

Glorious Love of Father and Son

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[0 : 00] Well, as we come to the word of God this morning, may the Lord give us receptive hearts and help us to hear what he has said. We're continuing on in the gospel of John chapter 10.

If you have your Bible, you can open it up to John chapter 10. If you don't have a Bible, there are Bibles in front of you in the seats there that you can grab onto. And we're in John chapter 10. We've been listening and thinking about the words of Jesus and how he is the good shepherd. And we're just now coming down to verses 17 and 18.

So let's read that. I'll start in verse 14 just to give us some of the context again and then we'll follow along with what Jesus is saying here.

John chapter 10 verse 14. I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

[1 : 00] Just as the Father knows me. And I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen.

I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice. And there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life only to take it up again. No one takes it from me. But I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again.

This command I received from my Father. So in verse 17 Jesus says, The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life only to take it up again.

Now this might sound a little strange to us. As we said last week, the Father and his son Jesus have a very unique relationship with each other.

[2 : 09] It's unlike anything that we know or experience. And if you haven't been with us since the beginning of this series, some of this might sound very strange to you.

What does Jesus mean by calling God his Father? Well, this is the mystery of God that the Bible clearly reveals. There is one God.

And this one God exists simultaneously all at once in three persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It's beyond anything that we know or understand. There's no analogy that can perfectly illustrate this mysterious nature of God. And I can tell you that we probably would not believe this, that God was anything like this, except that that's what God has revealed to us in his word.

That's what he said he is like. We could go to all kinds of scriptures. We won't do it this morning, but we see very clearly in the pages of the Bible that the Father is divine, truly God.

[3 : 15] The Son is divine. He's truly God. And the Holy Spirit is divine, truly God. And yet, not three gods, but one God.

One Lord. One Yahweh. One Yahweh. And Jesus has been telling us specifically here about this special relationship that he has with God the Father.

I'll read it again. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life. Now, we should know that, of course, this is not the only reason that the Father loves the Son.

Even before we've come to this verse, we've heard from Jesus and even from the Father that theirs is a relationship in which love is flowing back and forth all the time. It's a relationship characterized by love.

We saw this in John 3.35. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. We saw it in John 5.20.

[4 : 22] For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. We saw this at Jesus' baptism in Matthew 3.17.

The Father himself speaks from heaven audibly. This is my Son whom I love. With him I am well pleased. But now here in John 10.17, Jesus is drawing our attention to one particular reason why

the Father loves the Son.

Jesus says quite literally, on account of this, the Father loves me. That I lay down my life. And we have to really chew on this a bit.

It's not that God only loves his Son because his Son does what the Father wants him to do. That's a sad reality that we see sometimes in human relationships in our world.

No, it's not that. Neither is it that the Son is desperately trying to win and keep the love of his Father by doing what his Father has asked of him.

[5 : 37] That too is a sad reality that we sometimes see lived out in our world today. This is neither of those. And it kind of brings us to the question, well then, what is so love-worthy, what is so lovely about the Son laying down his life?

Why does the Father love that? The Son does this. Well, let's ask the question again. Why does Jesus lay down his life?

To accomplish what? We need only to go back a few verses and listen to what Jesus has been saying in verse 13. I am the good shepherd, said Jesus.

The good shepherd lays down his life. Why? Why? For the sheep. The hired hand, he said, is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep.

So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he's a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

[6 : 52] So Jesus lays down his life. Why? For his sheep. Because unlike the hired hand in this illustration, he cares deeply about them.

He loves them. And that's a glorious and beautiful thing. Love. True, selfless love like Jesus has for his sheep is a lovely thing.

The Father sees that and he loves that. Let's talk for a moment about the love that Jesus has for his sheep. Jesus loves his sheep not just a little bit but a lot.

So much that he will put down his life and give himself up to death in order to save them from the spiritual danger that they are in.

That's not just love like the kind of family or friend love that we are familiar with in our world today. That's true love.

[8 : 01] That's great love. That's deep love. That's the kind of love that's rare to see on earth today in a world where people usually put themselves first.

in John chapter 15 verse 13 Jesus says greater love has no one than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.

The greatest of loves is seen in the greatest of self-sacrifices for another. Take a good look at the man in this picture.

The man seated on the left. There's a reason that this soldier is sitting. It's a little bit tough to see in the picture but if you look closely you'll notice that part of his left leg is missing as well as his right arm.

His name was Harry Jackson. It was March 1945. He was stationed out on the island of Iwo Jima along with 70,000 other U.S. Marines.

[9 : 15] The Japanese troops attacked the island. The battle lasted 36 days. 27,000 American Marines were killed or injured. On the 19th of March seven days before this battle ended Harry Jackson's squad was on outpost duty with a rifle platoon.

