

Life Together, Compelled By the love of Christ

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[0:00] You can be turning with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 5. But we've been looking at life together, how the gospel shapes the church.

We've been addressing and especially emphasizing this idea of how the gospel does this work. And we've looked at several things, several different areas.

I won't address them now because I'm going to mention them in the midst of my message. We're looking back through these things, but emphasizing this part that talks about how we do this.

Because of what God has done for us. Because of the gospel. Because of Christ's work for us. And that's seen, I think, pretty plainly in 2 Corinthians 5.

As Paul is addressing a situation here we'll talk about in just a second. He pulls back the curtain of his heart. And they see what's making his heart beat.

[1:25] 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verses 14 and 15. Follow along as I read. For the love of Christ controls us because we have concluded this.

That one has died for all. Therefore all have died. And he died for all. That those who live might no longer live for themselves.

But for him who died for their sake. And was raised. Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for what Paul revealed here.

Father, I thank you for the difference it can make in our hearts. And I pray, Father, that what Paul describes here would be that which compels us.

Not just this morning. Not just when we have preaching to do or teaching to do. But Lord, in all of life. Because it is the only true motivation.

[2:32] The only motivating motivation. I pray that you would be with us. And open our eyes. As we look. At how Christ's love compelled.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. So as you may have gathered. From what we read. And what I prayed. That we're going to be talking about the compelling power of Christ's love.

We come to this point. This is. It's called the second. Second Corinthians. We know that there were other letters. So he's kind of. We could call this fourth Corinthians.

But Paul's written this letter. And he's expressed a great amount of desire and care for the Corinthians. And they have not quite appreciated.

They didn't understand Paul. I mean, they accused him of many things. They had a lot of problems. Some in Corinth. Had been moved by false teachers to question Paul's apostleship.

[3:37] They looked at Paul and called him that crazy man. I mean, he speaks so plain. And we have great teachers here.

Why does Paul keep coming back to us? Every time he comes. He doesn't take any money.

He's here. And he preaches all day. And at night. He makes tents. This guy's. On the edge of crazy. And we try to push him away. And other places have tried to push him away. Thessalonica. They stoned him once. And he kept going. And Philippi was put in prison.

Different places he was beaten. He was on a ship. That wrecked. In fact, a couple of ships that wrecked. He spent a night and a day in the deep. Why does this man keep doing what he's doing?

[4:38] Why is he willing to suffer so much. To be able to keep going to these places. And share the gospel with them. What drove Paul to serve these people?

Not just the Corinthians. Although we're looking at it in relation to the Corinthians. What drove Paul to keep coming back with this message? I think these verses talk about the motivation of Paul.

Well, I'll notice. I want you to notice that it was not. That someone at Corinth. Or someplace else. Forced Paul to serve them.

No one held anything over Paul's head. That said, you better do this or else. I don't care if you've been beaten. I don't care if you go to prison. I don't care if you're cold. I don't care if you're hungry. You better do this or I'm going to. There was never anything of that. And it was also not because of money. Now, there are a lot of people who are making money.

[5 : 40] It's sort of a kind of thing that Paul was doing. There were all kinds of people who would go from place to place. And give these fancy speeches with large words. And deep thinking.

And maybe tricky reasoning. And the people would be impressed. And they just throw. Not literally throw. But they would just give their money to these people. And these people made a lot of money doing that.

Did Paul come because of that? No, it's certainly not. We've already talked about it. It wasn't because of money. He was paying his own way. He didn't take anything from the Corinthians. Or many of any of the churches.

While he was out sharing the gospel. So it wasn't money. What made him keep going? Paul says. That he had been compelled. By the love of Christ. Verse 14. He says. For the love of Christ controls us.

[6 : 38] It's not just him. It's all the group that's with him. The love of Christ. Compelled him. How did he know? Christ loved him.

Well, Paul had come to find out. That he was a man who had been dead in sin. He thought he was serving God. Very well. In fact, better than most. In fact, probably the best that anyone.

Had ever served God. He thought he was one of the best going. He found out instead. He was a wicked, rebellious sinner. Who was blaspheming the name of God. Who was murdering God's people.

Paul had been dead in sin. And Jesus Christ had come. To take his place. Not take his place preaching.

