

Save from the Burning! The Love of Christ Constraineth Us | Gospel Sermon on 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

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[0:00] Music The love of Christ.

A mother sees her child trapped in a burning house. Flames at the door, smoke chokes the air. Yet love propels her forward.

She rushes into the inferno, her arms outstretched, crying, I will not leave you here. Such is Christ's love to you.

Urgent, sacrificial, saving love. The love of Jesus Christ, our Lord. And 2 Corinthians 5 tells us about the love of Christ.

It tells us, For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

[1:14] The love of Christ constraineth us. This word constraineth, it's a powerful word. It's an awesome word.

It means to be seized, held, compelled, or driven by an irresistible force.

It speaks of grapes being pressed in a wine press. Or a prisoner bound. The love of Christ, it grips us.

It gets a hold of our hearts. Both his love for us and the love that he awakens in us for others. The love of Christ, it constraineth us.

It leaves no room for apathy or half-hearted faith. It constraineth us. Why does it constrain us? Because if one died for all, then were all dead.

[2:16] All humanity was spiritually dead. Lost in sin. In the graveyard of sin. Until Christ died for us. In our place.

He died for all. And those that he has brought to life now, it tells us of new purpose we have. It tells that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again.

Think of the love that compels. The love that compels, that constraineth us. For the love of Christ constraineth us, says Paul. What love is this?

Not a fleeting emotion. It's God's eternal self-sacrificing agape love. It's a love that pursues, that sacrifices, that wins.

The love that compels. But God commended this love toward us. In that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. While we were his enemies.

[3:20] While we were mocking him. While we were cursing his name. And nailing him to the very cross. He loved us unto death. While we were yet sinners. Nothing to commend.

And greater loveth no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. The Lord Jesus, he laid down his life even for his enemies.

While we were yet sinners. While we were enemies. He gave his life even for rebels. Such as we. Such as me. Can we behold Calvary?

The sky darkens. The earth shakes. And the sinless son of God cries out. My God, my God. Why hast thou forsaken me? What agony.

To be estranged from his father. The sinless one. He who knew no sin. It tells that he was made sin for us. He became sin for us.

[4:19] That my sin was there on Calvary's hill. In his very body. As they nailed him there. That my sin was there. He became sin. My sin.

Your sin. For us. Who knew no sin. That we. Might be made the righteousness of God. In him. Bearing God's wrath. So we could receive God's favour.

The love of Christ. Constrains us. The love of Christ. It grabbed a hold of Paul. On that Damascus road. And turned a persecutor. Into a messenger.

Of mercy. The love of Christ. And Paul tells. I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live. Yet not I. But Christ liveth in me.

And the life which I now live in the flesh. I live by the faith of the Son of God. Who loved me. He loved me. And he gave himself for me. And when this love truly touches your heart.

[5:17] You cannot stay the same. The love of Christ. Constrains us. We love him. Because. He first. Loved us.

The love of Christ. It changes everything. Doesn't it? It changes everything. Even how we see people. As souls bound for eternity.

Even the ones that are hard to love. Yes. Yes. Yes. Even them. As souls bound for eternity. Yes. People. The people that we.

Can find hard. To deal with. We see them differently. Don't we? Because of the love of Jesus. The love of Christ. And your aim changes too.

No longer to please yourself. But to please him. That's the aim. And your priorities change. Not your comforts. But eternity. Eternal purposes.

[6:15] It changes everything. The love of Christ. The love of Christ. Can you see his love? See his love. And think of him. As he surveyed the city. His beloved city.

And when he was come near. He beheld the city. And he wept over it. He was moved with compassion. I wonder as he surveyed that city.

Maybe he saw the hill of Calvary there. On the mountains of Jerusalem. Maybe he saw the hill. Maybe there was people already being crucified. In prospect.

He saw his cross. He saw the lost. Some who would scorn him. Who would mock him. Abuse him. Crucify him.

He beheld the city. And he wept over it. His heart broke. Not for himself. But for those who would condemn him. He saw their sin. He saw their unbelief.

[7:13] And the coming judgment. And he wept. Ought in our hearts. Likewise be moved. To break for the lost.

To care for the lost. That our spirit should ache. For those shackled by sin. That the love of Christ. Constrains us. And we think of our saviour.

As he left his father's side. As he left the glories of heaven. The worship of angels. To tread the path to the cross. He knew.

The path. Of the cross. Was ahead of him. To wear the thorns. To pour out his lost blood. The love of Christ.

And think of the urgency of now. This is not theory. This is not theology. Some cold doctrine. This is now.

[8:13] It's you. It's me. It's now. It's this time. Can we sense the urgency of these words? This is about eternity. Eternity.

