

## Why Did Jesus Have to Die?

Actually He didn't! But before you write me off a complete heretic, stop and think. When God set up the universe, were His hands tied – did He have no choice? In reality, God had all the choices in the universe. He is God!

No one forced God to set up a system whereby blood had to be shed for the forgiveness of sin. But Hebrews 9:22 tell us that "...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness," (NASB).

God could have set up a system of works based salvation, but He didn't. He could have had us bobbing for apples or stacking greased BBs for salvation, but He didn't. He could have set up a system whereby we would have to suffer painful torture to be saved, but He didn't.

God, in His infinite wisdom gave us free will (free moral agency to choose right or wrong) and He knew that with that freedom man would have to make choices. Enter Satan! One of Satan's best tools is to convince people that God does not really love them very much.

One might ask, "How do I know that God really loves me a lot?" Enter the cross! When God set up the plan from the beginning, from before the foundations of the world, He decided to set up a plan by which mankind would forever be taught, "God loves you!"

You who? You, the world! "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life," (John 3:16, NASB). In other words, God is saying, "I love each individual I have created so much, that I am going to allow my only begotten Son to die for your salvation (eternal life).

When God made Adam and Eve, He placed in their hearts a deep and automatic love for their children. When we compare that love to God's love for us, His children, it is as if God were saying to Himself, "Just how can I show the humans on earth how much I love them? I know, I will place in the human heart a profound love for their children, then I will have my only Son die on a cross for their sins – then they will understand my deep and everlasting love for them.

Jesus died, fully agreeing with the Father and fully knowing that no other act on earth would prove, for all eternity, Their love for you and me.

Love your kids? Of course. Do you understand the implications of God giving His son to die for you and your family? Perhaps so, perhaps not. When you are wondering if God loves you, stop and remember the cross, remember how you love your children, then bow your head and thank Him for eternal love and sacrifice.

-Ray Wallace

Further study: Romans 5:6-10