

What Compels You?

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Key Text: 2 Corinthians 5:14–21 (NASB 1995)

Supporting Texts: John 15:13; John 3:16; Hebrews 2:9; Romans 6:23; Luke 19:10; Ephesians 2:1; Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 26:24–29; Matthew 9:36–38

Introduction

- There's no place like your home congregation. Familiar faces, familiar worship, familiar responsibility.
 - The question that exposes the heart:
 - **What compels you?**
 - What controls you?
 - What restrains you?
 - What moves you to be the kind of person you are?
 - If laws disappeared tomorrow, what would remain inside you?
 - Would you still do right when no one can punish you?
 - For the Christian, the answer isn't merely "good upbringing" or "good habits."
 - **"For the love of Christ controls us..."** (2 Corinthians 5:14)
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Sermon Outline

I. The Love of Christ Must Control the Christian

A. The controlling force is not just external law—it's the love of Christ

- **2 Corinthians 5:14** — "For the love of Christ controls us..."
 - Controls: restrains, compels, governs, presses forward.
- Many avoid sin because of consequences.
- But the stronger anchor is this: **Christ's love trains the heart to obey God even when nobody is watching.**

B. A sober truth: not everyone who knows the Bible is compelled by Christ's love

- Some understand Scripture and still refuse to obey it.
- They keep God in second, third, or fourth place.
- The problem is not lack of information—it's lack of surrender.

Application:

- Ask plainly: *What really controls my choices—Christ or my appetites?*
- If Christ's love doesn't move you, you will always find a reason to put yourself first.

Warning:

- Knowledge without obedience hardens the heart.
 - "Talk" is cheap if life is unchanged.
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II. Christ's Love Is Proven by Sacrifice—And It Demands a Response

A. Jesus showed the highest love by laying down His life

- **John 15:13** — "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."
- Jesus calls His disciples friends—and proved it at the cross.
- He didn't wait for us to deserve it.
- He didn't measure our worthiness.
- He loved first, and loved fully.

B. God's love is not vague—it has an "extent"

- **John 3:16** — "For God so loved the world..."
 - That word "so" points to the measure of His love:
 - He gave His only begotten Son.

C. The cross was for everyone—because sin's payment is death

- **Hebrews 2:9** — Jesus tasted death “for everyone.”
- **Romans 6:23** — “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- We earned death.
- God offers life.
- Christ’s love compelled Him to give Himself—so His love should compel us to live for Him.

Encouragement:

- The gospel is not God offering you a self-improvement plan.
- It is God offering you life through His Son.

Rebuke (where needed):

- Don’t sing “I live for Jesus” and then live for self the rest of the week.
- Don’t confuse worship noise with obedience.

III. Christ’s Love Exposes “Show Christianity” and Demands Real Daily Living

A. It’s easy to make Christianity a performance

- Singing can be loud.
- Amen can be strong.
- Clothes can be sharp.
- But if life doesn’t follow—**it’s show.**

B. Illustration: “Show” without substance (4-H horse showing)

- A person can present something well in public and still be empty behind the scenes.
- Christianity can become:
 - Sunday display
 - Sunday vocabulary

- Sunday emotions
- But no Monday obedience

Application:

- Measure your faith by what happens when nobody is impressed.
- Measure your love by what you obey when it costs you.

Warning:

- A polished “religious image” cannot substitute for repentance and holiness.
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IV. Christ’s Love Changes How We See People, Ourselves, and Our Mission

A. Christ’s love compels us to see the lost differently

- **Luke 19:10** — “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
- Jesus didn’t come to applaud the self-satisfied.
- He came to rescue the lost.
- **Ephesians 2:1** — outside of Christ, people are spiritually dead.
 - That changes how we view neighbors, co-workers, family:
 - Not as annoyances.
 - Not as projects.
 - As souls.

B. Christ’s love compels us to see ourselves differently: we are ambassadors

- **2 Corinthians 5:20** — “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ...”
- **Matthew 28:19–20** — the mission is to make disciples:
 - go
 - teach
 - baptize

- teach them to observe all Christ commanded

Application:

- Stop saying, “I wish I knew what to say.”
- You know enough to invite, to speak, to warn, to plead, to open a Bible and show the gospel.

C. Paul’s example: he begged people to obey

- **Acts 26:24–29**
 - Festus called Paul insane.
 - Paul answered with sobriety and urgency:
 - “I would wish... that all who hear me today might become such as I am...”
- The gospel makes you urgent, not passive.

Encouragement:

- One conversation can alter an eternal destination.
 - Don’t underestimate obedience in small moments.
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V. If Christ’s Love Does Not Compel Us, People Will Remain Lost

A. Jesus felt compassion because the crowds were helpless

- **Matthew 9:36–38**
 - They were “distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.”
 - The harvest is plentiful, workers are few.
 - Pray for workers—and then become one.