And Paul cries. Behold now is the accepted time. Behold now is the day of salvation. Can we capture the urgency.

Of these words. With every tick of the clock. Souls slip into a Christless eternity. Without Christ. Without hope. Without God. While we sit in comfort. Multitudes step into. A Christless eternity. And they are one heartbeat away.

From everlasting. Destruction. They enter eternity. Unprepared. Do we care? Does the love of Christ constrain us? We must go. We must speak.

[9:12] We must warn. We must reach them. The love of Christ. He says. I must work the works of him. That sent me. While it is day.

The night cometh when no man. Can work. There's a time constraint. And Matthew 9. 37. He says. Then say the answer to his disciples.

The harvest truly is. Plenteous. But the laborers. Are few. Pray ye. Therefore the Lord. Of the harvest.

That he will send forth. Laborers. Into his harvest. The eternal harvest. Of souls. It's right.

It's right. John 4.35. The fields are white. They're ready. Don't say three months. It's now. It's now. Your neighbor.

[10:06] Your family. The stranger. They hang by the thread. Over eternity. It's now. The harvest. The problem is not the harvest. It's the scarcity.

It's the shortage. Of laborers. The Lord of the harvest. Is recruiting now. Laborers. Into his harvest. The cost of our silence. Is the loss. Of souls. We need to understand. The urgency. Of the hour. And also the danger. That faces the lost.

You could. Calculate. Around about. 260 people. Step into eternity. Every. Minute.

260. Souls. Enter eternity. Every. Minute. That's including. Unborn children. The Broadway. Leads to destruction.

[11:02] It tells us. Many there be. That go in. There at. The Broadway. The highway. To hell. Literally. It is. And it leads. To the second death.

Of. Revelation. The lake of fire. Ultimately. And we. It tells of. This. Reality. Of hell. And our Lord's words.

Are these. In Mark 9. 44. Where their worm. Dieth not. And the fire. Is not quenched. This fire. Is not going to go out. It's going to go.

Forever. And whosoever. Was not found. Written in the book of life. Was. Cast into. The lake of fire. These are solemn words. Serious words.

Hell is real. It's real. And men and women. Are going there. Every. Hour. Every person. Who dies. Without Jesus Christ.

[11:59] Is headed there. This is a solemn. Reality. And Jesus. Our Lord. He spoke more of hell. Than of heaven. Calling it a real place. A place where a rich man.

Was. Begging. In torment. For. Just. One. Drop. Of water. He begged. One.

Drop. I'm. I'm. Tormented. In this flame. And he had. A sense. Of. Peril. For his five. Brethren. Still. On planet earth. That. Someone. Would go. And testify. That someone. Would go. And tell. Lest.

They also. Come. Into this place. Of torment. He pleaded. That his five. Brothers. Be warned. What about us? Do we believe. In hell?

[12:55] Do we believe. There is a hell. That there is a hell. That's real. There's a heaven. That's sure. Then let the love. Of Christ. Constrain us. Let it constrain. Our lives. Our wallets.

Our time. Our tongues. To act. Because hell. Is real. And with tears. And travail. We must reach. Into the flames. Of sin. And snatch.

The perishing. The love. Of Christ. Constrains. As it compels. Us to rescue. Compel. Them. To come. Compel. Them. To come in.

Now. I tried. Really hard. To get people. To come. To come. To the lunch. Today. To compel. Them. To come in. To compel. Them. To come in. It's interesting. That.

Our master. As related. In the parable. Of the great supper. The master. Their commands. Go out. Into the highways. And hedges. And compel. Them.

[13:50] To come in. That my house. May be filled. That my house. May be filled. And they. Went out. And they went out. And they went out.

And he says. Yet there is room. There's still some empty seats here. There's still some empty. Spaces here. There's still some empty. Spaces at the table.

There's some. Opportunity. I know I tried to reach out. To the woman. Just around the corner here. Living in her car. She wasn't there at the time. That I could reach her at the time.

But she's welcome. That's the highways and edges. In the cars. Under the shrubs and bushes. Where they're hiding. The homeless. He says invite them. Compel them.

Compel them. Means to urge them earnestly. To persuade them passionately. Not by force. But by fervent love. And warning.

[14:46] Compel them. There's a serious. Urgency to that. Isn't there? This urging. This passion. We ought to have. And we're told to.

Speak for our Lord. As ambassadors. For our Lord. As though God did beseech you. By us. He says. We pray you. We urge you. He said. In Christ's stead.

Be reconciled. Be reconciled to God. That's the message. That we. Are to impart. And Jude warns. Of. This picture of fire again.

Of. This. Picture of. Rescue. And Jude. Relates. And others say. With fear. Pulling them out of the fire.

