



## “Love on Display” Romans 5:6-11

**Idea:** The love of God for sinners is displayed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Intro:** Easter is love on display. It is the greatest true-love kiss story ever told. As a girl-dad, I have read and watched my fair share of true-love kiss stories. I know about Snow White and Prince Florian, Aurora and Prince Phillip, Rapunzel and Flynn Rider, Ariel and Prince Eric, Tiana and Prince Naveen, and of course Anna and Kristoff. As wonderful as these stories may be, they pale in comparison to the beautiful story of Jesus and the cross. Unlike their stories, His story is not a fairytale. It is a historical fact. Today, on Easter we celebrate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The apostle the John describes it this way:

*So they took Jesus, 17 and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.*

– John 19:16b-18

*When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

– John 19:30

*Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. – John 20:1*

Jesus was crucified, buried, and as Mary Magdalene discovered at the tomb, resurrected. Why? What is the purpose of this great story? The apostle Paul describes it to us as love on display.

Read Romans 5:6-11.

**Inquiry:** As Robert Mounce has said, “Life is precious, and the yearning to live is strong. Nevertheless, once in a while a person has sufficient courage to die for a generous friend. The remarkable thing about the death of Christ was that it took place ‘while we were still sinners.’” His love was on display. He did not wait until the performance of sinners matched the perfection of the gift. No, Jesus died for sinners while they were still alienated from Him and cared nothing for His affection.

On this Easter Sunday, we celebrate the love of God displayed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This love is displayed in four ways.

We see the love of God displayed in...

### 1. Substitution (vs. 6-8)

A substitute is a person or thing acting or serving in place of another. There on the cross, Jesus stood in the place of sinners.

*4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. – Gal 4:4-5*

The right time had come for God to offer His Son as a substitute for sinners. Jesus was to die in the place of sinners. Why was there a need for someone to die? It goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 2:17, God told Adam that if he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he

would die. Adam ate from that tree, and he died, spiritually and physically (Gen 3:7; 5:5). His disobedience and sin resulted in death, which was the payment for sin. Adam's sin has been passed on to every generation, so that all people are sinners and under the penalty of death for their sin (Rom 3:23; 6:23; 1 Cor 15:21-22).

As a result of sin, Adam was cut off from God and from life. Thankfully, God stepped in on his behalf. God pursued Adam in his sin (Gen 3:8). He spoke gracious words to him (Gen 3:9-13). And God provided a substitute to cover the shame of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:21). This substitute foreshadowed what would come in the Mosaic Law. Moses would command the people of God to slaughter lambs, bulls, heifers, goats, and doves as a sacrifice and substitute for their sin.

The offering of a sacrifice is a brutal scene. As Leviticus explains, the offering was brought to the priest. There the sinner was to lay his or her hand on the head of the animal to be sacrificed. Then the animal's throat was cut and the blood drained into a basin. The priests would then take the blood and throw into against the sides of the altar. Finally, the sacrificed animal would be flayed and placed on top of the altar and burned as an offering to God (Lev 1).

The sacrificing of an animal was bloody and brutal. It personified the seriousness and the depth of sin. It also forced the sinner to identify with the animal as a substitute for sin. The sacrificing of animals, however, never fully atoned for man's sin. It could not because it was merely symbolic of one who would give His life as a sacrificial substitute for the sins of man (Heb 9:11-14).

Jesus Christ died on the cross in the place of sinners. He gave Himself as a sacrifice in place of others. True love was on display through substitution, which provided justification for sinners.

## **2. Justification** (vs. 9)

The death of Christ on the cross satisfied the wrath of God the Father against sin. When Jesus cried out from the cross, *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken Me?"* He was bearing your sin and my sin (Matt 27:46). The full brunt of the Father's wrath was being exhausted against the Son as He bore our sin. His life was given in place of sinners. His sacrifice was accepted because it was holy and blameless. Through Adam's one sin, all of humanity was condemned, but now in Christ, through the sacrifice of the cross, sinners are justified and made right with God (1 Cor 15:21-22). Therefore, Jesus is both just and the justifier through His sacrifice (Rom 3:26).

Consequently, now the Father pardons and accepts believing sinners and counts them as righteous recipients of all the rights and privileges as His adopted children (Gal 4:1-7).

True love was on display through justification, which resulted in reconciliation.

## **3. Reconciliation** (vs. 1, 10)

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son..."*

– Romans 5:1, 10a

Paul says that through Christ sinners are reconciled, restored to friendly relations, with God. Justification satisfies and brings an end to the hostility sinners have toward God.

It is sin which separates. It divides. It creates war and hatred. Grace and mercy, on the other hand, unites. They bring parties together. The death of Christ reconciled sinners to God. They were once enemies of God, but now they are friends of God...sons and daughters of God.

On this Easter Sunday, we celebrate the love of God displayed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus because through it we are reconciled with the God who created us. True love was on display through reconciliation, which gave new life.

#### 4. Salvation (vs. 10b)

The death of Christ paid the penalty for sin. It satisfied the justice of God the Father (Heb 10:11-14). Hebrews tells us that after His offering, Jesus sat down at the right hand of God. How did He set down at the right hand of God? The answer is resurrection.

The resurrection is of first importance to our faith. The gospel message devoid of the resurrection is no gospel (1 Cor 15:3-5). Without the resurrection there can be no hope beyond this life (1 Cor 15:19-22). Thankfully, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, and His resurrection was witnessed by hundreds of people (1 Cor 15:6).

Today, sinners can be saved from the death and separation from God because of the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. Today, sinners can be forgiven of all sin and raised from death to life because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Today, sinners can experience a new beginning because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:17).

True love was on display through salvation.

**Conclusion:** Do you see the beautiful love of God on display through the Easter story? Why did Jesus suffer and die for our sin? The answer is love (John 3:16). This is the greatest true-love kiss story every told. The stakes were higher. The danger was greater. And the price was superior. We were dead in our trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1), hopeless and cut off from God and the life we were designed to enjoy. *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love which he loved us...made us alive together with Christ* (Eph 2:4-5).

Good News – You are loved by God. We know this because the Bible tells us that He designed you. You were made by Him and for Him (Col 1:16). You were designed to perfectly relate and to be in relationship with Holy God. God's design for your life was holy and perfect. We know God loves you because He has not destroyed you.

Bad News – Sin has broken God's design. The sinful nature that overcame Adam and left God's design in him broken has been passed on to us. It has separated us from God. Today, in our sin, we are on the wrong side of the great chasm. Our sin condemns us before God, so that we are deserving of His judgment. This brokenness should not surprise anyone; because if we are honest with ourselves, we recognize it. We feel it in our anxiety, fears, and broken relationships. We know there is a deep need that we cannot meet ourselves.

Best News - The gospel declares that God the Son has paid the penalty for our sin so that we can be set free (Rev 1:5). He offered His life as a substitute for you and experienced the wrath of God the Father against your sin. So that now, you can experience forgiveness for sin by placing your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. You are given a choice to make.

Forgiveness is always available if you will turn to Him in faith and repentance of all sin.

The word of the cross says your sin has been atoned and covered. This means as a Christian, I can and should lean into Jesus and His gospel daily. This means as a sinner, I can and should confess and repent my sin and experience His forgiveness. This means I have a message of hope to share in an increasingly hopeless season of life.

Have you experienced the love of Jesus Christ?