During the night Japanese soldiers infiltrated the perimeter and threw a grenade into the foxhole where Harry Jackson and his comrades were.

Without hesitation he took off his helmet put it on top of the grenade and then jumped on top of that with his body. He saved the lives of the three men next to him.

And amazingly he survived as well. He lost his left leg his right arm his left eye and he ended up with powder burns all over his body for the rest of his life.

Can you imagine that? As one U.S. Marine commenting on the story said the natural instinct there is to jump away to get away from it and nobody would have faulted him for doing that.

[10 : 29] But he knew in that moment that if he smothered that grenade there was a chance that his friends might live. And so he did.

Even if it would kill him. That's the greatest of loves Jesus says. To lay down your life for your friends.

And that's rare to see. Paul in Romans chapter 5 verse 7 says very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. Paul's about to contrast the rarest and best of human loves with the love of God and the love of Christ. But his point is that when it comes to choosing to die for someone else like to save them it's very rare.

even if the person who could be saved is known to be a good and righteous person it's very rare almost always people will just act in their own best interests to preserve themselves.

[11 : 41] And this is what is glorious and beautiful about Jesus Christ. He has the rarest and most beautiful of loves for us.

unworthy sinners that we are. Here in John chapter 10 we're still a ways off from the cross. That day Jesus will lay down his life but already Jesus is talking about it. He's thinking about it. I'm going to lay down my life for my sheep.

He's intent on doing it. In fact all the way back in chapter 6 back in Capernaum he was thinking about it. He said this bread is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world.

In fact all the way back in chapter 3 when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus he said a similar kind of thing about how he would be lifted up so that everyone who believes might have eternal life.

[12 : 42] even before that Jesus the Son of God right from the start had it on his heart to lay down his life to rescue us.

Mark 10 45 the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

and what makes Christ's love really stand out is that he will die for sinners like you and me.

We might think that we're pretty good some days probably the truth is that we all have no idea just how deplorable our sins really are to a holy and righteous God.

We are quite unworthy we are quite guilty we are quite deserving of punishment that's what's right that's what's fair and yet Jesus looks at us with compassion and tender pity and he says I'm going to go down and I'm going to suffer the shame and the agony of the death that they deserve for their sins so that they can be saved and rescued from it and Jesus did he laid down his life on the cross he was crucified to atone for our sins this love of Christ for his sheep for you for me is glorious it's beautiful it's wondrous have you felt it do you know it and the father as he watches all of this unfolding on earth he loves his son all the more for doing it for going through with it it's the most lovely thing in his sight there was already great deep love for his son and now there's even greater even deeper love for Jesus his son so Jesus tells the Pharisees and anyone else listening in that he's going to lay down his life for his sheep he's going to die for them but in the same breath he says

[15 : 26] I'm also going to take up my life again very strange thing to say maybe unexpected we'll come back to that another message we'll keep tracking with Jesus as he talks about laying down his life for his sheep down into verse 18 the reason my father loves me is that I lay down my life only to take it up again no one takes it from me no one takes my life from me but I lay it down of my own accord now this may sound strange but let's keep listening to Jesus no one takes my life from me he says I lay it down of my own accord it's as though he's saying let the record be clear even before the day comes when you Pharisees will see me up on that cross you did not take my life from me

I laid it down the Pharisees and the religious leaders who plotted against Jesus they did not take Jesus life from him as if they could the mob who shouted crucify him until Pilate finally gave in and handed Jesus over they did not take Jesus life from him as if they could Pilate who granted the request did not take Jesus life from him as if he could and even the Roman soldiers who pounded the nails into Jesus hands and feet did not take Jesus life from him as if they could no one takes my life from me I lay it down of my own accord the Roman soldiers Pilate the religious leaders could scheme they could do their their hardest to try to kill Jesus the son of

God but if Jesus had not surrendered himself to their plots and even in those final moments if Jesus had not surrendered his body over to death they couldn't have killed him they would have failed no one takes my life from me I lay it down of my own accord they're strange words and yet magnificent unless Jesus chooses to lay down his life and die he's immortal he is invincible he cannot be beaten he cannot be outsmart he cannot be outflanked by their schemes and their plots all of which he sees right through he is the sinless son of the most high God and unless Jesus allows himself to be bound and chooses to humble himself before them and willingly surrenders his body to death he will

