

A Look At Calvary

John 3:16 says, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* The love of God is proven more than anyplace else at Calvary. Luke 23:33 tells us that our Lord was brought to Calvary to be crucified. Romans 5:6-11 discusses the love God showed at Calvary. There are three good lessons that can be learned from Paul's brief statement.

The meaning of Calvary is discussed in vss. 6-8. The righteous Son of God died for the ungodly. Of course, the ungodly means every single one of us (Romans 3:23). Isaiah 64:6 says, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:3, said that Christ *"died for our sins according to the scriptures."* As good as we might think we are, there are none of us worthy enough to have the Savior die for us. Yet that is exactly what He did!

The magnitude of Calvary is discussed in vss. 9-10. God has justified us through the blood of His Son (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7)! We have been reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). Reconciliation effects a change of relationship between us and God. Where we were once enemies, we are now in fellowship with God. This fellowship requires a righteous conduct before God (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

Finally, Paul reveals the mercy of Calvary in vs. 11. We have joy because we have experienced God's mercy through the atonement. Atonement is the divine act of grace in which God accepts an offering as a substitute for the punishment for sin. In the Old Testament, the shed blood of sacrificial offerings effected atonement. The blood shed in the sacrifices was sacred. It epitomized the life of the sacrificial victim. However, in the New Testament, atonement was accomplished by the blood of Jesus. So we have the substitution of our sins wrapped up in Christ's sacrifice. The love of God is truly magnificent, but the love of God puts upon us a premium for action. Pure fellowship with God cannot be obtained without believing and acting upon what is righteous.

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