

Pinned Down and Happy About It!

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Sermon Notes

First in a series of sermons on II Corinthians 5:14-21*

Text: II Corinthians 5:14 – “The love of Christ compels me.”

What is it that controls me? What drives me? Is it money? What is it? Something drives us, motivates us.

Paul, Saul as he was first known, was initially driven by misplaced loyalty to his religious heritage, driven to the point of persecuting followers of Jesus.

When he yielded to Jesus on the Damascus road, his energies were redirected to the proclamation of Jesus and His sacrifice. Christ's love took control with Paul's consent.

The word used in II Corinthians 5:14 for the impact of Christ's love on Paul is variously translated “constrain,” “compel,” “control,” etc. The Greek is *katecho* in case someone is interested.

A missionary to China in commenting on this passage and word, illustrated his message with reference to a river flowing through steep gorges (now virtually a lake behind a dam), the water being held tightly and directed firmly by the mountain sides above the river bed.

Much damage can take place when massive quantities of water are free to move undirected (floods, broken levees), even so, human energies, undirected, are capable of real devastation.

God's love provides strong boundaries within which our lives must be lived and energies expended.

There is another sense to the word, being that of “compulsion.” “The love of Christ ‘compels’ us,” driving us on and not letting us rest (well, not for long, anyway).

The love dwelling in the heart of Jesus drove Him to Calvary for our salvation. Have we permitted Him to fill us with this “driving” love. Will we choose to be both constrained and compelled by the love of Jesus?

*II Corinthians 5:14-21 (NIV)

¹⁴For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵And 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.

¹⁶So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.