

Doctrinal Summary of  
Love: Walking Through Life Under God's Authority

In Ephesians 5:2 Paul commands the believers in Ephesus to walk in love just as Christ did.

“and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

The word “walk” is translated from the Koine Greek word περιπατεῖτε (“per-i-pa-tei-te”) which more literally means, “you all are commanded to perform the continuous type of action to walk step by step from one place to another.” It is used to refer to how man moves from moment to moment in the course of his life. It is a command that Paul gives to the Ephesian believers which means they must use the free will God created man with to become obedient to the command. Likewise, the Ephesian believers are the ones who must perform the action of moving through the course of their life. No one else is supposed to be carrying them, they are to be performing the action themselves. The location in which believers are to move through the course of their life is that of unconditional love just as Christ loved them.

The words “just as” are translated from the Koine Greek word καθὼς (“ka-thohs”) which more literally means, “according to the norms and standards of how.” It makes a comparison between two different things, comparing the first thing by the norms and standards that characterize the second thing. The result of the comparison is the understanding that the first thing is to be carried out in the same manner as the second thing. The two things being compared in Paul’s comparison are the believer’s walk and the love with which Christ loved the believer. Thus, believers are to walk in love according to the manner of how their Anointed Sacrifice loved them and gave Himself up for them.

The words “gave up” are translated from the Koine Greek word παρέδωκεν which more literally means, “He really performed the action in a point in time to deliver something to an authority.” It identifies that someone is delivered to an authority and becomes subject to the decision making of the authority. The “something” which Jesus delivered over to an authority was Himself. The authority which Christ delivered Himself up to was God the Father. Christ’s deliverance of Himself to God the Father culminated in His death on the cross for man’s sins. But, the entire scope of Christ’s life is in view in this passage. From His first breath until His substitutionary death for man’s sins Jesus Christ operated as one under the authority of the Father, fully at the Father’s direction to do and to will for His good pleasure. Jesus’ giving Himself up for man was not only in that moment of His death on the cross, but was in the totality of all of His life which He lived as a bond-slave to God. Jesus’ delivering up of Himself to the Father was motivated by love for sinners and those who would be His through faith in His substitutionary work on the cross.

Believers are commanded to walk through the moments of their life according to the same norms and standards of the manner by which Jesus Christ loved them: delivering themselves up to the God of the universe in submission to and at the mercy of His sovereign reign and will for them. God’s plan for each believer is different than Christ’s and His plan for any other believer, but as each believer obeys the command to walk in love God leads that believer to the fulfillment of His plan. In doing so, the believer carries out his logical priestly service just as Christ did (cf. Romans 12:1) showing others the love God has for man while moving through the course of his life under the direction and authority of God.