

## **"The Love Of God Shed ..."**

*"And hope putteth not to shame because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly ..." (Rom. 5:5f).*

The work of the Holy Spirit has always been of much interest to men. And, well it should be because Jesus told us that when the Spirit came *"he would convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness and judgment ..."* (John 16:8). In the Roman text the apostle tells that the *"love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit."*

What does the writer have in mind when he speaks of the *"love of God;"* God's love for us or our love for God? One only need turn to the text to learn that answer. The *"love of God"* is reference to God's love for us. *"For while we were weak in due season Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die. But God commended his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Rom. 5:6-8). Verse five tells us the *"love of God"* is shed abroad in our hearts; verse eight shows that love to be God's love for us. *"God commended his own love toward us ..."* So, while we must have a responding love for God's love and grace (*"we love because he first loved us,"* 1 John 4:19); the love of God of Romans 5:5 must be understood to be God's matchless love for us.

Even if we did not have a plain declaration that the *"love of God"* is God's love for us, the context would still show that to be its meaning. In these three verses (Rom. 5:6-8) the English word *"for"* appears seven times. Four times the word *"for"* is huper in the Greek and is defined *"in behalf of."* Thus *"Christ died for (in behalf of) the ungodly;"* *"scarcely for (in behalf of) a righteous man will one die ...;"* *"peradventure for (in behalf of) the good man someone might dare to die;"* *"while we were sinners Christ died for (in behalf of) us."* Three other times in the passage the word *"for"* is used and signifies *"because of."* *"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts for (because) while we were weak, Christ died for us;"* *"for (because) scarcely for a righteous man will one die, for (because) peradventure for the good man some one would dare to die ..."* There should be no doubt that the *"love of God"* in the context of Romans five is reference to God's love for us.

The work of the Holy Spirit now must be considered for we are told that

God's love for us is "*shed abroad*" in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Is this done by a personal, direct act of the Spirit? Some think so. But look back to the passage. "*Much more then, being now justified by his blood shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him*" (Rom. 5:9). In both verses the word through appears and is the same Greek word *dia*. The love of God is spread abroad in our heart through the Holy Spirit. We are saved from the wrath of God through him (Christ). Does Christ save us from God's wrath through direct intervention? No. We are saved from God's wrath by the work Christ did, the shedding of his blood. In the same way the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit: i.e., the work He has done.

The Holy Spirit's work is revelation through which comes conviction of sin. The Roman passage teaches us the Holy Spirit has shed abroad the love of God for us in our hearts by revealing that while we were weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly. Jesus said, "*Greater love hath no man than this than that a man lay down his life for his friends*" (John 15:13). The Holy Spirit reveals to us the sacrifice of Jesus which he made was because he loved us. In this way that "*the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us.*"

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