

2 Corinthians

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- [0 : 0 0] Depending on the help of the Lord, friends, I would refer you to the second epistle to the Corinthians, the fifth chapter, and the first clause of the fourteenth verse.
- The second epistle to the Corinthians, the fifth chapter, and the first clause of the fourteenth verse.
- For the love of Christ constrains us. You will perceive, dear friends, that in this chapter we have nothing really set forth in regard to holy baptism, but is such a gracious influence should provide.
- And we believe that the Lord by his spirit has constrained our esteemed sister here to follow him, believing that she has been constrained by the love of Christ to walk in the footsteps of her Lord and Master.
- I feel that that will be applicable to this service. Now just a few observations, as one may be helped, in regard to the love of Christ.
- [2 : 0 8] It is a profound subject, my friends, that we shall never be able to get to the end of it in this life.
- I believe that the extensiveness of it will be entered into, wherewith the spirits of just men made perfect, at the consummation of their earthly pilgrimage.
- They then will bask and will be swallowed up in the love of Christ. Now we must just meditate a little concerning his holy and sacred person.
- First he laid his glory by and was wrapped in human play. What condescension was there manifested by this supreme act of his?
- And the influence that provided in it all was his unspeakable love.
- [3 : 3 4] We would not disconnect the love of the Father and also of the Holy Ghost because they are in complete unison, one with the other, in one blessed, sacred person.
- But as we are dealing at this time with the sacred person of Christ, we trust that he might have the preeminence.
- In this service this evening, we desire that Christ might be first and Christ be last and Christ be all and in all.
- He is worthy to be spoken of. Then we have manifested in the word of God his condescending to walk in Jordan where he was baptized, where he did lay down for his people that way that they should follow as they are led and instructed by God the Holy Ghost.
- the wonderful sacred institution his holy baptism and what a favour and what a privilege it is to be allowed and to be permitted to walk where Jesus walks.
- [5 : 3 3] the persons that are the subjects of walking in the footsteps of their Lord and Master they feel absolutely unworthy of such a privilege but they are constrained by the love of Christ.
- I want to speak a little further in connection with this at a later date in the sermon. Next we have an unparalleled manifestation of the love of Christ displayed in his holy and sacred passion.

To have a view of the love of Christ to be led in some little measure by God the Holy Ghost to the garden of Gethsemane there to behold him in his ignominious sufferings the commencement of them where he sweat as it were great drops of blood where we perceive our precious Lord grovelling upon the earth with the conflict that he had that conflict constituting the sins of those who were given to him by his father and those whom he received as his own.

Oh I feel my friends that here is an abundant proof of his love his redeeming love and then to follow him in some humble measure to behold him upon the accursed tree the love of Christ his own love constrained him to pay the heavy debt that was due unto his people when one is favored to have a little sense realization of this in their own hearts a little hope that they have an interest in the atonement of Christ and his glorious righteousness that is to have a sense of it imputed and imparted and even to have a touch of his mercy reaching one's soul then one feels and experiences a little of the love of

Christ Christ then has the preeminent and as you sung in your opening hymn Christ is precious made very precious and in the first place he is precious in the want of him I would as helped by the spirit of God encourage any poor sinner as they are not only made sensible of their lost and ruined state and condition but to whom Christ is revealed as the way the truth and the life in desiring after him a saving knowledge of him Jesus becomes precious to that soul in the want of him and this will produce breathing desires in the heart after him

[10 : 11] I know that there are many vicissitudes in connection with a real vital exercise of soul much conflict and much darkness that may attend it for a period but how true is that assertion that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did speak while here upon earth ask and it shall be given thee seek and ye shall find knock and it shall be opened unto you and so therefore the Spirit of God is pleased to take the word sometimes either written word or the preached word and makes it applicable unto their case making Christ precious but my friends the time comes when he is precious in the enjoyment of him and this is what

I would desire that the Lord may bless many here present with is to have a saving interest in him a vital union to him now this service is since for the sufferings the death the resurrection of Christ we cannot disconnect his vicarious sufferings and death without his resurrection and ascension son now in the next place I feel that this was the influence that pervaded in the heart of the apostle which enabled him to preach the unsearchable riches of

Christ there was no other motive intent purpose of his heart but love to Christ the love of Christ he felt which extended itself to precious souls and whenever one is constrained by the love of Christ whether it is in a ministerial way and manner whether it is in following the Lord Jesus in his despised ordinances it is acceptable in his sight the Lord is pleased to own that which he is the author of now a few meditations concerning the effect that is produced in one's heart when one obtains which is a divine gift a touch of his love it surpasses the love of the creature it is a love my friends that has no beginning and has no end it is an unchangeable love we cannot begin to fathom or do we understand with our four finite minds where the love of

