

**Palm Sunday – 03/25/2024**  
**What Motivated Jesus to Die on the Cross?**

**This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.**

- Today is **Palm Sunday**, which begins **Holy Week**.
- A time when Christians around the world reflect on the most **sacred week in human history**.
- A **week** that begins with **Jesus Triumphant** entry into Jerusalem, **where the crowd shouts...**

***13 “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” (John 12:13)***

- They’re welcoming Jesus as **their Messiah, their King, their deliverer**.
- But as the week continues **there’s a problem**.
- The people expect **Jesus to deliver them from Roman Oppression**.
- But he came to deliver them (and us) **from our sin**.
  
- So, the week doesn’t go as **the crowd or even the disciples** expect.
- But **Jesus knows what lay before him...**
  
- **We see it in His last meal** with his disciples....
- There **He institutes the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper**.
- Which will **commemorate His sacrificial death**.
  
- **We see it in His agony** as he **anticipates** the cross in the **Garden of Gethsemane**.
- He sweats drops of blood and prays...

***39 ...“My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26:39)***

- **We see it in His High Priestly Prayer** recorded in John 17.
- Knowing his time on earth was short,
- Jesus prays for the **perseverance** and **unity** of his disciples.
  
- **And then comes His betrayal, His arrest, and His trials** before **Annas, Caiaphas and Pilate**.
- Where, as the prophet **Isaiah** writes...

***7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)***

- **And this inevitably leads Jesus to the cross and his death**.
- In less than a week, from **Palm Sunday to Good Friday**
- The shouts of the crowd have changed from **Blessed is He**, to **Crucify Him**.
- **Jesus willingly and knowingly gave his life as ransom for many**.

- **Now Good Friday isn't the end of Holy Week,**
- For we know and **rejoice that Sunday's Coming.**
- But we'll **save Sunday and the Resurrection** for next week, **For EASTER.**
- Today we're going to **focus on Friday, on the Cross.**
- Not so much on the **event of the Crucifixion, What Jesus Did.**
- although we'll certainly touch on that. But why he did it.
- **What motivated Jesus** to begin **holy week** on the **back of a donkey.**
- And **continue moving forward**, enduring **betrayal, denial, beatings, and mocking.**
- What motivated Him to go to the **Cross** and give his life as a **sacrifice for sinners.**
- I believe there were **at least three motivating factors.**
- I'll mention **two of them briefly.**
- And then we'll spend **the bulk** of our time looking at **the third.**
- For it's this **third motivating factor, if understood** and experienced,
- that will bring **powerful transformation to our lives.**
- So, with that to look forward to...
- Let me mention the other two factors that motivated Jesus to go to the cross. **First,**

### 1. **Jesus Was Motivated by Glory for God**

- Jesus desired that the **greatness, the majesty, the beauty** of God to shine forth for all to see.
- That's what it means to glorify, to bring glory.
- And even though this is not our focus today, this is **in many ways Christ's ultimate motivation.**
- Just as **the chief end of man is to glorify God**, the **chief end of God is to Glorify God.**
- Now understanding that would be a **whole other sermon.**
- So, for today, I'll just say that since God is worthy of all honor and glory and praise.
- Then for God to be **just and true** to himself, **he must glorify himself.**
- And this is what we see in the Bible.
- The **gospels** make it clear that Jesus (God the Son) was clearly motivated by God the Father's Glory and **vice versa.**
- In **John 17** just prior to **His betrayal and arrest**, knowing the **crucifixion** was before him...
- **Jesus prays...**

***1 ..."Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,... 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. (John 17:1, 4-5)***

- Only hours before his crucifixion, **Jesus prays for the Glory of God.**
- **The Glory of the Son of God** and for **the Glory of God the Father.**
- Glory, seeing the greatness of the **Son and the Father** would shine forth when Jesus accomplished the work that God the Father had given him.
- That is, the work of going to the cross and becoming **a sacrifice for our sins.**

