satisfied, is the highest improvement of love, Isa lxvi. 11-13.

That Christ should come from the eternal bosom of his Father, to a region of sorrow and death, John i. 18; that God should be manifested in the flesh, the Creator made a creature, Isa. liii. 4; that he that was clothed with glory, should be wrapped with rags of flesh, 1 Tim. iii. 16; that he that filled heaven, should be cradled in a manger, John xvii. 5; that the God of Israel should fly into Egypt, Mat. ii. 14; that the God of strength should be weary; that the judge of all flesh should be condemned; that the God of life should be put to death, John xix. 41; that he that is one with his Father, should cry out of misery, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!' Mat. xxvi. 39; that he that had the keys of hell and death, Rev. i. 18, should lie imprisoned in the sepulcher of another, having, in his lifetime, nowhere to lay his head; nor after death, to lay his body, John xix. 41, 42; and all this for man, for fallen man, for miserable man, for worthless man, is beyond the thoughts of created natures. The sharp, the universal and continual sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, from the cradle to the cross, does above all other things speak out the transcendent love of Jesus Christ to poor sinners. That wrath, that great wrath, that fierce wrath, that pure wrath, that infinite wrath, that matchless wrath of an angry God, that was so terribly impressed upon the soul of Christ, quickly spent his natural strength, and turned his moisture into the drought of summer, Ps. xxxii. 4; and yet all this wrath he patiently underwent, that sinners might be saved, and that 'he might bring many sons unto glory,' Heb. ii. 10.

Oh, wonder of love! Love enables Jesus to suffer. It was love that made our dear Lord Jesus lay down his life, to save us from hell and to bring us to heaven. As the pelican, out of her love to her young ones, when they are bitten with serpents, feeds them with her own blood to recover them again; so when we were bitten by the old serpent, and our wound incurable, and we in danger of eternal death, then did our dear Lord Jesus, that he might recover us and heal us, feed us with his own blood, Gen. iii. 15; John vi. 53-56. Oh love unspeakable! This made [Bernard] cry out, 'Lord, you have loved me more than yourself; for you have laid down your life for me.'

It was only the golden link of love that fastened Christ to the cross, John x. 17, and that made him die freely for us, and that made him willing 'to be numbered among transgressors,' Isa. liii. 12, that we might be numbered among the 'general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven,' Heb. xii. 23.

Christ's love is like his name, and that is Wonderful, Isa. ix. 6; yes, it is so wonderful, that it is above all creatures, beyond all measure, contrary to all nature. It is above all creatures, for it is above the angels, and therefore above all others. It is beyond all measure, for time did not begin it, and time shall never end it; place does not bound it, sin does not exceed it, no estate, no age, no sex is denied it, tongues cannot express it, understandings cannot conceive it: and it is contrary to all nature; for what nature can love where it is hated? What nature can forgive where it is provoked? What nature can offer reconciliation where it receives wrong? What nature can heap up kindness upon contempt, favor upon ingratitude, mercy upon sin? And yet Christ's love has led him to all this; so that well may we spend all our days in admiring and adoring of this wonderful love, and be always ravished with the thoughts of it.

See that you love the Lord Jesus Christ with a superlative love, with an overtopping love. There are none have suffered so much for you as Christ; there are none that can suffer so much for you as Christ. The least measure of that wrath that Christ has sustained for you, would have broke the hearts, necks, and backs of all created beings.

O my friends! There is no love but a superlative love that is any ways suitable to the transcendent sufferings of dear Jesus. Oh, love him above your lusts, love him above your relations, love him above the world, love him above all your outward contentments and enjoyments; yes, love him above your very lives; for thus the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, saints, primitive Christians, and the martyrs of old, have loved our Lord Jesus Christ with an overtopping love: Rev. xii. 11, 'They loved not their lives unto the death;' that is, they slighted, contemned, yes, despised their lives, exposing them to hazard and loss, out of love to the Lamb, 'who had washed them in his blood.' I have read of one Kilian, a Dutch schoolmaster, who being asked whether he did not love his wife and children, answered, Were all the world a lump of gold, and in my hands to dispose of, I would leave it at my enemies feet to live with them in a prison; but my soul and my Savior are dearer to me than all. If my father, says Jerome, should stand before me, and my mother hang upon, and my brethren should press about me, I would break through my brethren, throw down my father, and tread underfoot my mother, to cleave to Jesus Christ.

