

The Love of Christ
2 Corinthians 5:14–15

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MAIN IDEA: As the apostle Paul rehearses his ministry among the Corinthians, he reminds them of what motivated him against the lies of the false teachers who were trying to slander him and his ministry. As Paul explains his primary motive, he provides for us a pattern to follow. And the controlling motive that Paul expresses must always be a profound grasp of Christ's love for us.

In this text, Paul provides two crucial insights about this right motive of the Christian life.

SERMON OUTLINE:

- I. It's Defined as Christ's Love for Us (14a)
 - A. The Subject: "The Love of Christ"
 - It means "Christ's love for us" because of...
 1. Context: the following statements are clearly about Christ's love for us demonstrated in His death.
 2. Paul's practice: when he uses "love of" followed by a genitive of person, the person is showing love never receiving it.
 3. The other two occurrences: "the love of Christ" occurs in Rom. 8:35 & Eph. 3:19 and means "Christ's love."
 - B. The Verb: "Controls"
 1. First, we must grasp it with our minds.
 - He loved you in eternity past (Ps. 103:17)
 - He loved you in the incarnation (Mt. 1:21; Jn. 13:1; 1 Tim. 1:15)
 - He still loves you (Rev. 1:5)
 - He will love you forever (Ps. 103:17)
 - He loved you in His death (Jn. 15:13; Eph. 5:2, 25; 1 Jn. 3:16)
 2. Then, it will grip our affections—His love will compel us to love Him.
 3. Then, it will govern our wills—His love causes us to love Him and therefore to desire to please Him and live for Him.
- II. It's Grounded in Christ's Death for Us (14b-15)
 - A. Jesus Died for Us (14b).
 - B. We Died with Jesus (14c).
 - C. We Now Live for Jesus (15).

Common Wrong Motives

1. A Bribe: to get something from God
2. Your own glory: to gain reputation and respect
3. Pride: to feel good about yourself

4. Repayment: to pay God back for His goodness & grace
5. Duty: solely to fulfill your obligation to God
6. Obedience: solely to obey God's commands
7. Love: solely to show your love for God and others.
8. God's Glory: solely to bring glory to God.

BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

1. Read John 6:35–40. What do these verses teach us about the Father and the Son's eternal plan of redemption? Discuss.

2. Read Ephesians 1:3–6. What do these verses teach us about the Father's work in the eternal plan of redemption? Discuss.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What are practical ways to ensure our motives and affections are tethered to Christ's love for us and the glory of the triune God? Discuss.