- Jesus understood that His crucifixion **would Glorify God.**
- How so?
- **The Son's submission to his father, glorified the Father**
- **Jesus willingness to sacrifice his life for our sins glorified God's love and mercy and grace and kindness.**
- **And through this sacrifice,** as we have been talking about in the book of Hebrews,
- **Jesus brought and is bring *many sons to glory.***
- His death on the cross provided a **bridge between sinful man and a Holy God.**
- This resulted in the creation of **many 1,000s** upon thousands of **worshippers.**
- People like you and me whose chief end, whose purpose is to **Glorify God.**
- **To proclaim and live for his greatness, his honor, his praise and glory.**
- Therefore, **application,** as we look to the cross, as we see what ***Christ did for God's Glory.***
- Allow that to motivate **you to magnify God's greatness.**
- To declare the great things God has done for you and to live in trust and obedience to him.
- Showing that he is glorious, greater than all other things.
- **So first, God's Glory motivated Jesus to die on the cross.**
- And then **second...**

## 2. Jesus Was Motivated by Joy for Himself

- In our study through **Hebrews**, we haven't got to **Chapter 12** yet,
- But in **verse 1** the author calls his readers to run with endurance the race of faith set before them.
- And then he gives an example to follow.
- In **verse 2 of Hebrews 12** we read...

***2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2)***

- Jesus endured the shame, the humiliation, and pain and torture of the cross for the joy that was set before him.
- He knew there was Joy to come.
- Joy that would come when **God was glorified.**
- Joy that would come when **Jesus was glorified** at the right hand of the throne of God.
- Joy that would come when **God's people were by faith in Jesus reconciled to God.**
- Jesus knew that it was only through the cross that God's plan of salvation could be accomplished.
- And the Joy that God's Glory and Our Salvation would bring, motivated Jesus to endure the cross.
- **Therefore, application,** as we look to the cross where Jesus endured shame and pain and sorrow and suffering and even the wrath of God.
- All for the Joy set before Him. **For future Joy.**
- Allow that to motivate you to run the race of life with endure
- As you live in a world filled with shame and pain and sorrow and suffering.
- Know that your eternal future **with Christ** will be filled with **Joy beyond measure.**

- As **David** proclaims...

*in [God's] presence there is fullness of joy; at [His] right hand are pleasures forevermore.  
Psalms 16:11*

- And that brings us to the **third motivating factor** where we will spend the remainder of our time.
- Why did Jesus continue down the road that led him to **Golgotha** to death on a Cross.
- Yes, he was motivated by **God's Glory and His Own Joy, but also,**

### **3. Jesus Was Motivated by Love for God's People**

- Now I say **God's People (instead of all people)** not to exclude some from God's love.
- PTL, it is true that God was **motivated by His love for all people.**
- As we know, **John 3:16** famously says...

*<sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

- By sending his son into our world to die for the sins of humanity.
- God demonstrates his love for all.
- But we know that those who do not put their faith in Christ will **never experience God's love.**
- Instead as Jesus says in **John 3:36**...

*<sup>36</sup> Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:36)*

- Those who do not believe in Christ will not experience **the life of love God offers,**
- Instead, they will experience **God's holy wrath.**
- But those who trust in Christ will experience the love of Christ.
- Paul expresses this in **Galatians 2:20**... He writes...

*<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)*

- The Son of God, Jesus Christ has a **deep love** for those **who put their faith in him.**
- Those who die to themselves and are crucified with Him.
- Those who no longer live for themselves but for Christ.
- **Those who live by faith in Christ.**
- **And it's this love for God's people that motivated Jesus to give himself for them,**
- To endure the pain, suffering and even the wrath of God.
- To die in their (our) place for our sins.
- **And today, I want you to see the depths of Christ's Sacrificial love.**
- I want you to see **this LOVE for two reasons...**

- **First**, and this might **be obvious**,
- **But** as we see Christ's love for us **it** increases our love for Him.
- As we **consider** the **depths of Christ's love**,
- We're motivated to **give our lives fully and completely** to the one who loves us like no other.
- So first **knowing Christ's Love** for us enables us to **grow in love with Him**.
- **And second**, and this might **not be so obvious**.
- I want us to **see and know and believe** and even experience the depth of Christ's Love for us.
- Because **it's only when we truly know the love of Christ in our lives**.
- That we **can love in the way God has designed and commanded us to**.
- That's my **first subpoint**... Jesus' Love for God's People (for Christians).