Take his place in relation to what he owed God. Jesus had come to take his place. Jesus had shown his love for Paul.

[7 : 36] The love of Christ for Paul. Moved him. It moved him because he saw. Possibly even firsthand.

That Christ. Actually died. In his place. And that Christ had died.

Not only for him. But for all of God's people. And that changed Paul. Someone had taken his place. And he knew it. And he knew what it meant. In the closing scene of the movie. Saving Private Ryan. James Ryan. Is an old man. Standing with his wife and family. Looking at one Captain Miller's grave. The family doesn't know why he's there.

[8 : 36] Captain Miller was a man. Tasks. With leading three other soldiers. To bring Private Ryan. Back to his mother. Because all of his other brothers.

Had been killed in World War II. And they wanted to save this poor woman. At least one son. And so four men. Went to get this man.

Private Ryan. And bring him back. In the course of getting. And bringing this man back. Captain Miller. And the other three soldiers.

All died. Trying to save. Private Ryan. Private Ryan. Ryan obviously. Made it back.

And now as he stands. In front of that grave. Reflecting on what these men sacrificed. So that he might survive. Ryan feels the weight.

[9 : 33] Of their sacrifice. And he thinks about his life. Life lived at the expense of another.

Cannot be wasted. It compels one to live. For the sake. Of those. Who die for them. In the movie. He tries. It's portrayed to be a works righteousness. But that's not the way it is with Christ. Paul. As it were. Stood.

At an empty tomb. And contemplated the life. That was given for him. The love that Jesus Christ. Displayed for him. Compelled. Paul. To serve Christ. With all his heart. And that life. Was not just. The life.

[10 : 35] Of a captain. And three other soldiers. That life. Was the life. Of the God man. Who came.

Lived. Perfectly on earth. Never doing. Anything. Outside of God's command. Perfectly holy. Perfectly righteous. Doing. Always. That which pleased God.

And that God man. Took Paul's sin. Upon himself. He was charged. With all the guilt. Of what Paul. Had ever done. And we know.

Enough of Paul's life. That even though. He thought himself. A very. Very. Very. Righteous man. Paul came to realize. As he came to truly. Understand the word of God. He was not a. Really. Really. Righteous man. But rather. A very. Very. Wicked man. And yet.

[11:31] Christ. Had taken all that. Sin upon himself. And he'd gone to the cross. As we talked about.

Early. Earlier. And he gave. His life. For Paul's. For Paul's. Debt. And. That payment. When Paul. Came to trust. Christ. Was applied. To Paul's. Account. All his sins. Were paid for. And the life. That Jesus. Had lived. The perfect. Righteousness. The. Doing. Absolutely. Everything. Right. Was also. Placed. On. Paul's. Account. So that as. Paul. Would stand. Before God. No one. Could accuse him. Of anything. And everyone. Could look at him. And see. This is the most. Lovely. Of men. Look.

[12:28] He has a perfect. Righteousness. He has always done. What God has commanded. Jesus. Gave his life.

But it goes further. He didn't merely. Extend. Paul's life. Because of that. He made him. Acceptable. Before God. And made it.

So that. Paul. Could live with God. For all eternity. As a rich. Reward. For a righteousness. That. Someone else. Provided.

Someday. Paul. Will stay in. Stand in heaven. And. And will hear. Well done. Good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy.

Of the Lord. And he will stand there. Knowing. It was not. One thing. That he had done. All the things. He had done. Had killed people.

[13:25] Had mocked God. Had been blasphemy. Before God. And yet. He's hearing. Well done. Good and faithful servant. Why? Because someone. Had taken his place.

And for all eternity. It's a secret. That won't be found out. There won't be a day. Paul. The gigs up. We saw what you were really like. You're out of here. Because Jesus.

Actually. Took his place. And made him. Right before God. Now. Paul's not the only one. Who enjoys that standing.

Every person. Who's trusting. In the work of Christ. Has that same. Standing. Why.

Did Jesus. Do it. Well. We've been talking about. That kind of thing. In Luke. Because he loves sinners. Because he came.

[14:29] To seek. And to save. That which is lost. And Paul. As he. Learned of. And contemplated. And rehearsed.