Christ really began that is to say to state a time a definite time when it began but we know it began by the effects that has been produced by that love being made manifest and not only in a doctrinal way and manner but we trust in some humble measure by gracious experience can you remember my friends when you hoped the first touch of mercy reached your heart how it softened you and humbled you in the dust of self abasement now to have a touch of the love of

Christ is more than all the honors and confirmments that creatures can bestow upon us because every person now this is an authentic statement every person who is the subject of the love of Christ is a heaven born person you cannot make me believe my friends that the Lord is pleased to bestow this divine and heavenly gift only upon those that belong to him and I refer now for the moment unto what the hymn writer expresses this if once the mark of that celestial seal be felt it can never be erased now I know that this is not quite correct in the rendering of it but the substance is the same it is an unchangeable love who once he has loved he will never leave but love them to the end now in the love of Christ felt and realized there is a quiet hood that is felt and realized in the heart and upon the spirit signifying a little of gospel peace you cannot have the love of

[17:19] Christ without a touch of this because there can be no disconnection with it another point is how it does sweetly humble the soul and also there is faith that is exercised for a few moments sometimes in this particular way and that is in connection with the love of Christ first we love him because he first loved us love is one of the divine attributes of Christ and not only an attribute my friends but his very essence essence of his character of his disposition is love for the love of

Christ constrain us now in relation to the love of love of Christ I feel that there is a passiveness a submission that is wrought in a poor sinner's heart to that which the spirit of God has been working and operating in the breast concerning this sacred ordinance I realise that there is a variation undoubtedly of how the Lord is pleased to commence this exercise and the leadings of the spirit of God are varied indeed so but I do feel that that scripture is brought to bear at times with weight and power upon one's heart if ye love me keep my commandments now the commandments are very extensive but there is one outstanding commandment that the spirit of

God lays in a person's heart they begin to be graciously exercised and concerned about it and there is much waiting upon the Lord in secret prayer in relation to this exercise that they may be led and guided and directed right in this matter there is a perception given that it is not only a sacred spot to come to to follow the Lord but it is a very solemn and weighty step and hence the persons that are the subject of this exercise are found in secret before the Lord connection with it asking besieging and requesting that a token for good might be given

I believe a person that is rightly exercised concerning this divine ordinance does not desire to presume in the matter but they desire to be led by the Lord now there's a beauty there's an excellency that is perceived in this divine ordinance now I asked a question with some of you dear friends here present who perhaps have joined the church militants many years ago can you trace that you were constrained by and through the love of Christ to take up your cross follow him now I wish to explain this that this divine ordinance is not a cross no we have this word respecting this and other things and other spiritual nature and character by people shall be made willing in the day of his power love for the love of Christ makes willing constraints compels there is a sweet compulsion in this love love

I realize that probably with some of the family of God they may deter for a season and that season may extend over a period of years wherein they are afraid to move and sometimes like all exercises it ebbs and flows it comes and goes that is to say there are times in particular when the person who is the subject of this is heavily burdened and pressed with it and another time it subsides until the Lord's time comes and that makes all the difference when his time comes then this exercise returns and it remains until something is vitally accomplished and this accomplishment is in accordance with the heavenly mind and will and decrees of God even the place has been appointed by the

[24 : 46] Lord and how mysterious to us is divine providence and yet we would desire to appreciate this point of the sovereignty of the Lord made manifest displayed in his divine providence God's how he is pleased to lead a certain person or persons to a certain place where there is a certain water and these persons begin to be attached unto the church the people of God in that particular spot and place and you may feel likened to this my soul shall pray for Zion still as long as breath remains they are my best friends my kindred dwell their God my saviour reigns now with that latter line that

I have quoted you may have to say that quickly and I will explain to you what I mean perhaps you may be between hope and fear but when the love of Christ is shed abroad in your hearts then living faith which has holy affections in it appropriates that Christ has a favour to you now I feel that there is a beauty that is perceived in perceiving the ordinance being distributed I do not know your order here my friends I have nothing to do with that but in many causes of truth there is an observance of the ordinance by the congregation now there is gracious profit

I feel to the congregation sometimes when they look upon the communicants at the communion and I believe that it does produce this in their hearts wilt thou on me as on thy children look and make my lot with theirs the same and also you see or you perceive these people in Christ there are moments when all their human frailties are covered over by love now cannot some of you acquiesce that this is so with you perhaps some of you that are at present observant of the communion now the time will come when you will not be driven but you will be drawn drawn now

