

“I am going to die for you.”

John 10:11-18

We know of course that Jesus died for us on the cross. Jesus already introduced this strategy in John 3 ...

John 3:14-16 (NLT)

¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,

¹⁵ so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

¹⁶ “For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

And here is the background verse for that from the life of Moses ...

Numbers 21:8-9 (NLT)

⁸ Then the LORD told him, “Make a replica of a poisonous snake and attach it to a pole. All who are bitten will live if they simply look at it!”

⁹ So Moses made a snake out of bronze and attached it to a pole. Then anyone who was bitten by a snake could look at the bronze snake and be healed!

And another verse even farther back ...

Genesis 3:1 (NLT)

¹ The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

Satan is here portrayed as a snake, and his goal from the beginning was to get people to reject the Word of God, “did God really say ... ?” Once you get someone to reject the authority of God's Word, you've successfully disabled that person of experiencing the life God wants for them.

And finally, making full circle back to the Gospel of John ...

John 1:14 (NLT)

¹⁴ So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

Jesus literally embodied the Word of God, Jesus is God's Word with skin on. It is Satan's goal that you reject the Word today just as Adam and Eve did at the beginning of human history.

So, the purpose of Jesus' death on the Cross was to bring us by faith into Eternal Life. But is there MORE to it, are there any other reasons why Jesus would choose to die for us as Romans 5:10 says, "For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son."

In today's passage we discover how the character of Christ compelled Him to die for us.

Why did Jesus Die For Us?

A. Because He was Good.

John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep."

-- Good people do good things. One measure of goodness is how we balance selfishness with sacrifice. A good person will make a habit of living sacrificially for others.

B. Because He Promised Never to Forsake Us.

John 10:12, "A hired hand will run when he sees a wolf coming. He will abandon the sheep because they don't belong to him and he isn't their shepherd. And so the wolf attacks them and scatters the flock."

-- The end of the Great Commission is important "... and be sure of this I will be with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

-- All of us have felt the sting of being let down by someone who hurt us, betrayed us, broke an important promise, or left us. Jesus is saying, "not me, I'm not like that."

C. Because He cares deeply for us.

John 10:13, "The hired hand runs away because he's working only for the money and doesn't really care about the sheep."

-- What *motivates* Jesus? Money? Fame? Power? Uh, He's God, why would He need any of that stuff. Jesus is motivated, energized, and mobilized by compassion.
-- Caring is free to acquire and costly to use.

D. Because He truly knows our need, and the answer.

John 10:14-15, "I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, ¹⁵ just as my Father knows me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep."

-- Jesus is our middle-man to God the Father, our High Priest. He knows us completely. He knows God completely. So, He can bring us together.
-- Jesus knows God's demand for Holiness. Jesus knows our stubborn bent to sin. That's why dying for us was the answer, it satisfied God's wrath, while opening our hearts to faith in that kind of love.

E. Because His goal is being with us, united as one.

John 10:16, "I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd."

-- Jesus loved the Jews, but others also! The "church" is a big tent.
-- NOTE: Mormons believe these "other sheep" are the native inhabitants of North America. They are correct in that Jesus died for them too, and Africans, and Asians, and Russians, and Eskimos, and Taxi Cab Drivers in the Bronx. These "other sheep" are anyone outside of the Jewish faith.
-- Aren't you glad the good news Jesus brought was for every person, in every age, on every continent? I certainly am. The "FREE SALVATION" offer never expires, and you don't need a secret code, or be among the first 50 in line.

F. Because He was committed to obedience.

John 10:17-18, "The Father loves me because I sacrifice my life so I may take it back again. ¹⁸ No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily. For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. For this is what my Father has commanded."

-- When you are committed to obedience to God
-- you experience to love of the father.
-- the tough choices are already made simple.

- you gain authority over death.
- you gain control over the chaos ... you volunteer while others feel trapped.

MAIN POINT: "Jesus died for us to make it possible to follow His example. You choose to adopt His character, living beyond yourself, to shepherd others."

One last verse (we're skipping ahead to the end of the story!) ... John 21:16, Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love me?" "Yes, Lord," Peter said, "you know I love you." "Then take care of my sheep," Jesus said.

MAIN POINT: "Take care of my sheep."

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, help us shepherd as You did. We know only Your Son could die for our sin, now help us live to care for others. In Jesus' name, amen."