

The Lord's Day Evening

**December 9, 1945**

**“The Constraining Love of Christ”  
Scripture Lesson – 2 Corinthians 5:14-21  
Text – 2 Corinthians 5:14**

The Reverend Dr. Girard Lowe

Introduction

1. Here is a great passage of Scripture. Let me see if I can make it live for you.
2. The key is “The Love of Christ Constraineth Us”
  - a. What it does for us
  - b. What it makes us do

I. What the love of Christ does for us

1. He died for all
  - a. Then surely all were dead
  - b. All are dead in trespasses and sins
  - c. Here is doctrine of original sin
    1. Some declare they do not believe it

Carl Fox in my office about time I first came here and said he did not believe it. I asked him why and he said he believed he could teach his children to share their toys with one another. He thought he could teach them to be unselfish. He could teach them not to quarrel and fuss. I said, but your reason for not believing in original sin is a commitment of your belief in it. He asked how I made that and I said, “Well, you have declared that your children are selfish and quarrelsome and that you have to teach them goodness and unselfishness. This means that their tendency is to be bad. If left alone, they would grow up into the sort of folk you do not want them to be.”

- d. The Scriptures tell us that this tendency which is inherent in man if let alone, will produce sin and that when sin is finished it brings forth death.
- e. Since then this is in all men – all were potentially dead.
2. The only hope is that men should be reconciled to God.
  - a. Sin produced an enmity to God
    1. When men cannot have their own way, they come to hate those who prevent it. Cain came to hate Abel because he was accepted to God and he refused to offer the sacrifice God commanded (Genesis 4:7). So he went out from the presence of God.
  - b. God sent Christ to reconcile us to Himself
    1. Notice not to reconcile God to us
    2. He wanted us to be in fellowship with Him all the while
  - c. Here was a great expression of His love

1. He sent Christ to die for us
2. Here is a great manifestation of love
3. Mother who put her pictures in saloons – from “The Genesis of Genesis”

“In a western city a girl had left home and gone astray. Letters ceased. The mother suspected the worst, and travelled in search of her lost child; but without success. Eventually, she sought the help of the superintendent of a mission which worked amongst the vicious and degraded in the lower parts of the city. ‘Can you help me to find my poor lost girl?’ was her inquiry. ‘Well, perhaps I can, if you will do what I ask,’ he replied. ‘Oh, I will do anything to get back my daughter,’ was the mother’s response. ‘Then,’ said the missionary, ‘will you please bring me fifty copies of your photograph?’ When she brought them, he said, ‘Now just sit down and write underneath the picture in your ordinary handwriting, ‘Come home.’” The mother sat down and did what he requested. ‘No,’ said the missionary, ‘with your permission I am going to distribute these photographs in certain saloons and resorts of ill repute in this neighborhood.’ It was a hard thing to ask of a good mother, but she consented. The missionary distributed the photographs, and having done so, said to the mother, ‘Now you must just go back home and wait.’ A few nights afterwards a mixed company of young men and women entered a saloon where one of the photos was hanging on the wall. In the company was the erring daughter. The picture immediately arrested her attention. It looked familiar. She went closer to examine it, only to see the face of her mother, and the familiar handwriting in the words, ‘Come home.’ She knew what it meant. It broke her down. She fled from the saloon, weeping. She took the first train back, and in a few hours was lovingly embraced in her mother’s arms.”

4. God hung His Son on the cross to let us know that He was saying, “Come home.” This is all some see in the cross, but there must be more.
3. But more was needed
    - a. Our sins had to be dealt with
    - b. Girl who did not want to face her father in the light. From, “The Strong Man.”

