



REFLECTIONS

March 31, 2024

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:19

Unfathomable Love

Just imagine. You pack a couple of donkeys with supplies for a sacrificial offering and lead your first-born son up a mountain to be your sacrificial lamb. Well, I can't imagine it either; but Abraham did that. (See Genesis 19) And God did that too.

Speaking to Nicodemus in John 3:16 Jesus said, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*" He knew God meant it. Only, Jesus didn't mention the horrific torture he would suffer.

As if the thought of crucifixion wasn't horrendous enough, scourging sounds almost as bad. (Look it up. It's worse than a whipping.) No wonder expectation brought Jesus to his knees where he might have found a large stone to prayerfully rest his arms, and to lift his head toward heaven with an uneasy plea: "*Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.*"

God's answer came quickly when: *An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. Still, being in anguish, [Jesus] prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.* (See Luke 22:42-44)

Abraham and Jesus loved God deeply enough to sacrifice whatever He asked of them no matter the suffering, and strength enough in their faith in him to assure that God would be true to his promises. They loved God because He first loved them.

Easter is the day God blessed us with the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. And Easter is a day to remember God's unfathomable love for us—and to love him back.

Abraham did that. And Jesus did that too.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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