In his own mind. The things that God. Had done for him. His love for Christ. Grew. And caused him to say. I will do.

Whatever God. Wants me to do. I will go to people. Who don't love me. I will go to people. Who think I'm crazy. I will go to people. Who won't pay me. I will go to people. Who. Who are complaining.

Against me. I will be a witness. Of this one. Who loved me. So. The love of Christ. Compelled him. If you're trusting Christ.

Today. Are you. Compelled by the love of Christ. Do you do what you do.

[15:26] Because. Of what Jesus did for you. If someone has died for you. They've died in your place. You can't live for yourself anymore.

We see it so easy in movies. Someone jumps on a hand grenade. And they sort of survive. And that person feels such guilt. And such thankfulness. They want to do everything for them.

And yet. There are many of us. Who will be saved by Christ. And if we're not careful. We're the kind of people. Who brush that off. And throw that aside. And think nothing of the fact. That Jesus has suffered.

More than any human. Could ever suffer. Under the wrath of God. He has humbled himself. Greater than any person. Could ever. No one of us.

Can be said. To have left the throne of heaven. No one of us. Could take on. The form of a worm or less. But our Savior has done this.

[16:27] If someone has died for you. If they've taken your place. We can't live for ourselves. We must live for the one. Who has taken our place. And you can only live.

For others. You are only able to live your life. Because someone has forfeited theirs. Jesus has forfeited his.

To be anything less. Than compelled to service. By the life. Sacrificed for you. Let me start that again. To be anything less than.

To be compelled. To service. To service. By the life. Sacrificed for you. Is to be unthankful. And disrespectful. To the one.

Who gave his life for you. And we've gone through. Six messages. And the theme of those messages.

[17 : 27] Has been life in the body. How the gospel affects. Now. We could apply this to many more. Areas. But we applied it to six. And I'm going to quickly review. Some of these.

And point out. How we can respond. In the first week. We talked about. Membership. Compelled by the love of Christ. For us. We spoke of how the gospel.

Makes the church. A people. Not a crowd. You as you're sitting here. If you're part. If you're trusting Christ. You are not. Individual spectators.

Who have happened to walk. Into a room. Where all of us. Happened to be together. If you know Christ. You're here. As a part of a body.

Christ loved. Not only loved us so much. That he gave his life for us. To save us from our sins. But he also cared for us. By establishing. That all his people. Be knit together.

[18 : 26] As a body. That he might use. Each one of us. To minister to the other one. In love. For their growth. And their comfort. He loved you.

Enough to die for you. And desired your good. So much. That he put you in a body. And would have you serve. One another. And so let me ask you.

If you've been saved by grace. Have you been willing. To be recognized. As part of the body.

Called. Called you to serve in. Have you seen your need.

To take your place. In the body of God. That God has called you. To serve in. Are you one. Who takes the thinking. I'm just here for supper.

I just like the fellowship. Or I just like the singing. Or I just like this. Or I just like that. Have you seen your need. To take your place. In the body.

[19 : 27] That God. Has called you. To serve in. Don't just come. For supper. Become a part. Of the body. That which God.

Formed. For your good. And you. For our good. So let the love of Christ.

That he has displayed. Cause you to choose. To be a part of his. Gracious provision. In the second week. We talked about service. Compelled. By the love of Christ.

And in that message. We spoke about. The gospel. Makes the body. The church. A body. With interdependent. Members. Who serve one another. And there are several places. In scripture. That speaks about this.

Paul uses. The picture. Of a body. A hand. Or a foot. Or an eye. And how those parts. Serve one another. Paul did what he did.

[20 : 25] For the Corinthians. Because they were a different part of the body. And God had put him there. To serve them. And God.

Or Christ himself. Was a perfect. Perfect picture of that. In humbling himself. To serve you. In Philippians 2. It speaks to that. Christ had that mindset.

Of serving you. Was willing to humble himself. And he's placed you in a body. If you know Christ as Savior. For the very purpose. Of serving one another.

We pray often. For those who are. Chronically ill. Just because they're not here. Or can't be here. Doesn't mean.

We don't have a responsibility. To them. Just because they are here. Or people are here. Doesn't mean. That you. As a born again Christian. Don't have a responsibility. To serve them.

