

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a



GROWTH GUIDE the **difference maker**

Handout: 02/10/19
Study: 02/17/19

My Love Can Make A Difference

It's amazing how certain things will motivate certain people to incredible exploits. I'm convinced that motivation is important for the church of Jesus Christ. We spend a lot of time talking about methods and materials, money and manpower. Without motivation you don't have much at all.

There's something peculiar about the motivation of early Christians like the apostle Paul. We have many passages of Scripture that explain to us his powerful motivation. In 2 Corinthians 5:14, he says, "For Christ's love compels us." His understanding of the love of Christ became a dramatic, powerful motivation. Few of us will have his gifts, none of us have his opportunities, but all of us have the same message he received and may have the same powerful motivation. It would be perfectly proper for each of us to say with all sincerity, "The love of Christ compels me."

The word "compel" means, literally, "to hem in; to hold on both sides; to take away the options; to give no way out; to back into a corner." We are hemmed in by the love of Christ. Sometimes we think the love of Christ leaves us certain options. Paul would have none of that. He said the love of Christ takes away our options, backs us into a corner, holds us firmly on both sides, and gives us no way out. When we become motivated like that, we become a great power for God's glory and for the world's blessing.

The love of Christ compelled Paul because he understood that while we were still sinners, God demonstrated his love toward us in Christ's death. The love of God in Christ was unique. In exactly the same way that the power of God transcends any human power, and the wisdom of God transcends any human wisdom, so the love of God transcends any human love. This incredibly gracious love does not demand that we stop being sinners. It does not say, "I will love you if _____." God's love is not just a warm, fuzzy feeling. It took Christ to a cross! Paul tells us in Romans 5 that Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, to make us righteous. He says in this same passage that God no longer counts people's sins against them.

God demonstrated his incredible love toward us when he took the initiative and determined to do something about the sin problem. He invited Christ to take our sins on himself and die our deaths. God would no longer count our sins against us. He would reckon the sin to Christ and reckon to us the righteousness of Christ. That's love.

Paul never recovered from the discovery that all the unrighteousness of Saul of Tarsus had been credited to Christ and taken to the cross. All the glorious righteousness of Christ had been credited to Saul of Tarsus. It hemmed him in; he couldn't escape. It took away his options, and he was backed into a corner, held firmly, unmistakably, unshakably, by the love of Christ. "The love of Christ," he said, "compels me."

Excerpts from: "A Love That Compels" by Stuart Briscoe

KEY VERSE

II Corinthians 5:14

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; NKJV

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: II Corinthians 5:14-21

Introduction

1. List some things that motivate you in life.
2. From today's passage, describe in your own words what motivated Paul?

Tuesday: II Corinthians 5:14-16; I John 4:9-12; Psalm 86:5

The Love Of Christ Motivates You

3. What impact does Jesus and what He did for you have on the way you live your life?
4. In what ways does the love of Christ affect the way you view people? How does love motivate you to share His good news?

Wednesday: II Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1-14

The Love Of Christ Transforms You

5. In what ways has God made you a new creation?
6. If God has transformed you, you can be sure that he wants to do the same for others. How can being a new creation impact your desire to share the Gospel?

Thursday: II Corinthians 5:18-19; Romans 5:10-11

The Love Of Christ Calls You To A Ministry Of Reconciliation

7. Describe in your own words, what it means for you to be given the ministry of reconciliation.
8. The hard work of reconciliation has already been done by God. What are some specific and daily ways we can invite people to be reconciled to God?

Friday: I Corinthians 5:20-21; I Thessalonians 2:4; Acts 1:8

The Love of Christ Calls You To Be His Ambassador

9. What does it mean to be an ambassador for Christ?
10. Each of us has relationships with people who have not yet received the reconciliation God offers through Jesus. Who are one or two of these people, and how has God connected your life with theirs?
11. How can your group members pray for you and encourage you as you seek to be God's ambassador right where he has placed you?
12. Who can you share God's message of reconciliation to this week?