### **A. Jesus' Love is Essential for Our Love**

- Knowing Christ's love for you is essential for you to grow in loving God and loving people.
- And the first thing I want us to understand is the depths of love to which we are called, we are commanded.
- Yes, we are commanded to love...
- As Jesus tells us the two greatest commandments are...

***<sup>30</sup> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' <sup>31</sup> The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* (Mark 12:30-31)**

- These are Old Testament commandments that Jesus says apply to those who would follow Him.
- But then he adds another commandment, which is known as "**The Law of Love**"
- In John Chapter 13, to his disciples, Jesus says...

***<sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*" (John 13:34-35)**

- We, the disciples of Jesus Christ, the Church, the Body of Christ, are commanded by Christ to love one another.
- And not with a simple, casual love, but with a deep abiding love, **with the love of Christ**.
- With the same love that **Christ has loved us**.
- With the same love that held him on the **back of that donkey on Palm Sunday**.
- With the same love that enabled him to endure **betrayal, denial, beatings and mocking**.
- With the same love that kept him on the cross on **Good Friday**.
- That's the kind of love we're to **have for one another**.
- And it's by this Christ-like love for one another that all people will know we are **His disciples**.
- So, if we're going to flourish and grow **as people and as a church**,
- we must be convinced of and committed to **a deep love for God and for one another**.

- And the only way we can do that is by **first knowing and experiencing the love of Christ.**
- That's what **Paul means** when he says to the **Corinthians...**

***<sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup> and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)***

- The **love of Christ as seen in his sacrificial death controls us compels us** to not live for ourselves, but to die to ourselves and live for him, to love like him.
- So, we must conclude (**believe and understand**) just how much **we are loved by Christ.**
- **Trusting that you are loved by Christ** enables and empowers,
- compels you **to live for and love like Christ.**
- The **Apostle John**, beginning in **1 John 4:15**, explain it this way (pay attention here)

***<sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. (1 John 4:15)***

- John is talking to God's People... those who confess Christ.
- Those who have the Spirit of God abiding in them.
- And he says in **verse 16.**

***<sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us... (1 John 4:16)***

- This is crucial, this is what we are aiming for, to know and believe the love that God has for us.
- And we can we know and believe that God loves us because...

***...God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:16)***

- When we abide (remain, live in) the loving God,
- when we abide in relationship with the God who is love... We abide in His love.
- Love dwells in us and can be demonstrated through us.
- **And we can be secure in the love of God.**
- How... **Verse 17...**

***<sup>17</sup> By this is love (the Love of God) perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment... (1 John 4:17)***

- By abiding (remaining) in relationship with God we abide (remain) in his love.
- And therefore, the love of God is perfected with us.
- That is, we grow in our ability to love by remaining in relationship with God who is love.
- And as the love of God grows in our hearts, **we gain confidence for the day of judgment.**
- **We become confident that we will escape the judgment of God.**
- **Why?**
- ***because as he is so also are we in this world***
- Our confidence comes from the fact that we are becoming more like Christ.

- And the greatest demonstration of Christ's love was when he went to the cross and died for us.
- Therefore, our confidence comes from knowing that God loves us,
- Based on Christ's death for us.
- Therefore, we will not be judged based on our sin but based on Christ's righteousness...
- And **Verse 18 adds...**

***18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. (1 John 4:18)***

- If you've given your life to Christ, if you are becoming more like Christ,
- If you are abiding in the LOVE of God.
- You have no reason to fear, **your eternity is secure in Christ.**
- Because of Christ's love for you, you will not experience eternal punishment.
- Your eternal life is secure and now in this life you are free from fear,
- **and you are free to Love with the LOVE of Christ.**
- So, in conclusion, and here is the point, **verse 19...**

