

**2nd Corinthians 5: 14-17; “The Love of Christ Compels Us”, (Part 2) A Sermon
for the New Year, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on January 4th, 2015,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

This morning I presented you with the proposition that: If you would know Christ better, and have Him in your thoughts more, your attitude toward what you should be doing for Him must decidedly be a good attitude; one of receiving His word with joy, and believing that He has many good things to show you in truth. He does have many good things to show you and to teach you practically; things which will flow out of your receiving all of the truth of the Bible. I then asked this question: How can you know Christ better, and have Him in your thoughts more, in this year 2015? And I answered this question with this statement: You will find that He will be revealing Himself there, more and more in your thoughts, when you 1st of all – Learn to boast in heart, and not in appearance. (verse 12) 2^{ndly} – You will find that He will be there revealing Himself to you more when you seek to better understand how the truth should affect your mind and your heart. (verse 13) And 3rd - When you seek to better understand the love of Christ. (verse 14) This 3rd point I did not have time to amplify on this morning, but I would like to open it up more this afternoon in relation to our partaking of the Lord’s Supper. You will come to know the love of God in a deeper, more meaningful sense, experientially; if by faith, you will regard Christ in His risen, ascended, and glorified state as caring for your soul. “Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you. As you partake of the Lord’s Supper this afternoon will you not remember His continual love toward you which is based upon His sufferings and death for you, and

So, this afternoon, I want to set before you what the loving sufferings of Christ purchased for you. Christ’s death and His resurrection life are intended by God to be the basis of your living to God, and not to yourself. Our text here in verse 14 says: “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died. What I want to show you before we partake of this Supper is that Christ’s death provided a certain and definite atonement for each and every believer; not a hypothetical atonement, not a general atonement, but a definite atonement. Every believer has been placed into the merits of Christ’s death according to the Father’s purpose and design that they will be saved. In the time of His choosing in their conversion, they come to experience the Holy Spirit’s working; a most certain and definite giving to them the gift of eternal life because of Christ’s death. I want to open up to you now, dear Christian, 3 of the most tangible blessings of your salvation; blessings which Christ purchased for you in love, by His sufferings and by His death, so that you would make progress in your faith and in holiness. 1st of all – Christ’s loving sufferings purchased your death to sin. 2nd – Christ’s loving sufferings purchased His life living in you. 3rd – Christ’s loving sufferings purchased a New Creation in you. May our minds dwell upon these truths and spiritual realities with joy this afternoon.

1st of all – Christ’s loving sufferings purchased your death to sin.

Verse 14 says: “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died.” Now this is truly an amazing and powerful verse which clearly shows us that Christ’s atonement was specifically designed by the Father, not for all men, but for the Elect of God. It is important that you understand the grammar here; that because Christ died for all, then all died. The meaning of this verse is not that Christ died for all men, for if He did, then they all would have been saved, and they all would have died to sin. But not all men have died to sin; only those who have believed the gospel. All of those who have believed in Christ died to sin because He suffered that it should be so; not in an indefinite sense, but a definite sense. I suppose that it is a natural instinct that there are many people want to believe in a general, or

hypothetical atonement. And there have been many who have studied the Bible who have tried to grammatically play with the wording of this verse to make it say something that the Apostle Paul was not trying to say. They try to say that it reads, “If one died for all, then were all dead.” It is true that before conversion that all men are dead in their trespasses and sins. But this is not the way that the original Greek words it in verse 14 of our text. The phrase – *ὅτι εἰ εἰς ὑπὲρ ἀπέθανεν*, “that if One died for all, then all died” does not indicate the condition that men were in before they were converted; it indicates the state which they were brought into because of Christ’s death. They all died a spiritual death to sin and to their old life which Christ purchased for all those for whom it was intended. Those persons in particular died. And it is these people in particular, it says in verse 15, who should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Now, why is this so important? It is important for us to have a correct understanding of how we saved. We are saved by Christ’s death, not our own efforts to change our heart, or to persevere in holiness. If we do not understand this, we will not be able to come to a correct view of the assurance of our salvation. We shall always wonder: Have I done enough? It is important because God would have us glory in this truth, and not fear that somehow we might be lost after we have been saved. It is important that we see that we could in no way save ourselves from our sins except through faith in what Christ has done for us as our substitute. It is very evident from this verse that Christ offered Himself as a definite atonement which accomplished a particular and definite redemption of all those who are effectually called by the Father. “The death He died, He died to sin once for all”, it says in Romans 6: 10. This verse says that when Christ died, you the believer in Christ also died. Christ did not suffer to purchase hypothetical blessings which fallen and sinful men by their own free will then choose to receive, apart from grace. The ability of a man who is dead in his trespasses and sins does not exist, to change their own heart and mind, or die to sin.

