

Christ's death

Ephesians 5:2 (ESV):

And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Introduction: Why is Christ's death so important? Mark Jones writes very clearly about this when he says, "Christ's willingness to die, and the acceptableness of his death in the eyes of the father" guarantees our salvation.

I have given gifts to my friends and kids. I always share what I like and what costs me. Some people might share what they don't want or what does not cost, but the example we have in the scripture is that giving should be a freewill offering that should cost us.

God set an example for us. Stephen Charnock said of Christ, "His will was as free in consenting as his Father was in proposing." Jesus's sacrifice for us was the greatest; He did not suffer out of convenience; it had been God's will before the world's foundation. Christ always loved freely and was willing to give his life. God's giving Christ and Christ dying for us is what love is all about.

God loves and gives; Jesus loves and is willing to sacrifice himself for us. Without the love of God to willingly give us his Son and the willingness of Jesus to give himself freely for us, we would not be free from the wrath of God that we deserve for our sins.

What does this have to do with us? First, we must accept his death as a freewill offering of God to us. We must also accept Christ's sacrifice as a gift by faith for our salvation. God wants us to imitate Christ in his sufferings. We might never have to suffer and die for our sins, but God calls us to imitate Jesus by suffering and enduring trials for God's glory.

Discussion: Read Philippians 2:6-11

1. How did Christ teach us to suffer?
2. What is God doing in our lives by allowing us to suffer?