I just wish to clarify this remark it may be that some of you are holding back that is to say there's a stone that is over sepulchre now what is that stone many things may constitute your stone I believe that with males who are vitally exercised about this ordinance it is what comes afterwards with them that sometimes is as a stone their commitments in regard to their membership in public prayer and also who knows what this may lead to in regard to an office in the church now with some that is their stone but the

Lord in his tender mercy is pleased to remove that stone I am not able to speak of everything that may be an impediment to you now I do feel this not speaking in a detrimental way to the male god forbid there but have we not instances in the word of God regarding the godly women that waited around the tomb to see Christ rise we know that when they came to that spot and place Christ was risen and they were talking between themselves as they went early to the sepulchre who shall roll us away the stone and so the females have a stone but may

[31 : 32] I by the help of God declare unto you this whether you are a male or a female who are vitally exercised about these solemn things the Lord grant you strength and grace to venture and you will find the stone removed and well indeed venturing faith is the strongest faith now you may be the subject of some heavy exercises before you take the step and may I name one or two one may be this shall I endure unto the end shall I prove to be like and even to Peter who denied his

Lord and Master I know that that was one thing that exercised my heart my friend prior to my baptism and it produced this within my breast O Lord preserve and keep me in thy holy fear and if thou wilt be pleased to grant me that grace and strength to venture I venture my all upon thee another stone which I feel one could speak of and that is they are very fearful as many of those deep exercised souls are very fearful and those fears relate to many things you are fearful in taking this step maybe you are the subject of many fears after you have spoken to the deacons or the pastor or whoever is the head of the church and that fear if it's analysed would prove to be the fear of men now

I know a little of what I'm speaking of here my friends because I walked in this after I'd spoken to our late dear pastor in connection with this command I felt that I could not take the step I was so fearful I looked upon the church the members of the church as holy people I hope I saw them in Christ and I felt to be so unfit so unworthy of such a favour and there seemed to be in my spirit a little drawing back and I remember that I was on the point as it were of going to him and stating to him

I'm sorry but I cannot proceed with this when I hope the Lord spoke and what did he say who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that should die and the son of man that should be made as grass now that alleviated my fears now I know and I would sympathize with any soul that is the subject of fears but the love of Christ it casteth out all fear for the love of Christ constrains us and strains us to move in the path of obedience now there's a beauty in this constraint an excellency in it which is commendable and which has divine approbation of time now the approbation of the

Lord is felt and realized where the love of Christ constrains one to follow him and they're not only made willing to follow him through good reports but through evil reports because the cross will be laid upon one to carry you will learn of Christ by this method that the Lord may lead you in afterwards learn of him who is meek and lowly in hearts he said you shall find rest for your souls now the love of

[38 : 08] Christ produces a measure of gracious contentedness contented with him money with your heart with your station in life Oh I feel that we would love to be favoured to realise again and again the shedding abroad of the love of Christ One says, oh that it now was shed abroad in this poor stony heart, so often we we feel and answer to that description, we have a stony heart

Oh that that love can be shed abroad We want to feel it feel its sacred influence providing Now with the love of Christ there is permissible happiness joy in the Holy Ghost and with the love of Christ felt and realised produces worship little of that inner court worship where you are favoured for a few moments while that pervades or longer to be shut in with the Lord you lose sight of every material thing including yourself the love of Christ the love of Christ produces praise and thanksgiving when you feel a touch of it when you realise when you realise what you have deserved and that is to be banished from his presence and then his love is made manifest well if it doesn't move the soul and the spirit and the spirit and the feet my friends friends I do not know what works but he does the love of Christ constraining us well we believe that with the apostles and all the apostles there were times in particular as we have stated they were constrained by the love of Christ and suffering for Christ's sake did not deter them from going on in that work it was commissioned to them and my friends to every humble believer in Christ who follows him they realise according to sacred rites and they will be brought into it in some humble measure that as they are a partaker of the consolations of the gospel they also will be a partaker of the afflictions thereof and these afflictions and tribulations being sanctified will stabilise these souls in the truth and also the love of Christ felt in the heart and while one is upon earth it does give us sweet hope beyond the grave it does the hope of a Christian is not this side of the grave only my friends it extends itself to the other side now I do hope and trust that our dear esteemed sister who is about to be baptised may really feel the effects of the love of Christ in her soul to feel a measure of that gospel peace

and quiet and as we attend now to the sacred ordinance may I myself with my dear sister here realise that we are being constrained for the love of Christ and then that will be approved by the Lord Amen nor have you are we not understand so the point in See you