

**OUR ATONEMENT  
BE FOLLOWERS OF GOD – PART 2 OF 3  
EPHESIANS 5:2**

**GOD'S LOVE FOR US**

1. The ultimate **test** of our Christian "**profession**" is love (1 Cor. 13:1-3).
2. **Love** is the test, so **everything** in the Christian life is designed to bring us to this condition.
3. We are to be like God, as **children** of God; for **God** is **love** (1 John 4:7-11).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Christianity demands dying to **self** and living for **Christ** (John 15:12-14).

**I. CHRIST'S ATONING WORK (EPHESIANS 5:2)**

A. The **Atonement** (Eph. 5:2)

1. The measure of Christ's love is that He **loved us!**
1. You will never understand the love of Christ until you truly grasp the scriptural doctrine of **sin**.
2. When you realize that we were ungodly, **vile**, and **enemies** of God, then we see something of the love of God (Rom. 5:6-8, 10).

B. The **influence** of the Atonement on a Christian causes us to walk in love (Eph. 5:2).

1. Your behavior is always determined by your **doctrine** (Prov. 23:7).
2. Your understanding of God's love and the love of Jesus Christ is measured by the **extent** it is manifested in your **life** (John 15:12-14; 3:16-17).

**KEY THOUGHT:** It is much easier to sing and talk about God's love than to **practice** it.

## II. CHRIST'S ACTIVE WORK (EPHESIANS 5:2)

A. Jesus "gave Himself up for us" (Eph. 5:2)!

1. Jesus gave up His possessions and His prerogatives of His deity (Phil. 2:5-6).
2. Jesus deliberately emptied Himself to position Himself for our atonement (Phil. 2:7-8; 2 Cor. 9:8).
1. Jesus intentionally gave Himself up for us and our atonement (John 10:17).

B. Jesus gave Himself as an offering to God (Eph. 5:2).

1. The Old Testament practice of sacrificing an animal was symbolic of a substitute payment for one's sin.
2. Jesus was sacrificed upon the cross on Calvary when His body was broken and His blood shed (1 Cor. 11:24-26).
3. The Father was completely satisfied with Jesus' payment for man's sin (Eph. 5:2; 1 Tim. 2:5).

**KEY THOUGHT:** Jesus' submission to God's plan was active, deliberate, and positive (Matt. 16:21).

**FOR FURTHER STUDY AND PERSONAL GROWTH**

**January 22, 2012**

**SUNDAY:** **The ultimate test of the Christian “profession” is love (1 Cor. 13:1-3)**! God’s love for each redeemed sinner is absolute (Rom. 5:6, 8). It is the convicting call of God on our lives that brings the unredeemed into a relationship with the Father (John 16:7-8). This divine love is beyond the pettiness of earthly love. God’s love is unconditional and without reservation. The ultimate test for our Christian “profession” is to love (1 Cor. 13:1-3). Love is the test, so everything in the Christian life is designed to bring us to this condition. We are repeatedly told to pattern ourselves after the love of Jesus (Eph. 4:32). We are to be like God, as children of God; for God is love (1 John 4:7-11). Are you appalled with your own sin, both before salvation and after? Does the love of God seem like it is too good to be true like you won the Publisher’s Clearinghouse Sweepstakes? Thank your Heavenly Father for His unconditional love and the resultant conviction of your sin. ***Praise God for the pattern of unfailing love He has cast in your life to demonstrate to others!***

**MONDAY:** **Living for Christ (John 15:12-14)**! What is the purpose of your life? What are at least two goals that you have set for this year regarding the kingdom of God? How has God revealed you will serve Him and His kingdom this year? Participating in the construction of the kingdom of God will require sacrifice on your part. Building anything demands a sacrifice, but building the kingdom of God seems to always demand the thing we hold the dearest. Why? It is because God wants you to place Him and His business above everything else in your life. Christianity is not a title but a way of life. Christianity demands dying to self and choosing to live for Christ first (John 15:12-14). What is the most precious thing in your life? Money? Time? Freedom from commitment or authority? Living for Christ will demand that you begin to align all your priorities with scripture but will usually start with the biggest item. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you change your priorities to create an avenue for living for Christ. ***May this become a priceless theme in your life!***

