

## **Week 7 – Handout 2 Cor 5:14-15 “Love Compels us**

“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

### **2 Cor Background**

- Written by Paul and Timothy to Church in Corinth and the surrounding area. Paul planted the church in Corinth during second missionary journey Acts (15:36-18:22)
- 1 Corinthians addresses several issues within the church involving divisions, lawsuits, sexual immorality, exaggerated eschatology, over embracing freedom, under valuing community, over emphasis of certain gifts, under appreciating certain groups of people, confusion over resurrection hopes. The letter addresses some of these topics in a forceful way
- 1 Cor 16 outlines Paul’s plans...which must have been changed. The divisions present in 1 Cor are now full blown and Paul is being criticized.

### **Opponents apparently have several criticisms of Paul**

- 10:10f; 11:5f – Not a good speaker
- 2:17; 12:11f – He did not accept money for preaching...(except the collection)
- 4:1f – He was being deceptive in his practices (unreliable)

### **Summary of Key Theological Points So Far**

- (1:1-11) Suffering & Comfort of Christ → Flow into our Lives → Others (mutuality). Hardships teach us to rely on God who raises the dead, instead of self
- (1:12-22) Reliability of ministry and message are based in the promises of God not ministers. Paul conducts his ministry in a manner that spurs criticism and hardship...but is intentionally aimed at helping the Corinthians become mature (1:14) and help them to see that is God who makes them stand firm (1:22)
- (1:23-2:11) The Corinthians are competent to stand on their own (2:5-11)
- (2:14-17) The ministry and message of Christ will look foolish to some and glorious to others
- (3:1-18) The proof / certification of the message and ministry is if it changes hearts, not based on the form of ministry, the appeal of minister, letters of recommendation, or popular response.
- (4:1-15) Because we have been given this glorious ministry we do not lose heart. We don’t use the common ways of advancing our cause which often rely upon deception, distortions, being attractive. Instead, we commend ourselves to a person’s conscience and conduct our ministry so that the power and effectiveness can only be attributed to God and not us.
- (4:16-5:10) - Do not lose heart because we are confident that the struggles we experience in our present bodies will be replaced when we are resurrected. The Holy Spirit in us confirms our hope in a resurrected future. All of this is unseen and so we live by faith.
- (5:11-13) - “Knowing the fear of the Lord” → because we respect Christ, and are confident of his promise of an eternal dwelling, we work hard in the ministry he has given us. We are not trying to persuade you of the integrity of our ministry, but we are explaining our motives so that you can take pride in the sincerity of our efforts. We want you to understand why we go about our ministry this way so that you can reject the popular, success-minded, pride-of-life-motivated efforts of others.

### **Paul’s reluctance to claim legitimacy based on externals**

- (2:17) – Profit, (3:1f) – status / reputation, (4:1f) – deception & distortion, (11:5f) – Popular preacher, (11:16f) – take advantage of others & boasting, (13:1f) – forceful demands / commands.

## **Focus Verse - 2 Cor 5:14-15**

“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

### **“For Christ’s love compels us” –**

- “Christ’s love” = The love Christ has for us. This love is connected to the death of Christ
- “Compels us” = both motive and constraint. Paul’s life and ministry operate under the reign of Christ’s love, seeking only God’s approval, not man’s. That love gave him his ministry, defined the shape of the message, and urges him to explain the significance of Christ’s death to others. The love Christ showed is the decisive force for our ministry

### **“we are convinced that one died for all,...”**

- One died for all, he died for all, him who died for them are all parallel constructions that refer to the Christ’s dead/burial/resurrection on the cross
- “for all” – The death of Christ has universal significance for humanity, not just for those who accept him. His death demonstrates God’s love for all.
- “for all” –

### **“...and therefore all died.”**

- “all died” – also understood as a universal “all humanity” as in previous phrase. Thus this “all” projects an eschatological perspective. The death/resurrection of Christ, as a human, prediscloses the path that every human life will follow. There is death and potential new life. The end of life, and the end state of humanity has been demonstrated in the death of Christ. In a sense, Christ’s death not only demonstrate the future state of humanity, but it began the transition from “this present age” to “the age to come.”
- Because Christ was raised from the dead, he demonstrates that death does not mean the end of living for those who are in Christ (whose life is hidden within the body/life of Christ).

### **“And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”**

- “those who live” – is a reference to those who have faith in Christ/God. While the death has significance for all, the resurrection hope has significance for those who live by faith.
- “those who live” – is one way to refer to the change of life for those who through the death and resurrection of faith (depicted in baptism) adopt the life of Christ. “old self / new self”, “dead to sin / alive to Christ”, etc. (rom 6)
- Col 3:1f

### **Parallel expressions**

- Rom 5:6-21; 8:31-39; 13:8f -
- Gal 2:20; 5:6f – “...the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”
- Phil 2:5f
- 1 Cor 15:22 – “for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive”

### **Implications**

- What does it mean to live for Christ and not for self?
- How does this perspective effect our
  - (1) Conversations – how do we exist in conversation for others?
  - (2) Religious opinions? (Rom 14-15; 1 Cor 9)
  - (3) Occupations?