

CIRCLE OF LOVE

By Keith Greer

Today we want to examine the complete "**Circle of Love**" described in God's word.

The World- God so loved. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." {John 3:16}

God knew His greatest creation needed something - a remedy for sin -that it was unable to do for itself. Despite what Calvinism teaches, God loved the whole world and gave His Son to give every sinner the opportunity to recover from the condemnation brought on by sin.

The Church-Christ died for her. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her." {Ephesians 5:25}

Before He laid the world's foundation, God formed a plan for saving sinful men. His Son's sacrificed blood would not only provide the redemption needed for man's salvation, it would also purchase the church. "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." {Acts 20:28} When Jesus returns, He will give the kingdom back to His Father. {1 Corinthians 15:24-26}

Mankind - Christ's personal sacrifice. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." {Galatians 2:20}

Yes, He loved the whole world and became a sacrifice for sins. "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." {2 Corinthians 5:21} But don't allow that fact to overshadow the personal benefit each of us receives from Christ's death. Why would Christ die for a sinner such as myself? Could the mob that demanded his blood be more guilty than I am? I must understand that Jesus had to die because I sin! Because of my sins, He had to bear my penalty on Calvary's tree long ago. I'm unworthy of such love, and I cannot begin to measure or understand it. Greater love has never been expressed!

Anyone, who would be open minded and fair, and looked at the brief life the Lord spent on earth here one could easily see the many expressions of love He showed during His life. Yet, knowing what He would receive in exchange – the cross – He still loved us! ***