Had I ten heads, said Henry Voes, they should all be cut off for Christ. If every hair of my head, said John Ardley, martyr, were a man, they should all suffer for the faith of Christ. Let fire, racks, pulleys, said Ignatius, and all the torments of hell come upon me, so I may win Christ. Love made Jerome to say, O my Savior, did you die for love of me?-a love sadder than death; but to me a death more lovely than love itself. I cannot live, love you, and be longer from you. George Carpenter, being asked whether he did not love his wife and children, which stood weeping before him, answered, My wife and children!- my wife and children! are dearer to me than all Bavaria; yet, for the love of Christ, I know them not. That blessed virgin in Basil being condemned for Christianity to the fire, and having her estate and life offered her if she would worship idols, cried out, 'Let money perish, and life vanish, Christ is better than all.' Sufferings for Christ are the saints' greatest glory; they are those things wherein they have most gloried Your cruelty is our glory, says Tertullian. It is reported of Babylas, that when he was to die for Christ, he desired this favor, that his chains might be buried with him, as the ensigns of his honor. Thus you see with what a superlative love, with what an overtopping love, former saints have loved our Lord Jesus; and can you, Christians, who are cold and low in your love to Christ, read over these instances, and not blush?

Certainly the more Christ has suffered for us, the more dear Christ should be unto us; the more bitter his sufferings have been for us, the more sweet his love should be to us, and the more eminent should be our love to him. Oh, let a suffering Christ lie nearest your hearts; let him be your manna, your tree of life, your morning star. It is better to part with all than with this pearl of price. Christ is that golden pipe through which the golden oil of salvation runs; and oh. how should this inflame our love to Christ! Oh that our hearts were more affected with the sufferings of Christ! Who can tread upon these hot coals, and his heart not burn in love to Christ, and cry out with Ignatius, Christ my love is crucified? Cant. viii. 7,8. If a friend should die for us, how would our hearts be affected with his kindness! and shall the God of glory lay down his life for us, and shall we not be affected with his goodness i John x. 17, 18. Shall Saul be affected with David's kindness in sparing his life, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, and shall not we be affected with Christ's kindness, who, to save our life, lost his own? Oh, the infinite love of Christ, that he should leave his Father's bosom, John i. 18, and come down from heaven, that he might carry you up to heaven, John xiv. 1-4; that he that was a Son should take upon him the form of a servant, Phil. ii. 5-8; that you of slaves should be made sons, of enemies should be made friends, of heirs of wrath should be made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, Rom. viii. 17; that to save us from everlasting ruin, Christ should stick at nothing, but be willing to be made flesh, to lie in a manger, to be tempted, deserted, persecuted, and to die upon a cross!

Oh, what flames of love should these things kindle in all our hearts to Christ! Love is compared to fire; in heaping love upon our enemy, we heap coals of fire upon his head, Rom. xii. 19, 20; Prov. xxvi. 21. Now the property of fire is to turn all it meets with into its own nature: fire makes all things fire; the coal makes burning coals; and is it not a wonder then that Christ, having heaped abundance of the fiery coals of his love upon our heads, we should yet be as cold as corpses in our love to him. Ah! what sad metal are we made of, that Christ's fiery love cannot inflame our love to Christ! Moses wondered why the bush consumed not, when he sees it all on fire, Exod. iii. 3; but if you please but to look into your own hearts, you shall see a greater wonder; for you shall see that, though you walk like those three children in the fiery furnace, Dan. iii., even in the midst of Christ's fiery love flaming round about you; yet there is but little, very little, true smell of that sweet fire of love to be felt or found upon you or in you. Oh, when shall the sufferings of a dear and tender-hearted Savior kindle such a flame of love in all our hearts, as shall still be a-breaking forth in our lips and lives, in our words and ways, to the praise and glory of free grace? Oh that the sufferings of a loving Jesus might at last make us all sick of love! Cant. ii. v. Oh let him forever lie between our breasts, Cant. i. 13, who has left his Father's bosom for a time, that he might be embosomed by us forever.

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