not die we see glimpses of what

Jesus could have done like in the garden when Jesus commanded Peter to put his sword away as he says in Matthew's gospel do you think I cannot call on my father and he will at once put at my disposal twelve legions of angels oh I could get out of this and yet he didn't because he was instead choosing to surrender himself into their hands no one takes my life from me I lay it down of my own accord or like on the cross when the people were mocking Jesus Matthew 27 verse 40 they were saying you who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days come down from the cross and save yourself if you are the son of God could he have come down from the cross in that moment oh yeah could he have saved himself absolutely but instead he chose to surrender his body to death to fulfill the scriptures to accomplish the mission the rescue mission planned long ago no one takes my life from me says Jesus but I lay it down of my own accord there's another angle that I want to talk about just briefly here sometimes you may run across someone who mocks God who says what kind of father would kill his own son Richard Dawkins is an example of such a person he's the most arrogant and truth suppressing man I've ever heard of his book maybe you've heard of it the God delusion I refuse to even quote how he describes God in that book but one of the things that he accuses God of being is filicidal so think homicidal homicidal the tendency to kill people filicidal having the tendency or bent towards killing your own children according to Dawkins that's God that's his nature and we should be clear did God kill Jesus on the cross many passages of scripture say yes God poured out his wrath on Jesus he punished

[21 : 16] Jesus but not because he's some evil sicko of a father who gets kicks out of doing things like that to his own child no God punished Jesus for our sins and he did it because Jesus willingly agreed to be our substitute to take the punishment that we deserve to be that sacrificial lamb Richard Dawkins view of God is twisted and false God is not some vindictive or violent bully who just gets kicks out of making people suffer that's what the devil wants us to believe about God it's the same sort of lie that Satan used back in the garden of Eden is God really good does he really have your best interests in mind no God is good he is just he is compassionate he is gracious and he did not force his son

Jesus onto that cross hear the words of Jesus again and make no mistake no one takes my life from me I lay it down of my own accord of my own accord we've heard that before this is something that Jesus said back in John chapter five I don't know if you remember this one Jesus was talking to the Pharisees there too he said very truly I tell you the son can do nothing by himself that's the same language in the original language of his own accord he can only do what he sees his father doing because whatever the father does the son also does for the father loves the son and shows him all he does so we read there that the son can do nothing of himself nothing on his own nothing independent from the father and yet here in John 10 17 and 18 he says

I lay down my life of my own accord what do we need to make of this but we must not make the mistake of trying to pit Jesus against the father just as Jesus said he and his father act and work together they can't be divided they can't be separated on this yes Jesus lays his life down of his own accord but it's also the father's plan and the father's will too yes the father has sent the son and given the son and delivered him up for us all but it's also the son's will and desire to go and to be sent and to be given and to be delivered up for us all you can't separate father and son they always work together says Jesus they act together they accomplish together at the same time as Jesus willingly lays down his life so too his father delivers him up to death they do have a different role the father commands and the son obeys those commands but it's not a begrudging or dutiful obedience that Jesus has of his father Jesus loves his father and it's his own heart's will not only to obey his father but to do all the same things that the father is commanding him to do he would do those anyway because they are good they are beautiful they are right you cannot separate father and son in their willing or in their working so what do we take from all this well I want to point us back to the heart of Christ we know most of us that God the father loves us we know that he sent and gave Jesus to save us

John 3 16 for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son but do you know that Jesus the God man the one with flesh and blood like we have do you know that Jesus himself loves you in his heart of hearts so much that he laid down his life of his own accord because he wanted to do it for you sometimes we might get that mixed up in our minds we might think well did Jesus just go to the cross and die for me because he had to because it's what the father wanted hear these words I did it I do it of my own accord because I want to do that for you I care about you I love you I want to

see you have life and be forgiven and be saved he wants you to have life just like
[26 : 51] God the father wants you to have life or maybe it's the other way around in your mind
maybe you tend to think of it a little differently well I know that Jesus loves me I mean look at what
he did for me at the cross but the father does he really love me or is he just angry with me and
Jesus is there like my older brother standing in the gap and making a case for me let me point you
back to verse 17 again the reason my father loves me is that I lay down my life and we can fill in the
blank for the sheep God the father loves that Jesus willingly lay down his life to save you because
God the father himself loves you and wants you to be saved just the same as

Jesus the two are one father and son together both love you love me in fact it's all three father son
and holy spirit all working together in love on this rescue mission it's a beautiful thing the only words
I could think to wrap all this up are the words of Fanny Crosby to God be the glory great things he
has done so loved he the world that he gave us his son who yielded his life an atonement for sin
and opened the life gate that all may go in praise the Lord praise the Lord let the earth hear his
voice praise the Lord praise the Lord let the people rejoice oh come to the father through
Jesus the son and give him the glory great things he has done let's pray what more can we say to
you Lord to your name be the glory I thank you that there's no darkness in you there's no malicious
intent there's no evil there's no secret agenda to hurt or to harm or to deceive there's goodness
there's love right down to the very depths of your heart for us oh I pray that each one of us here
would feel that and know that and that we would surrender ourselves completely to your care in
Jesus name amen amen to listen hung warz ■

Yah Simply