

2 Corinthians 6:11–13

<sup>11</sup> O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open.

<sup>12</sup> You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections.

<sup>13</sup> Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open.

*The Importance of Love*  
*2 Corinthians 6:11-13*

INTRO:

When I was a teenager the song, *“They will know we are Christians by our Love”* was very popular. What kind of love do we have? What kind of love shows to others who view us? What kind of love do we see in the Corinthian church? Paul didn’t think it was the right kind. He stopped at the end of his confession of his frustrations in the ministry to address their love.

*I. I Paul Love You (v. 11-12)*

*II. You Must Love Me (v. 13)*

*I. I Paul Love You (v. 11-12)*

**2 Corinthians 6:11–13** *“O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections.”*

A. In the verses leading up to our text, the Apostle Paul wrote openly about the frustrations and difficulties he endured in ministry, both in Corinth and in other places. Now suddenly, Paul suddenly made a strong emotional appeal.

**v.11** *“O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open.”*

1. Paul said he was honest and forth coming about everything to them. He did not do this to manipulate them. Rather he did it to underline how much he cared about them. The false apostles in Corinth and the attacks he received from them did not drive his love for them out of his heart.

2. Just like his speech was open and he did not try to hide anything. His heart was open and transparent in his great love for them.

B. Paul not only brought the gospel to those who were lost. He genuinely loved the people in the Lord.

**1 Corinthians 4:14–15** *“I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”*

We learn a little of Paul’s compassion for people in the churches he planted in 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8.

*“But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.”*

C. Why did Paul love like this? Was it because he was “an old softy?” Reading Paul’s history and actions, it would be hard to come to this conclusion. He loved like that because Paul first loved Christ and because he loved the Lord, he loved those Christ loved.

1. This is the point in **1 John 3:10**.

*“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.”*

2. John stated this truth in stronger terms in **1 John 3:14**.

*“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.”*

3. In **1 John 3:23** we get a point that is often missed.

*“And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.”*

We are to love because the Lord commanded us to love one another. Love is not simply an emotion it begins with a decision and then emotion follows.

4. The key is **1 John 4:19**.

*“We love Him because He first loved us.”*

The only way we can love as the Lord Jesus wants us to love is to know the love we experience from the Lord Himself.

D. While Paul is open and unrestricted in His love for them, the Corinthians had not loved him in this way.

**2 Corinthians 6:12** *“You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections”*

## ***II. You Must Love Me (v. 13)***

**2 Corinthians 6:13** *“Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open.”*

A. Because the Corinthians had not returned his love like they should. Paul commanded them to love him as children should love their father. This seems harsh to us. Still, Paul’s concern is real.

B. We have already seen in **1 John** how being saved means we love Christ, and we love those who belong to Christ in His church. Do we also realize that we are obligated to love those whom Christ put over us in His church?

C. In **1 Thessalonians 5:11-13**, Paul wrote:

***“Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.”***

I preached on this verse at a pastor friend’s installation service. The point is there is supposed to be an attitude of love and esteem of those whom God has put in position over the church.

D. Look at how Paul pleaded with the folks at Corinth for this kind of love.

**2 Corinthians 7:2–3** *“Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one. I do not say this to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together.”*

### ***What do we take from all of this?***

1. We can only love one another if God has done a work of grace in our hearts. We can only love one another because Christ has first loved us.
2. Loving one another and our spiritual leaders in the Church is vitally important. For our love causes others to be drawn to our Savior.

Hymn #364 *My Jesus I Love Thee*