Pulling them out of the fire. Hating even the garment. Spotted by the flesh. The imagery is striking. Isn't it? Think of this imagery. These pictures. That. The lost.

[15:41] As it were. In a building. That is burning down. And the flames. Are closing in. And. They've got moments. Only moments. From destruction. And the believer.

Acts like a fireman. Like this fireman. To. Take on the. Work of rescue. And. It's like this. Picture of the believer.

As a fireman. Taking risk. Pushing through. Determined to rescue. Knowing there's a soul. That needs to have.

Rescue. And. The picture here. Is that. The danger is immediate. They're already in the fire. They're in the fire. This is just. They're just moments away.

From. Destruction. The danger is immediate. And the danger is fatal. Without rescue. They're going to perish. They're doomed. They're.

[16:36] Going to die. If we don't. Get constrained. And the rescue is costly. Because pulling someone from flames.

It takes some effort. It takes some courage. It takes some determination. To go into a burning. Building. To pull them. Out of the fire. It's costly.

And why must we compel. Because the lost are deceived. You could think of this one. In the burning building. As this picture shows. And they're like a man.

Sleeping in a burning house. The smoke's there. He wouldn't know. That he's going to die. That's what happens. In. Situations.

Where. The smoke alarm doesn't go off. And. The fire just consumes. And they're goners. Like a man sleeping. In a burning house. He can't sense the danger of it.

[17:30] He's comfortable. He might be having a nice dream. And. Quite. Comfortable. And comfy. And resting. Not knowing.

His peril. And we must shake him awake. We must shake him awake. Hey. Wake up. Get out. Get out. Now sometimes. When we're door knocking.

You feel like. Shaking people. Wake up man. You're on the edge of eternity. You're on the edge of eternity. This is urgent.

This is important. And some would say. Not interested. And those words will haunt them. For eternity.

They have refused the gospel. It's serious stuff. We must pull them out of the fire. This is a holy compulsion. We must rescue the perishing.

[18:26] While there is still time. It's a real picture of. The principle here. And the love of Christ. It constrains us. It's not optional. It's the driving engine.

It compels us. It constrains us. It drives us. And it's every believer's calling. It's not for some evangelist to come. Oh we've got an evangelistic campaign.

On the calendar. Where an evangelist such and such. Is going to come. And he's going to share the gospel. Preaching to the converted. No. You're the evangelist.

It's you. You are his witnesses. It's every believer's calling. Think. Someone had the courage. To share the gospel with you. Now you must do the same.

And knowing therefore. The terror of the Lord. We persuade. Man. But we are made manifest unto God. And I trust also. I'm made manifest. In your consciences.

[19:23] Paul says. The terror of the Lord. We persuade man. The love of Christ. It constrains us. We want to see people saved. Don't we? Don't we church? Don't we want to see the lost.

Come to the saviour? That's why we care about tracks. That's why we care about evangelism.

That's why we care about door knocking. That's why we care about any way. By all means. Save some.

Whatever means. You can save some. Reach out. Let's invest in that. And let's not live any longer for ourselves. Hey.

It would be easy just to coast and be uncaring. Yet. This verse tells us that we. Which live. We the saved. We shall not henceforth live unto ourselves. But unto him. We should live unto Christ. Really the greatest barrier to revival.

[20:17] Is not outright rebellion. It's not some open sin. It's lukewarm apathy. That's what's stopping us. That's what stops me. Let's face it. The man in the mirror.

I could do more. It's apathy. It's in me. Apathy. Ah. She'll be right. Ah. Too busy. One day. One day I'll do it. One day I'll tell. It could be one day too long. It's apathy. It's in all of us. And. Where is the gospel fire? Where is the zeal? Where is the burden? To see souls saved. The tears for the lost. Do we care?

Do we really care? Do we really believe there's a hell? And the damned are going there. Every minute. Of the day. And we do nothing. I do nothing.

[21:15] The burden. We should have the burden. To tell. And let Christ's love constrain us. It's a holy zeal. It's not a duty.

It's not a burden. It's not an irksome burden. It's a light burden. It's an easy burden. And that we have that holy zeal. That we want to tell. Like someone told us.

To pray without ceasing. To give sacrificially. To speak fearlessly. And if you're saved. You're no longer your own. Hey. It's not your time. It's his time. It's his time.

Your life is his life. You don't live for yourself any longer. You live unto him. You live for him.

Because you are not your own. You're bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body. And in your spirit. Which are God's. The Christian life is not self-centred. It's Christ-centred. Hey. You're saved. And you know it. And you really ought to show it.

[22:10] You really ought to tell it. And we've been sent out. To take this message. To our world. It's the great commission. It's our mandate. He says. Go ye therefore.