***19 We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)***

- The love that God has for us is the motivation and foundation of our becoming loving people.
- So, it's when we truly believe **that God loves us** that we can grow in our love for Him,
- **for one another** and **for those in the world who need to experience God's love**
- It's when we **trust in God's love for us** that we are enabled to **Fulfill the Law of Love...**
- **So, do you truly believe that God, loves you?**
- Are you secure in His love, are you abiding in his love?
- Knowing you've escaped eternal punishment and have been given eternal life.
- Knowing that you have nothing to fear and therefore you can stop wasting your time worrying about yourself and spend your time LOVING others with the LOVE that God has first loved you.
- **Are you convinced of God's LOVE for you?**
- Because if you are then you **will grow in your ability to LOVE.**
- You will seek to fulfill **the NEW Commandment** and love others like Christ has loved you.
- You will demonstrate sacrificial love in **your family with your friends in your church at your school, at your job, even at the grocery store.**
- You will be known as someone who gives more than they receive.
- Who helps when there are needs, who is reliable and trustworthy.
- **Is that how you're known?**
- If the answer is yes, **then praise the LORD...**
- But I'm afraid, for many of us, me included, we fall very short when it comes to fulfilling the law of love.
- And what that says to me is that we're not truly convinced (deep in our hearts)
- that Jesus loves us.
- And so, I want to help us see and even experience the love of God as demonstrated by Jesus Christ.

- And we are very fortunate, because...

## B. Jesus' Love is Explained in God's Word

- How do we know Jesus loves us.
- I can think of no clearer answer than the one given by the famous children's song.
- **Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so!**
- **Scripture** is filled with passages that teach and show the love of Christ.
- We've seen some already...
- But I want us to look at several more, beginning with **Ephesians 5:1-2...**
- The **Apostle Paul** writes...

***<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:1-2)***

- There is clear instruction here for us...
- We, ***who the holy Spirit inspired apostle Paul calls beloved Children of God...***
- are to be imitators of **our Father**.
- We are to look at our father with loving admiration and say **I want to be just like my DAD**.
- And how can we be like our Father?
- By walking in love, by living out the law of love in our lives.
- By loving God and loving people.
- And who are we to **imitate**? Who are we to follow?
- Who provides **the greatest example of love in all human history**? **Jesus Christ...**
- And the culmination of **Jesus example of Love** is found in his death on the cross.
- Walk in love as Christ loved us **and gave himself up for us...**
- Christ did not just give us **some stuff**.
- He didn't just sacrifice his time and talents and treasures.
- **He gave himself.**
- On the Cross, Jesus **sacrificed his life that your sins might be forgiven**.
- He died in your place.
- Why? ***as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.***
- **His love** for us caused him to **give himself up for us**.
- And in so doing He became a ***fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.***
- Christ died in our place, he died that we would not have to experience eternal death.
- He experienced the wrath of God that we deserved.
- God accepted the death of Christ as a **sacrificial offering** for your, for my sin.
- Christ became a ***fragrant offering, a pleasing sacrifice.***
- Out of Love, **FOR YOU and ME...**
- Christ's love was not ordinary human love,
- It's not the love we're used to experiencing,

- It was not...
- I see something **attractive** about you or **admirable** in you, therefore I love you.
- Or I like being **with you**, I **enjoy how you make me feel** therefore I love you.
- Or I like how much **you love me**; **therefore, I love you.**
- Just think about the people you love and ask yourself **why do you love them?**
- And you can **probably make a list.**
- But that's not the kind of love Jesus has for us.
- His love is not based on something **we have to offer him.**
- **His love is based on who he is.**
- His love is a **sacrificial love.**
- It is love for those who had **nothing admirable or attractive to offer.**
- In fact, it's even greater, for in **Romans 5:8** Paul makes it very clear...

***<sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)***

- Christ laid down his life, he gave himself up for us when we were in sinful rebellion against him.
- Do you understand that, and more importantly do **you feel the weight of that?**
- Do you feel the **depth of Christ's sacrificial love for you?**
- I think that we can **say yes** but we might not really know what we are saying.
- **We've heard**, many of us since we were children, **that Jesus loves me**,
- **We've heard** it so many times that it has become common, **it's lost its impact.**
- We don't **stop to consider (think about, meditate on) just** how amazing Christ's love for us is.
- We're **not as moved by His** spectacular and sacrificial love as we should be.
- **I know that can be true for me.**
- And so, I want to help us see and even feel the spectacular sacrificial love Christ has for us.
- And to do that I want us to first look at and be **amazed by a lesser sacrificial love.**
- Then we can compare **this lesser love to the love of Christ explained** in God's word.
- This I pray will help us see and **feel Christ's love.**
- Okay, so we begin with a **true story that comes from a book titled "Through the Valley of the Kwai"** by Ernest Gordon, Movie Bridge over the River Kwai...
- It's the story of a group of prisoners of **war during the Second World War.**
- These men were force into hard labor in a Japanese prison camp **located in Thailand.**
- Every **morning each man** was given a shovel and would dig all day,
- And when they **returned to camp** in the evening, they would **give back their shovels.**
- One evening **20 prisoners were lined up** by the guard and the shovels were counted.
- The guard **counted nineteen shovels** and turned in rage on the 20 prisoners demanding to know which one did not bring his shovel back.
- No one responded.