So Christ had purchased these tangible blessings, these certain and definite blessings, which are most certainly and definitely communicated to all who believe in Him. And the Holy Spirit has to sovereignly apply these blessings to the heart of the sinner in their regeneration and in their conversion to Christ. It is this blessing your being seen by God as having died with Christ that makes you one of God’s saints; one of His holy ones. When you believe in Christ, you experience a real definite death to sin which takes place in your heart. In your heart sin no longer rules over you. Its dominating power has been broken, and you are released from your bondage to sin. You no longer love to pursue sin; you have been set free from it. How do you then live? You don’t continue on in your pursuit of sin. You willingly and consciously take up learning Christ. Ephesians 4: 17 – This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” “But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” When you have died with Christ you have the power to put off the Old Man. He is still with you, after you become a Christian, but he is growing corrupt. Your responsibility then becomes to put him off and put to death the motions that he puts forth in your heart. The grace of Christ gives you that power. Yours is to actually do it by His mighty grace.

2nd – Christ’s loving sufferings purchased His life living in you.

Verse 15 – “And Christ died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.” “Therefore from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh.” “Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.” Sometimes, I think, Christian people have a romantic notion of what it means to follow Jesus. They think that if they go over to the Holy Land and walk where Jesus walked, that they will be better able to follow Him. They think that if they could just have been there in the days when Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee and taught the multitudes, that they then would have enough inspiration for them to live the Christian life. But these verses tell us something different; something very important about living the Christian life. We no longer know Christ after the flesh. Even those apostles and disciples that lived in that day had to relinquish their earthly conception of our Lord. Following Christ now takes place in relationship to the life that is given to us. It is not simply storing up didactic teaching; it is having regular fellowship with the Father and the Son by and through the presence of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

Turn with me over to John Chapter 20, verse 15. It is the first day of the week after Jesus was crucified, and Mary Magdalene had such a great love of Christ that she went to the tomb to anoint his body, but coming there she found the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. She runs back to get Peter and John and tells them that the Lord had been taken out of the tomb, and they knew not where they had laid him. They run and see and go away marveling. She stays hoping to find out what had been done with His body. A man whom she supposed to be the gardener speaks to her in verse 15– “Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ “Whom are you seeking?’ “she, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ “She turned and said to Him, ‘Rabboni!’ (Which is to say, Teacher) “Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’” Mary had had great things done for her by Christ’s intervening and rescuing her from demon-possession. He cast seven devils out of her, it says in one place. She loved Him very much, with the pure love of a devoted sister. He had saved her, and rescued her from the power of Satan. She wanted to show her love, after He was crucified, by paying her respects to His body, but instead she comes and finds that He is alive.

Her reaction to this was to be expected. She clung to Him and called Him her teacher. Her love of Him as her Savior compelled her to do this. But Jesus did not want her to do this. He says: “Do not cling to Me,” or as the NAS has it – “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father.” The King James says: “For I am not yet ascended to my Father.” Why did He say this? He said it because He did not want her to rest in the knowledge of Him that she had accrued while she walked with Him on the earth. Do not cling to me according to your former knowledge of this our relationship as Rabbi and disciple; even though I have been raised from the dead, He is saying. There is a greater stage in our relationship which is coming, and it will take place when I have ascended. This you must prepare yourself for, Mary. It to this more exalted relationship with Me that is coming when I ascend to heaven; this is what you should cling to when the time arrives. And this new relationship would commence in 40 days. Thomas Manton says, “This knowing Christ after the flesh is inconsistent with His glorious estate in heaven.” “It pleased him not in the days of his flesh.” “A divine spiritual affection doth only befit the state of glory to which He is exalted.” “Now He is ascended into heaven he is to be known in faith and worshipped in spirit; his body is above all kindness, and His memory is to be respected not as the memory of an honorable man, but as one who is lord of the Church, and governs it by His Spirit to the end of the world.” Vol. 13, P. 228, Works Let me ask you whether you have this love of Christ which compels you to worship Him in this way? “Whom having not