[21 : 23] You have a responsibility. Watch for them. To pray for them. To be with them. To encourage them. To exhort them. You can list. Many things from scripture. As one who's been shown mercy.

And names the name of Christ. Do you see. This group of people. You sit with this morning. As people. You are called to serve. Paul served the Corinthians.

Because of what Christ did. Does your attitude. Toward those around you. Reflect the attitude. That Christ has shown. Towards you.

Our third sermon. Was along the idea. Of commitment. Is compelled. By the love of Christ. To you. And that third message. We spoke about. The gospel. Calls Christians. To be committed. To the body. Jesus was committed. To providing salvation. Even though. He faced the most. Extreme suffering.

[22:27] Man could face. Remember the scene. Remember the scene. In the garden. Remember the scene. On the cross. Remember that he experienced. The father's wrath.

Against. Our sin. Placed on him. He died. He died. He died. To save a people. Who would. Who are to be committed.

To him. And to one another. Committed. Committed. Committed means. Maintaining unity. It means. It means. Working together. In the ministry. Of the gospel. Means. Staying together. Through difficult circumstances. Working through difficulties. Loving those. Who are hard to love. He's called us. To be committed. To one another. To stick together. Are you. Committed to those. You're sitting with.

[23:20] This morning. Do you see. The folks. Now. Don't emphasize. The wrong part of this. But do you see. Those that you. Sit with.

This morning. As fellow. Fellow. Sinners. For whom. Christ. Gave his life. It's easy. To look around. See them as. Sinners. But do you. See them.

As the same. Kind of sinner. That Christ. Died for. When you look. At yourself. Sometimes. We have limits. And we say.

I'll serve. So and so. And so and so. But that person. They're just too far out. We're to be committed. To serving the body.

Committed to one another. Do you think about. The brothers and sisters. Around you. As being. As. Precious. To Christ.

[24:14] As you are. And then. Would you be committed. Not just for the sake. Of your own comfort.

And your own blessing. Committed to serve them. Because they. Are Christ's. He loves them. They are his treasure. The fourth.

Message. Involved. Giving. Compelled. By the love of Christ. For us. And that fourth. Message. We spoke about. The gospel. Calls us to give. Of what God has prospered us.

To carry on. In the work of the gospel. What does it mean. By giving. From what God has prospered us. In all of scripture. God's people. Have shown their worship.

And thankfulness. In setting aside. A portion. Of what God provides. As an offering. For God. Both the old. And new testaments. This has been shown. As the proper response.

[25:14] To God's provision. To them. The portion. Given back to God. Has been designated. By him. As a means. By which his ministry.

Has been carried out. Why. Did the Galatians. Beg. To have a part. In giving. To the saints. At Jerusalem. Because God. Had met their need. Because Christ. Had loved them. And given. His life.

For them. We give. As an offering. Of praise. And worship. For what he has done. In providing. Salvation. For us. We give.

As a means. Of facilitating. More people. Who know. Who should know. Christ. To come to Christ. Those whom. Christ love. Loves. Who have not yet.

[26:06] Been brought. As part of our. Motivation. For giving. So as one. Who has known. The grace. Of God. To save you.

Do you. In thankfulness. And worship. Give back. To him. A planned portion. To carry on. The work. Of the ministry. The fifth message. Was. Worship.

Compelled. By the love. Of Christ. For us. And in that fifth message. We saw that the gospel. Calls us. To worship. Worship.

Is a response. To greatness. We worship. We worship. Because of who God is. And what he's done. And what Christ has done.

Should compel us. To give thanks. And praise. What God has done. We listed some of the things. We just pointed to glimpses. Of things. Of who God is. And what he's done.

[27:01] And that should compel us. To worship him. But. The love of Christ. For us. Should compel us. To worship him. We're just like Paul.

We're sinners. And haters of God. And the son of God. Took on flesh. To live for us. And die for us. That we might be forgiven.

We didn't desire. What God. Had done. And yet. He cares for. And blesses us. In this life. We'll be with God.

For all eternity. In heaven. Because of the salvation. God has provided. For us. Just a few. Of the reasons. That God deserves.