- The guard took out his gun and said that he would shoot five men if the guilty prisoner did not step forward.
- After a moment of tense silence, a 19-year-old soldier stepped forward with his head bowed down.
- The guard grabbed him, took him to the side **and shot him in the head**,
- He then turned to warn the others that they better be more careful than he was.
- When he left, the men counted the shovels **and there were 20**.
- **The guard had miscounted.**
- And the boy had given his life for his friends.
- Can you imagine the emotions that must have filled their hearts as they knelt down over his body?
- In the five or ten seconds of silence, the boy had weighed his whole future in the balance.
- A future wife, an education, a new truck, children, a career, fishing with his dad...
- And he chose death so that others might live.
- Jesus said in **John 15:13**,

***13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)***

- To love is to **choose suffering for the sake of another**.
- And this is **how Jesus has loved you**.
- Only, O so much more! Consider the life he laid down.
- One of the reasons that the missing shovel story hits us so hard is because the boy was **19 years old**.
- If he had been **89 years old** and the others 19, we might say it was a beautiful act of love,
- But with a full life behind him it wouldn't feel like the same kind of **sacrifice** as when your whole life stretches in front of you.
- So, consider the life that Jesus **sacrificed for you**.
- **First let's just consider the normal human aspects of his life...**
- **Things that would apply to anyone.**
- **He too** was young, only **33 years** old.
- His ministry was only **three years old**.
- He was cut off, as we say, before his prime.
- **Second**, he was the **oldest son** of a **widowed mother**.
- One of **the last acts** of his life (as he hung on the cross) was to see that she would be taken care of.
- In **John 19** we read...

***26 When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" 27 Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" (John 19:26-27)***

- So just from a human standpoint, the life Jesus gave up for us was young and was needed by his mother.

- But there is so much more that was **unique to Jesus...**
- **Third**, he was **the most kind and caring and wise and courageous man who ever lived.**
- Peter wrote...

***22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (1 Peter 2:22)***

- Even his enemies knew they could find no fault in him.
- **Pilate said...**

***6 ...I find no guilt in him. (John 19:6)***

- So, the life he gave for us was no ordinary human life—which would be sacrifice enough.
- It was a **sinless perfect life.**
- This life, **of all the lives that have ever lived**, was the most valuable life.
- The **worthiest of living**, the least worthy of dying.
- This is the life he gave for you—**that you might live.**

- **Fourth, He was the Son of God**

- Which means **he was God as well as man.**
- Along with his **human nature** was a **divine nature.**
- The value of this life was not just **superior to other human lives.**
- His life was **of infinite value**

- With this life Jesus went to the cross for you.
- This is how much it cost to cover our sins against the holiness of God.
- And he paid for it willingly, **so you could live.**

- **Fifth**, as the Son of God (Jesus) was supremely **loved by his Father in heaven.**
- **Matthew records that at the transfiguration of Jesus.**

***5 ...a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." (Matthew 17:5)***

- Suppose that 19-year-old prisoner of war was the son of **the President of the United States.**
- And he knew that there were **powers available** to him to escape not only the death he died but also the prison camp.
- And suppose that you find out that his father, **the President**, not only had a massive love for the boy, but also approved of his dying for you,
- and wanted to meet those of you for whom he died,
- and give you some of the **boy's inheritance.**
- Would not the worth of that life be so unspeakably precious as to make you feel absolutely overwhelmed with love?
- And consider now not only the life that Jesus sacrificed for us,
- But consider also what the sacrifice involved.