“There is a story of a girl who in a mood of restlessness flung away from home, and was swallowed up in a great city’s shadows. Her mother went after her, and found her lonely and miserable and destitute, and brought her back. It was dark when the door of the old home was reached; and there the girl stopped. ‘Mother,’ she said, ‘I cannot go in. I cannot face father.’ ‘But your father is longing to see you,’ said her mother. ‘He has been waiting for this day, hungering to have you home.’ But still she stood there hesitating, afraid to meet her father’s gaze. ‘Mother,’ she said at last, ‘will you go in and turn down the lights?’ And so in the darkness the reconciliation was effected. But there is no need of lowered lights and the cover of the dark when a soul from its wanderings turns home to God. We

have all so much to make us abashed and contrite and shamefaced and afraid; but God has no grudge against us. He has brought us to His banqueting house, and His banner over us is love. Here all is friendliness and sunshine and grace and welcome. Let us rejoice in the light of the Lord! ‘They saw God, and did eat and drink.’”

- c. God sent Christ to die for our sins.
- 4. But He rose again
  - a. Now He is alive

## II. Verse 15 – Should live unto Him

- 1. We are now new creatures
  - a. Old things are passed away
- 2. How we as new creatures should live
  - a. Verse 15 – not unto self, but unto Christ
  - b. Paul as an example
- 3. Counted all things but loss for Christ
  - a. What he lost
    - 1. He was chief among younger Jews of his time. He had a great political future ahead of him.
    - 2. He lost family ties. Never mention of family until after her returns to Jerusalem for last time.
    - 3. He became an outcast from among his own people.
  - b. Mother loved people and enjoyed being with them and having friends as much as anyone I have ever known. She moved to Dallas and starting with a few people she had known before soon she had a host of friends and was invited to party after party. About that time, the ladies began playing cards for money. When mother was invited to parties where they played for money she refused. Soon she was refusing nearly all invitations and soon she lost many contacts with people. People she loved to be with. But she said no, she was a Christian and her husband was an elder in the Presbyterian Church and her son was a minister and she did not think it was right for her to play cards for money and she did not do it. You may not agree with her, I do not know, but I know she paid a price to live for Christ instead of self.
  - c. The thing which hurts me so about so many Christians is that they are not willing to pay even the smallest price to be what Christ wants them to be or do.
- 4. Paul had mind of Christ
  - a. Philippians 2:5 – Mind of Christ
    - 1. This was a mind to surrender his position and rights for our sake
  - b. Paul sacrificed for sake of Christ
  - c. I wonder if we ever do
    - 1. You young people – Story of General Howard. From “Born Crucified.”

“Shortly before the American Civil War closed, General Howard had succeeded another officer as head of a special division. General Sherman had been the commanding officer, and when he was arranging for a grand

review of the army at Washington, he sent for General Howard. He told the general that the friends of the other officer insisted upon his riding at the head of the corps. 'But it is my command,' said Howard. 'I am entitled to ride there.' 'Of course, you are,' replied Sherman. 'You led the men through Georgia and the Carolinas; but, Howard, you are a Christian and can stand the disappointment.' 'If you put it on that ground,' said Howard, 'there is but one answer. Let him ride at the head of the corps.' 'Yes, let him have the honor,' said Sherman, 'but you will report to me at nine o'clock and will ride by my side at the head of the army.'"

III. Why we can be expected to do this

1. Verse 14 – Love of Christ constrains us
2. Think of this love
  - a. He died for us
3. Cyrus King of Persia and his wife. From, "Days of the Son of Man."

"Xenophon tells that when Cyrus, the King of Persia, had conquered Armenia, he offered its king three things as a reward for his bravery in battle – his own life, the independence of his country, or the freedom of his wife. The monarch replied that he loved his own life very much and the freedom of his own country still more, but that if he were offered these in comparison with the freedom and honor of his wife, he had but one answer. 'Let my wife be saved and all else perish.' Cyrus was so pleased that he gave the faithful husband all three. As he was going home with her, and descanting on the emperor's generosity, he asked her what she thought of Cyrus' appearance. Was his not a noble face? 'I was thinking so much of my dear husband,' she replied, 'all the time, of your great love to me that I could see no other face in all that court.' It is such a love that the Holy Spirit produces in the hearts of those to whom He comes."

4. Oh, this love of Christ should awaken a new love in us for Him
  - a. This love for Christ should make us willing to do anything for Him