

## How Much Do You Love Me?

Ponder: The astounding love of God

Scripture: “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8, NKJV).

“How much do you love me?” That’s a difficult question. After all, how do you calculate love? You can’t weigh it on a scale or measure it with a ruler.

God didn’t merely affirm the magnitude of His love for us in words; He demonstrated it through Jesus. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son . . .” (John 3:16).

Innumerable men and women have sacrificed their lives in service to others. We honor our fallen military, firefighters, police, and others for their selflessness. What, then, makes the sacrifice of Jesus unique and extraordinarily praiseworthy?

In short, the sacrifice of Christ was a case of the absolutely innocent dying on behalf of, and in the place of, the totally guilty. That simply isn’t the way it’s usually done! “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die” (Romans 5:7a). A righteous (just) man is one who does what is right according to God’s word. He isn’t sinlessly perfect, but in the overall picture he does what God requires of him. Only rarely might one see fit to die for such a person.

“Yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die” (5:7b). While a righteous man does what God requires, the good man goes “above and beyond the call of duty.” Dying for a good man would be more likely than for a righteous man, but still far from routine.

But who ever heard of dying for one’s enemies? Human wisdom labels such an act preposterous! Yet “God commends His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Jesus went to the cross, not to endorse good people, but to save sinners, who are, by definition, His enemies (Romans 5:10). The prospect of saving sinners like you and me gave Jesus such joy that He “endured the cross, despising the shame” (Hebrews 12:2).

Glory in the love of God! And let us love Him by keeping His commands and loving one another!