

What We Need to Learn From Couple Who Died in El Paso Mass Shooting

Love makes us do crazy things.

We sing more love songs than any other song. We hear country songs about what a man will do for his love, and pop singers singing about the love of their life. And who doesn't like a great love story? Hallmark movies, romance novels and magazine articles all boast of love. It is everywhere. We adore love.

History holds incredible love stories. King Edward VIII of England abdicated his throne for the love of an American divorcee, Wallis Simpson, in 1936. He could not take her as his bride as king, so he gave his kingship to his brother, King George, and married the woman he loved. They became the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

Who doesn't remember reading about the famous Egyptian queen, Cleopatra, and the Roman general Mark Antony? After losing a war on Rome, they took their lives rather than be apart in life.

In a recent El Paso Walmart shooting, a man shot a couple, Jordan and Andre Anchondo, to death while they tried to protect their 2-month-old son. The shooter shot Andre as he threw his body in front of his wife and then shot Jordan as she tried to protect their son.

What has love caused you to do?

When my children were young, my husband built them a swing set and fort with a slide and tunnel to play on in our backyard. He started it in our garage in the middle of winter. I have the cutest pictures of my three bundled children sitting on

the steps of the garage watching my husband hammer nails, saw wood and piece together this surprise. They could not wait to play on it.

On Father's Day, I gave Mike a small plaque inscribed with "From Daddy, with love" to attach to the wooden beam of the playset so my children would always remember who built it for them. My kids are nearing the end of their college careers and that playset still stands in our yard.

Hebrews 1:3b (ESV) says that Jesus is "The exact imprint of [God's] nature." God sent His Son as a loving imprint of His nature and love for us. One of the most famous Bible verses is John 3:16 (MEV), "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

We could also say, "From Daddy, with love."

Who among us would give their child for the life of a good person, let alone an evil, selfish or hateful person? Only a loving God would offer His Son for sinners like you and me. Jesus suffered and died for us out of His love.

Hebrews 2:9 says, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels to suffer death, crowned with glory and honor, so that He, by the grace of God, should experience death for everyone."

Not only was Jesus willing to die, but Hebrews tells us how He went to the cross. Hebrews 12:2 says, "Let us look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the *joy* that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (author's emphasis).

The Greek word for *joy* means "gladness, state of rejoicing, happiness." Why would Jesus be in a state of rejoicing in going to the cross? Because He knew that cross would restore

the relationship He, the Father and the Holy Spirit wanted with us. We could finally come to the Father, be in the presence of the Godhead and experience their love.

Jesus said in John 15:13, "Greater love has no man than this: that a man lay down his life for his friends."

There are many people who have not only laid down their life for a friend or family member, but also a total stranger. How often do we see videos of or read about someone who risked their life to save another or gave their life saving someone? Just as Andre Anchondo threw himself in front of his wife to save her from the shooter, Jesus did the same for us.

Jesus took the blame and punishment for a crime He did not commit. Soldiers beat Him, and He bled the blood we should have bled. He allowed the soldiers to nail His body to a cross that ours should have been nailed to.

But Jesus did what we could not do. He raised Himself from the dead (John 2:19, 10:18). Love raised Him. Love gave Jesus life from a horrible death. Love left scars on His resurrected body. Love seated Jesus at the right hand of the Father.

Remember, when we read verses like "Love is patient, love is kind" from 1 Corinthians 13 (ESV), we can replace each "Love is" with "God is."

God is love. So God is patient, God is kind; God does not envy or boast. ... God never ends. {eoa}

Stephanie Pavlantos is passionate about getting people into God's Word. She has taught Bible studies for 15 years and has spoken at ladies' retreats. She wants to get people into the Word where they can discover God's love for them, discover their identity in Christ and find healing for the wounds of this life while forgiving those who caused their pain. Visit her blog at .

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