Ye. That's. Including me and you. It's us. Go ye therefore. I'm with you always. He says. It's our mission. But what's stopping us? What's quenching the zeal?

Could be all kinds of things. That quench the zeal. Well. Things are getting in the way. That distract. Lots of things can hinder. The care of this world. The deceit of riches.

The fear of man. There's so many reasons. Isn't there? So many excuses. So many reasons why. Oh. Yeah. It's not a priority.

But it ought to be. The lost of souls. For whom Christ died. Do we care? Do we weep? Do we reach out? I urge you this morning. Take action. The work of rescue.

[23:08] It's your call. Your call to this. The love of Christ. Constrains us. It's not a passive sentiment. It's a holy fire. It's constraining.

It's compelling. It's a divine compulsion. That seizes our heart. Propels us out. Into the harvest. Every believer. It's called to this action.

To take action. There's friends. There's people in your circle of influence. You know who they are. Say something. Do something. We're called to love.

To rescue. Time is short. Eternal souls are at stake. And the love of Christ constrains us. No longer to live for ourselves. But to live unto him. Rise up church.

And take the challenge here. Time is fleeting. And the world is perishing. Let Christ's love. Drive you. Move you. Constrain you. There's a famous preacher said these words.

[24:04] If sinners be damned. At least let them leap to hell. Over our dead bodies. With our arms wrapped about their knees. Imploring them to stay. In other words. Imploring them to stop.

To turn. To stop this pathway. To hell. To reach them. While we can. With the message. And the love of Christ. It constrains us. To speak.

To go. To warn. To rescue. To compel. To fight for souls. On the brink of hell. So I hear the call this morning. And if you're without Christ.

Then you are one of the ones I've been talking about. You're on the damned road to hell. To damnation. And it's a terrible place. It's a real place. But thank God.

There's a way unto life. There's a way that leads unto life. And Jesus says. I am the way. The truth and the life. I am the way. Trust in him.

[25:01] Believe on him. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord. Shall be saved. There's a promise that we can be saved. If you're without Christ this morning. I urge you to flee to the Saviour.

Who loved you so. Who took the very penalty of your sin. And paid for it in full. He gave himself for you. And the door of mercy is flung wide open. If you would but believe.

And the call goes to believers today. If you're complacent. If you've tasted the love of Christ. But you've been living for yourself. The love of Christ.

Let it constrain you. Let it constrain you. Let it ever constrain you. To arise from slumber. And to shake off. That indifference. To give yourself.

Wholeheartedly. Unreservedly. For the work of the kingdom of God. Will you answer the call. Who will go for him. He says.

[25:58] Who will go for me. And Isaiah says. Send me Lord. Send me. Here am I. Who will weep for the lost. Do we care. Does the love of Christ constrain us.

That we share his heart. Who will compel them. To come in. Let us pray. Lord constrain us. Give us a burden.

For the perishing. May we be his watchmen. That will give warning. May we Lord be moved. We pray if there's any yet to trust you here. Lord that they would. Realise their peril.

And. Be stirred to call upon you. To trust you. To receive your gift. To believe. That you died for their sin. And to. Receive that pardon.

By faith. To receive that forgiveness of their sin. Knowing that you paid for it. And Lord that. There's no merit of our own. That can save.

[26:57] Only your merit. Lord we pray that you would. Help us to have. A heart. That will. Want to pull people out of the fire. Or want to be moved. Or want to be constrained.

Lord. That constraining. Lord we know. It's in a way. A stirring up. That constraining. Where you grip us.

Where you hold us. Where you. Grab us. Where you get our attention. And that compulsion. That you. So reach us.

Gives us a burden. That we would also reach others too. To compel them. To come in. That your house would be filled. Lord we know there's still.

Room at the cross. There's still room at the cross. For you. These words tell us Lord. There's still room. Yet there is room. There's a banquet.

[27:56] There's a feast. There's a. Preparation. Of a feasting. And yet. Some. Will. Will refuse. The invitation.

Help us Lord. To. Invite others. To. Be so constrained. That Lord. You would use us. Give us the burden.

Give us the sense of urgency. Most of all. Put our feet into action. Lord help us. You know.

Sometimes it's hard to. Even open our mouth. To. Someone we know.

Lord. Help us. To muster the courage. We don't live for ourselves anymore. We live unto you. And you are our life. Lord give us that grace.

We pray. In Jesus name. Amen. And just a last verse here. May the God of peace. Make you perfect. In every good work. To do his will.

[28:54] Working in you. That which is well pleasing. In his sight. Through Jesus Christ. To whom be glory. Forever and ever. Amen. Amen. Praise God.