B. A hard reality: indifference leaves people damned

- When Christ’s love fails to control us:
 - the lost stay lost

- families stay broken
- souls stay unrescued
- the church becomes a club instead of a mission

Warning:

- This life is the closest some will ever come to heaven.
 - This life is the closest some will ever come to hell.
 - Your silence can be part of someone's destruction.
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Conclusion / Call to Action

- We can talk about it.
- We can sing about it.
- We can build programs and put on appearances.
- But until the love of Christ truly controls us, it's all noise.

Call:

- Examine your spiritual condition today.
 - If you have unrepented, unconfessed sin, don't pretend it's harmless.
 - Turn now. Make it right.
 - Let the love of Christ compel you to obey, to live faithfully, and to rescue the lost while there is time.
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Slide Deck (10–15 Slides)

Slide 1 — What Compels You?

Main Content:

- What controls you?

- What restrains you?
- What moves you to do right?

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:14

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light / warm
- Emphasis: serious / searching
- Mood: reverent / direct

Slide 2 — The Core Answer

Main Content:

- “For the love of Christ controls us...”
- Real faith is driven from the heart

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:14

Design Intent:

- Background tone: neutral / light
- Emphasis: instructive
- Mood: steady / sober

Slide 3 — Knowledge Without Obedience

Main Content:

- Some know Scripture...
- ...and still put God last
- The issue isn't information—it's surrender

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:14 (theme)

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: warning
- Mood: challenging

Slide 4 — The Greatest Love

Main Content:

- Love is proven by sacrifice
- Jesus laid down His life for His friends

Scripture (if applicable):

- John 15:13

Design Intent:

- Background tone: warm / light
- Emphasis: hopeful
- Mood: reverent / grateful

Slide 5 — “So Loved” Means “This Much”

Main Content:

- God’s love has an extent
- He gave His only Son

Scripture (if applicable):

- John 3:16

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: awe / gratitude
- Mood: worshipful

Slide 6 — Sin Pays Death, God Gives Life

Main Content:

- Wages of sin: death
- Gift of God: eternal life
- Christ exchanged His life for ours

Scripture (if applicable):

- Romans 6:23

- Hebrews 2:9

Design Intent:

- Background tone: neutral / light
- Emphasis: clarity / urgency
- Mood: serious / hopeful

Slide 7 — Show Christianity Isn't Christianity

Main Content:

- Loud singing ≠ obedient living
- A religious performance can fool people
- It cannot fool God

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:14 (theme)

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: rebuke
- Mood: firm / corrective

Slide 8 — Live It Every Day

Main Content:

- Not Sunday-only faith
- Daily obedience
- Daily holiness

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:15 (live for Him)

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light / warm
- Emphasis: practical
- Mood: motivating (not hype), steady

Slide 9 — See People Like Jesus Sees Them

Main Content:

- Jesus came to seek and save the lost
- The lost are not interruptions—they are the mission

Scripture (if applicable):

- Luke 19:10

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: compassion
- Mood: tender / urgent

Slide 10 — Outside of Christ: Spiritually Dead

Main Content:

- Lostness is real
- Death is real
- The gospel is rescue

Scripture (if applicable):

- Ephesians 2:1

Design Intent:

- Background tone: neutral / light
- Emphasis: warning
- Mood: sober / urgent

Slide 11 — You Are an Ambassador

Main Content:

- You represent Christ
- You carry His message
- You speak for the King

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:20

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: responsibility
- Mood: serious / commissioning

Slide 12 — The Mission: Make Disciples

Main Content:

- Go
- Teach
- Baptize
- Teach them to observe

Scripture (if applicable):

- Matthew 28:19–20

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light / clean
- Emphasis: action
- Mood: purposeful

Slide 13 — Paul's Urgency

Main Content:

- The gospel is not entertainment
- Paul pleaded for obedience

Scripture (if applicable):

- Acts 26:24–29

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: urgency
- Mood: firm / persuasive

Slide 14 — If Love Doesn't Compel Us...

Main Content:

- People remain lost
- Sheep remain without a shepherd
- The harvest rots in the field

Scripture (if applicable):

- Matthew 9:36–38

Design Intent:

- Background tone: light
- Emphasis: warning
- Mood: heavy / urgent

Slide 15 — Today: Let Christ's Love Control You

Main Content:

- Repent where you've been drifting
- Stop living on "talk"
- Obey Christ—fully

Scripture (if applicable):

- 2 Corinthians 5:14–15

Design Intent:

- Background tone: warm / light
- Emphasis: call to action
- Mood: urgent / hopeful