- **John Piper Put it this way...**

*To get to the point where he could die, Jesus had to plan for it. He left the glory of heaven and took on human nature so that he could hunger and get weary and in the end suffer and die. The incarnation was the preparation of nerve endings for the nails of the cross. Jesus needed a broad human back for a place to be scourged. He needed a brow and skull as a place for the thorns. He needed cheeks for Judas' kiss and soldiers' spit. He needed hands and feet for spikes. He needed a side as a place for the sword to pierce. And he needed a brain and a spinal cord, with no vinegar and no gall, so that he could feel the entire excruciating death—for you. (John Piper)*

- The 19-year-old boy **was a wonderful picture of love.**
- But compared to **Jesus he was only a picture.**
- His death **was quick and relatively painless.**
- Jesus' death was **one of the worst kinds of torture** devised for human pain.
- So, when **Ephesians 5:2** says,

***2 ...Christ loved us and gave himself up for us (Ephesians 5:2)***

- Don't breeze over the words: **"gave himself up."**
- His love is great in proportion to the **costliness of his sacrifice.**
- And his **sacrifice was tremendous.**
- **And if you are thinking,** well, his death wasn't that big a deal because he knew it was only **temporary.**
- He knew that he would rise **in three days,** so was it really that big of a sacrifice.
- Well, I would take you again to the **garden of gethsemane** where he in anticipation of the cross.
- In anticipation of the **physical suffering of crucifixion.**
- In anticipation of the **emotional suffering** of the betrayal, denial, mocking and rejection.
- In anticipation of the **spiritual suffering** of taking on the sins of vile wicked evil humanity.
- In anticipation of **receiving the full the wrath of God** that we deserved.
- In anticipation of **his loving heavenly father,** for the first time in all **eternity forsaking him.**
- In anticipation of all of this, in the **garden of Gethsemane,** hours before going to the cross.
- **Matthew tells us...**

***<sup>38</sup> Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." <sup>39</sup> And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:38-39)***

- Luke adds...

***<sup>44</sup> And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Luke 22:44)***

- Clearly, Jesus understood the suffering that faced him on the cross.
- His death for you and for me was not only a big deal,
- it was the biggest deal, the greatest, the most loving sacrifice in all human history.

- **So, we should ask in closing,**
- How can **we personally receive the Sacrificial Love of Christ?**
- Not just **believe the facts about Jesus** death for you.
- But **experience the love that motivated** his death.
- I want **us to know that Jesus' Love for You...** Enables you to fulfill the law of Love.
- It is Explained in God's Word But ultimately...

### **C. Jesus' Love is Experienced by Faith**

- Do you desire to feel **personally loved by Jesus Christ?**
- Not just now, **but later today** and tomorrow morning, and each day of your life?
- Maybe you struggle to **accept Christ's love...**
- Maybe you believe you're **not worthy of His love...**
- Well, there's good news, **you and I are not worthy,**
- But the Bible declares that **Christ loves us none the less.**
- And to experience that love, to allow the love of Christ to enter and transform our lives.
- We must have faith that His Love is Greater than our Unworthiness.
- As we've already seen in **Galatians 2:20** Paul writes...

#### ***20 I have been crucified with Christ.***

- First, we must have faith that we are in Christ, that we our old self died in Christ.
- And then we will experience the reality that...

#### ***It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.***

- You can experience Christ, living through you.
- How, by Faith, by trusting that you are loved by Christ.

#### ***And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)***

- As we continue to live in this world (in the flesh).
- We must live by **faith in the Son of God**, who loved **me and gave himself for me...**
- As we see, **through the word of God**, the depth and breath of Christ's love for us,
- We must trust in Him....
- We must trust in His Love for us...
- And we must allow that LOVE to control us to compel us to such an extent that we no longer live for ourselves...
- But instead, we live by faith in Christ, **for Christ.**
- We live for the one who loved us enough **to die for our sake.**
- It is my prayer that we as **individuals and as a people** could (BY FAITH) know and experience the sacrificial love of Christ in our lives.
- That we might **Fulfill the Law of LOVE.**
- That we might **be compelled by the love of Christ, so clearly demonstrated at the cross...**
- **That we might be perfected in love,**
- **Loving God and loving people in ways that we would never have considered.**

**Would you pray with me to that end...**