

It is true that His love is discernible everywhere—*In creation*: By the way in which everything is made to minister to the best interests of His creatures, particularly the highest of those creatures—man. And doubtless when at the beginning “the morning stars sang together; and all the sons of God shouted for joy,” it was as much, if not more, on account of the love as of the wisdom and the power displayed in the work.

*In Providence*: Not only in that general providence by which He shows His watchful care over us: in the language of St. Paul:—“Giving us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness:” but more particularly in that special providence by which our individual lives have been guarded: and all notwithstanding our selfishness and ingratitude.

But if we would sound the full depths of God’s love we must turn to Christ. Christ whose coming down into this lower world was the *result* of God’s love, for “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish; but have everlasting life.” Christ who is “the brightness of His Father’s glory, and the express image of His person,”—the one in whom dwelt “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Christ whose every act of kindness and word of tenderness was but a manifestation of God’s love to man.

But glorious as was the life of Christ, much as His love shines through His every word and deed, the glory of the whole pales before the one great act of self surrender. And it is only by fixing our eyes upon the cross that we can get anything like an adequate conception of that love wherewith He loves us. Here it is that we see:—“*Love divine* all love excelling.”

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,” said our blessed Lord, and yet He Himself laid down His life for His enemies. And it is this love when seen, and understood, which gives the cross its attractive power. And, as St. John says, “we love Him **BECAUSE** He first loved us.”

That this thought was prominent in the minds of the first disciples, I think is evident, not only from the writings of St. John, the loving disciple, but also from those of St. Paul, who in writing to the Church in Galatia when in the midst of his argument upon justification by faith, says: “The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, *who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*” And again; in the Epistle