**TUESDAY:** **Christ loved us when we were yet sinners (Rom. 5:6-8; 10)**! The atoning work of Christ on the cross completed the sacrifice necessary for your salvation. The atonement is the crowning achievement in God’s plan of forgiveness for man (Eph. 5:2). Interestingly, Paul does not say that the measure of Jesus’ love is the love He has for the Heavenly Father. That inner-Trinitarian love is unwavering. The measure of Christ’s love in this passage is that He loved us! First, you will never understand the love of Christ until you truly grasp the scriptural doctrine of sin. If you feel that you are a good person, one who has never done anyone serious harm, someone who has lived a kind and good life, and in fact has done a good bit of good; then it would seem strange to you if Jesus did not love you. When you realize that we were ungodly, vile, and enemies of God before we were redeemed, then we understand something of God’s love (Rom. 5:6-8, 10). Praise God for His patience and love for you! Show your gratitude for your salvation by serving Him in building His kingdom. ***Praise the Lord for the privilege of serving Him in reflection of His love for you!***

**WEDNESDAY:** ***The influence of the Atonement causes the Christian to walk in love (Eph. 5:2)!*** You cannot escape this thought; your behavior is always determined by your doctrine (Prov. 23:7). Our conduct and behavior are proclaiming our views and philosophy of life. Learn to think critically. Cultivate the ability to use logic and critical thinking to develop your perimeters for living. Our conduct and behavior reveal the level to which we have thought critically, or expose the lack of such thinking. Your understanding of God's love and the love of Jesus Christ is measured by the extent it is manifested on your life (John 15:12-14; 3:16-17). It is much easier to sing and talk about God's love than practice it. Reflect on the Atonement of your sin and the love of Jesus demonstrated in your deliverance from sin's penalty. Plead with the Lord for the atonement to influence how you live every day. ***Praise God for your redemption!***

**THURSDAY:** ***Jesus actively worked for the redeemed (John 10:17)!*** Jesus actively participated in our redemption by giving Himself up for us (Eph. 5:2). Jesus came from His place at the right hand of the Father to become a man. Jesus gave up His possessions and His prerogatives of His deity (Phil. 2:5-6). Jesus deliberately emptied Himself to position Himself for our atonement (Phil. 2:7-8; 2 Cor. 9:8). Jesus intentionally gave Himself up for our atonement (John 10:17). Worship your Heavenly Father who sent the Son, Jesus, who came and acted obediently, and the Holy Spirit that convicted you of your sin unto salvation. ***May the active work of Christ for your salvation stir you to actively work to build the kingdom of God!***

**FRIDAY:** ***Jesus gave Himself as an offering to God (1 Tim. 2:5)!*** The Old Testament practice of sacrificing an animal was symbolic of a substitute payment for one's sin. Jesus acted as the substitute for each person who is redeemed from his sin. Jesus was sacrificed upon the cross on Calvary when His body was broken and His blood shed (1 Cor. 11:24-26). Our Heavenly Father was completely satisfied with Jesus' payment for man's sin (Eph. 5:2; 1 Tim. 2:5). Reflect again in the sacrifice Jesus made in coming to earth. Think on the divine, unconditional love of the Father and the Son to set the plan of redemption into motion to redeem sinful, rebellious, vile man. Praise Him for His love. Commit to be influenced by the atonement in living your life and serving in the kingdom of God. ***Praise God for the active work of Jesus for our redemption!***

**SATURDAY:** ***Jesus deliberately and actively participated in God's redemption plan (Matt. 16:21)!*** Jesus' submission to God's plan was not passive. Jesus' submission was active and deliberate. It was a positive response to the need for the substitutionary payment of the debt each sinner owed for his redemption (Matt. 16:21). Now is the time you will need to choose if and how you will respond to your atonement. Don't practice casual obedience with little or no change in your priorities. You might address the greatest area of affection that is keeping you from placing God first in your life. Jesus' action on your behalf was deliberate and positive. Your response will need to be deliberate and positive. Ask the Lord to give you the strength to take a step beyond where you feel confident to build your dependence and trust for Him. ***May this be a great adventure of spiritual growth in your life!***