

GODS' LOVE FOR US

By: Bill Irby – Minister, West Hobbs Street Church of Christ, Athens, Alabama

The grand old translation has in Romans 5:8 *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* We learned from our source that the word translated “commendeth” here has in it the idea of demonstration or showing something by one’s action. The English word “manifest” comes close to getting the idea across. Hugo McCord has “displayed” and the Berkeley translation has “proven.” When we put all of this together, we learn that God’s love for us is shown and proved by the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

The death of Christ is the ultimate manifestation of God’s love for us, but it is not the only one. We will be benefited if we think of other proofs of God’s love for us.

A compelling thought to me is that the very existence of the world (Genesis 1:1) is a display of God’s love. Add to that our personal existence (Genesis 1:27). Think for a minute about the fact that you are alive. You have energy. You move about, you think and reason, you experience aesthetic beauty and are repulsed by horror and ugliness. You feel love, hate, and all emotions in between. These things we do because we are.

Some might wonder about a connection between human existence and God’s love. After all, there is plenty of sadness and trouble in the world and sooner or later, all of us get to experience some of that. Not a few philosophers and theologians have expressed the view that life is a dirty little trick. This idea has led folks to conclude that there can be no such thing as God, the idea being that a good God wouldn’t do such thing as make a world as perilous as this. Other thinkers have come to the conclusion that God may well exist but that He most certainly does not love us. But God is good and one manifestation of His goodness and love is that He made us.

Go down a path with me for a moment. Our existence makes all that we will ever think, say or do possible. We all know this existence is good because we never wish to give it up voluntarily. We fight to live. Since life is on the face of it a good thing, the being who provides that life is good. God is the good Being that provides our existence. If God had not loved the idea of man, He would not have gone to the trouble of making one.

There are many points of connection between our existence and the love of God. We know 1 John 4:7-8. It says, *“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and know God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”* Think about the idea, the emotion and spiritual acts of love. These are things that we can have in common with God Himself. Love is the common thread running through all of humankind and is the essential characteristic of Christianity. God’s love for us is displayed by the fact that He made us and that He made us able to love.

So, the beginning place for thinking about God’s love for us is our own very existence. But it is just a beginning. God’s love for us is proved by the way He has equipped us for life. He has given all of us gifts that we use to make our living (Luke 6:38). He has provided the tempering of life’s experiences that make us better people (read Psalm 119:65-80). And, as we begin, He has provided in the blood of Christ, the opportunity for eternal life in Heaven with Him.

Think today about the fact that you exist. Be thankful that God made you. Be thankful for His love that provides the potential for a full and wonderful life. Be thankful for the promise of Heaven. Be thankful for God’s love for us.