

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

2 Corinthians Series

These questions are for the **July 29, 2018** sermon, "A love that controls." Please read the sermon passage (2 Corinthians 5:11-15) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

IN OUR MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION, NOTE THE MOTIVATION TO . . .

1. Know the fear of the Lord (11)
 - a. Because the body is decaying and life is fleeting, judgment before God is coming.
 - b. To "fear" is to revere, to submit to by faith. This is a learned discipline.
 - c. "We fear man so much because we fear God so little." -GK Chesterton
 - d. In our ministry of reconciliation, we persuade others to fear the Lord.
2. Protect the integrity of the church (12-13)
 - a. Do not be moved by external signs of power or eloquence.
 - b. The keys to authentic Christianity are the internal realities which glorify Jesus Christ.
 - c. Paul is appealing to the Corinthians to take his side, which is the side of Christ; to stand up for him, rather than bowing to the pressures of false teachers in the church.
3. Share the controlling love of Christ (14-15)
 - a. "Controlling" means "fixed walls on either side escorting us forward to a specific place."
 - b. Christ's love is seen in his substitution for us. He receives the penalty due the sinner, while the repenting sinner receives the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: It's really important that we understand the difference between the fear of man vs. the fear of God. One is cast out because of love (1 John 4:18), but the fear of God is a good and learned discipline whereby we obey him (2 Corinthians 5:11). "One fear cures the other," said Chesterton. Discuss a right understanding of the fear of God. How does this knowledge of a coming judgment before God purify our lives now?
2. Based on #2, above: People in the church were bad-mouthing Paul. Rather than esteeming Paul's inward qualities (and position and doctrine), they criticized superfluous outside qualities. Do you have a spirit of criticism? How does criticism contribute to discouragement, confusion and selfishness?
3. Based on #2, above: The false teacher's criticism of Paul was motivated by their desire for authority and influence. They wanted control. Look at your own tendency to criticize. Is it motivated by love or a desire to control? How can you grow in this area?
4. Based on #3, above: God's controlling love has set before us a necessary next step, which includes obedience and proclaiming Christ, even to those who criticize. Who is criticizing you? Have you been able to show them love by faithfully proclaiming Christ in both word and deed?
5. How can we pray for you?