seen you love.” “Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory. The loving sufferings of Christ purchased this for you, so that even though you cannot see Him now, you love Him, worship Him, serve Him and follow Him, seeing Him by faith, exalted at the right hand of the Father. Let us now come down front to remember Him, not only as He was, dying on the cross, but as He is now, our Risen, Living, Ascended Lord.

3rd – Christ’s loving sufferings purchased a New Creation in you.

Verse 17 says: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.” Christ’s sufferings purchased the New Birth. His resurrection power applies what was purchased. The Holy Spirit alone causes the sinner to receive the blessed work of regeneration; the circumcision of the heart, the washing of the heart and the renewing work of creating good qualities of spirit which is implanted; of new desires placed there by the Holy Spirit, of a new nature, a new mind, willing to be transformed by the truth of the Word of God, and the planting of the seed of righteousness in the heart; and what is more, the giving of Himself to dwell with you forever. When the Spirit comes into your heart to work and to dwell, all things in us become new. This is what we come now to remember at this time; Christ’s sufferings which purchased all these good things which we now find in our hearts. As we break the bread and drink the cup, let us give thanks that He has made us into New Creatures and that we have a New Year to serve Him.

Footnote: Charles Hodge on 2nd Corinthians 5: 14 -

“The apostle here presents Christ as the one priest and the one sacrifice. He died for all. The words are *Uper Panton*. The preposition *Uper*, may have the general sense, for the benefit of, in behalf of, or the stricter sense, in the place of, as in v. 20 of this chapter. Philemon 13; Ephesians 6:20. In many places the choice between these senses depends on the context. In all those passages in which one person is said to die for another, as Romans 5:6, 7, 8; 14: 15; 1st Thessalonians 5:10; Hebrews 2:9. Comp. Luke 22:19; 1 Timothy 2:6; Titus 2:14. etc., etc., or in which the reference is to a sacrifice, the idea of substitution is clearly expressed. The argument does not rest on the force of the preposition, but on the nature of the case. The only way in which the death of the victim benefited the offerer, was by substitution. When, therefore, Christ is said to die as a sacrifice for us, the meaning is, he died in our stead. His death is taken in the place of ours so as to save us from death. That the preposition *Uper* in this and similar passages, does mean instead of, is admitted by the great body of even Rationalistic commentators. See De Wette, Ruckert, etc. Christ, it is said, died for all, i.e. for all the subjects of redemption. This limitation is not an arbitrary one, but arises of necessity out of the nature of the case, and is admitted almost universally. He did not die for all creatures; nor for all rational creatures; nor for all apostate rational creatures. The all is of necessity limited by what the Scriptures teach of the design of his death. If his death was merely didactic, intended to reveal and confirm some truth, then he may be said to have died for all benefited by that revelation, and therefore for angels as well as men. If designed to make it consistent with the interests of God’s moral government for him to pardon the sins of men, then he may be said to have died equally for all men. But if his death was intended to save his people, then it had a reference to them which it had not to others.

The true design of the death of Christ is to be learned from express assertions of Scripture, and from its effects. It is so obvious that the death of Christ was designed to save those for whom it was offered, that many of the recent as well as ancient commentators justify their explaining *Uper Panton* as meaning all men, by attributing to Paul the belief that all men are to be saved. This is an admission that the all for whom he died, are the all who are saved by his death. One of its effects is stated in the following clause; Then were all dead, or, Then all died. The word is *αἰπέθανον*. It is the same verb, and in the same tense. ‘If one died, (*αἰπέθανεν*) then all died, (*αἰπέθανον*), The word must have the same sense in both clauses. It cannot mean were dead, because that is inconsistent with the force of the aorist. All, (literally, the all, of *οἱ πάντες*;) i.e. the all for whom the one died. His death involved, or secured their death. This was its design and effect, and, therefore, this clause limits the extent of the word all in the preceding clause. Christ died for the all who died when he died.”