Our worship. And so. As one. Who has experienced. The grace of God. Are you not. Compelled. By the love of Christ. To worship God. Corporately.

[28:02] And personally. Who would not want. To praise the person. Who has met. Their deepest needs. The debt.

Of their sin. And the bondage. That they had faced. Do you. View. Worship. As optional. Or of low. Priority. In the sixth message. We address the idea. Of attention. To the word of God. Compelled. By the love of Christ. In the sixth.

Passage. This message. We see. That the gospel. Causes us. To need. And to want. To be under. The ministry. Of the word of God. We need. To be under. The regular preaching.

And teaching. Of the word of God. To be equipped. As saints. For the work of service. We need. To be there. To be matured. In Christ. We need. To be there. To make. Us more. And more. Like Christ.

[28:57] We need. To be there. To be reminded. Of Christ's work. For us. Part of the reason. You come. Each week. Is to be reminded. Of that love.

It's easy. To grow cold. It's easy. To forget. The love of Christ. Compels us. To be under his word. Because it shows us.

All. Of the one. Who has given. Himself. For us. As one who's experienced. The grace of God. Do you see. Your responsibility.

As God. One God has redeemed. To be under the preaching. And teaching. Of the word of God. Does. The love of Christ.

Compel you. To follow Christ. In these ways. We've mentioned. But the love of Christ. Should be the compelling. Reason.

[29:55] For all of our service. Maybe in the past. You've been hurt. Or offended. By a situation. To the church. And you struggle. And you struggle.

To fulfill. To fulfill. Some of the. Things that we've talked about. Encourage you. Talk to one of the elders. It's under control.

We can all cleanse our minds. And go on. Talk to one of the elders. Let them listen. And help you see. How God. Could have you trust him.

In your situation. Maybe you've just forgotten. How much God's grace. Has been demonstrated. To save you.

Peter gets into this. In second Peter. Chapter one. He mentions. That some of them. Had forgotten. That they were washed.

[30:58] That they were cleansed. We're often people. Like that. We're often people. Who forget. That we were washed. And that we were cleansed.

And our love. Grows cold. Do you see the love of Christ. And what he's done for you. Ask the Lord. To remind you. Of what he's done. Read and listen. To the word preached. And the written word. To hear again. Of what Christ has done for you. Be with those. Who've heard. Of what Christ has done for you. Be with those. Who will remind you. Of what Christ has done for you. And maybe you're here today.

And you don't know. The love of Christ. And so you're not trusting. What he's done for you. I want you to understand. This is such a blessed scripture.

I am so thankful. God had Paul put this in scripture. Maybe you don't know. The love of Christ. Maybe you've never seen. How he's loved you. But Romans 5.

[32:00] 6 through 8. States it so clearly. For while we were still weak. At the right time. Christ died for the ungodly.

For one will scarcely die. For a righteous person. Though perhaps for a good person. One would dare. Even to die. But God shows his love for us.

In that while we were still sinners. Christ died for us. If you know Christ. There was a point when you didn't.

And though you may or may not have read this verse. The truths of this verse. Transpired in your life. You saw. That Christ. Loved sinners.

And he loved you even when he was an enemy. You were an enemy of his. But he died for you. May we never get over that.

[33 : 02] But maybe you're here. And you've never understood that. You've wondered. Does anyone love me? Does anyone care for me? Has everyone given up on me?

Nope. Many haven't. But primarily. While we were still weak. At the right time. Christ died for the ungodly.

For scarcely. For one. Will scarcely die for a righteous person. Though perhaps for a good person. One. Would dare even to die. But God shows his love for us.

And that while we were still sinners. Christ died for us. Let's pray together. Thank you Father. For the compelling love of Christ.

And I pray that you would help us. To never get over that. May our hearts. Be constantly. Warmed to the idea.

[33 : 59] To the understanding of what. Christ has done on our behalf. And Lord. May it not just be the warming of our hearts. Though that is so good. But Lord.

May it be that which compels us. To be like Paul. Willing. To show others. Willing. To serve others. Willing. To take the gospel.

To those who don't know it. And I pray that you. Use it. And that you'd be glorified. And that you would build your church. Be with us. In Jesus name. Amen.

Amen.