



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

2 Corinthians 5: 11-15

Spring 2025

"Compelled By Love"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. What a blessing it is to be here and be with you; and to take up this great text of Scripture that we have. And we've gotten a little preparation for it from our prayer request here. Fortunately, we don't have a lot of names listed for prayer, though I know there are many who do need it. But this prayer request is a good one:

"Father, thank You for revealing to us Your sovereign love for Your children, and we pray that this love, so amazing, so divine, controls us."

Well, that is Paul's testimony here in this text...that that 'sovereign love' did control him...and guided and directed him in all that he did. And so that's what we get to consider this morning, because that is the answer to so much of the Christian life.

Verse 11, of 2 Corinthians 5, through verse 15,

¹¹Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences. ¹²We are not again commending ourselves to you but *are* giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have *an answer* for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart. ¹³For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you. ¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all,

therefore all died; (and we'll spend a little bit of time on that small word, "all", that is sort of a source of some controversy...so we'll need to consider that),¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

2 Corinthians 5: 11-15

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word, and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, it is a great privilege to be with Your people and to have real fellowship, which is with the children of God—and it is around this, around Your revelation...that's true fellowship. We get to consider Your revelation: What You say about Yourself, and what You have done, and what we have received.

And Father, we come to a great text for that; of the work of Your Son on our behalf and Your love for us—the amazing love that was demonstrated at the cross and that saved a multitude of people...all sinners, all unworthy, all utterly and completely lost. But the Good Shepherd came, and He found the lost and He saved them; and we give You thanks for that. We can't take credit for anything—it's all of You; Praise the LORD; we thank You for what You've done for us.

And what You're doing for us...for this work of 'salvation' goes on, in that while we are 'saved' at the moment of faith, we are being transformed 'saved' through the work of sanctification—and we will be 'saved' completely, utterly, in the future when we are *glorified*...when we enter into heaven and we see our Savior. That is Your plan, and it's perfect...and it's going to be completed with perfection.

So we have every reason for confidence in this life...help us, LORD, to have that confidence, even in the trials of life—for they are many and we all suffer them to some degree, (and some more than others). But You have a purpose for that.

You have a purpose for everything. You are the One, 'Who sets the times and the boundaries of the nations.' You are in control of these great, sweeping, magnificent

aspects of life that we consider; but are just as intimately involved in each and every one of our lives with the things that come in and bless us in the obvious sense of the positive, the pleasing things of life. But You also bless us with the trials of life; and we can't understand that, but we know You're in control. The God of creation, the God who sets the boundaries of the nations, the God who sets destinies for them and for us, You are in control of every little detail, and we pray that You would teach us that and give us confidence in that.

But we pray for those that are sick, and some with very serious illness, and going through serious treatment; we pray for them. We pray for some who recently had surgery. LORD, You know the names, and You know every one of us, and You know who's about to have trials and difficulties; I pray that You would prepare us for those. But we pray Your blessing, that out of all of that, good will come and we'll be built up in the faith.

Well LORD, we pray Your blessing upon us now. We pray that You would prepare our hearts as we sing our next hymn, and that You would bless us with enlightenment as we deal with this great text of Scripture. We look to You to bless; We look to You, through the Spirit, to bless us with understanding and edification.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) When you see old films of World War II, and young soldiers landing on Omaha Beach on D-Day, you wonder what went through their minds. What motivated them to rush into the jaws of death? Was it patriotism? Was it love of country? Or was it fear of being seen a coward? What moved them forward out of those boats and into the bullets? There is always a reason, a motive, either good or bad, for why we do what we do; there's a motive in everything.

But it is a question we ask especially when it involves danger, and courage, and sacrifice. So why did Paul do what he did? ...Travel across continents, and deserts, rivers, and seas into hostile towns, suffering sickness, and beatings, and prison, heat and cold, and hunger, to give the Gospel?

He tell us the motive in 2 Corinthians 5, verses 11 through 15. It was “the fear of the Lord”, (vs11), and ‘the love of the Lord’. (vs14). Both moved him to selfless service.

But that was not what some people were saying at the time. Men had come to Corinth who imputed bad motives to Paul's ministry. They were ‘teachers’, (Paul speaks of them later in chapter 10, verse 2), where there they said Paul's motive was ‘fleshly, not spiritual; selfish and not controlled by the Holy Spirit.’ Here, according to verse 13, they were accusing him of being ‘out of his mind’. Literally, the word means, ‘to stand’, or, ‘be outside oneself’...it is, ‘to be out of one's senses’. So they were saying: ‘Paul was extreme, Paul was fanatical—he was ecstatic, he sees visions,’ (things that aren't there). ‘He was not rational. He was not of sound mind.’

That wouldn't be the last time Paul would hear something like that. Later in chapter 26 of Acts, verse 24, the Roman governor Festus interrupted Paul's defense before King Agrippa, (in fact, before a whole host of great dignitaries there in Caesarea), he interrupted him by saying, "Mania!", (‘Paul, you're out of your mind!’)

Paul wasn't ecstatic. Paul wasn't a fiery-eyed or hysterical preacher. He was calm and rational, simply telling the account of his conversion. But men think the cross of Christ, think the new birth, think the Gospel is, ‘Foolishness!’ So Paul's life was often explained as ‘madness’...his Gospel is ‘crazy talk’. And that, for his opponents, explained his ministry—the ‘why’ he would rush into the jaws of death.

It's not unusual. Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 2, verse 14, "A natural man...", (an unbelieving person), "... does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him..." So don't be surprised if family or friends think you've gone, ‘off the rails’, when you give the Gospel to them...and they reject it. They might even call you ‘crazy!’ And that's okay; it's not your mind, it's your message. —And you're in good company with Paul and the other apostles.

But *mania* can't explain Godly zeal, and Paul corrected that. He had just stated that we, (all saints), ‘will someday stand before Christ and give an account of our lives,

and be rewarded for what we've done, whether good or bad.' (2Cor 5:10). Now that motivated Paul; so he began verse 11, "Therefore", that is, 'Because that day is coming, the fear of the Lord impels him to persuade men of the Gospel, to be busy about the work of the Gospel—presenting it clearly, presenting it rationally, presenting it convincingly.'

He entered synagogues and marketplaces to do that very thing. Not friendly environments, but he went there, "knowing the fear of the Lord." (vs11). Not 'slavish fear' or 'cringing fear', Paul wasn't *afraid* of the Lord...this is awe; this is *reverence and love*. The idea of 'fear' would have the sense of, 'fearing disappointment'...if it disappointed the Lord by not fulfilling the mission that he had been given.

And there's love in this Godly fear. He hoped the Corinthians understood that. He knew that they did; so in verse 12 he explained that he wasn't engaging in self-praise in order to convince them for they were already confident in Paul.

[Now we can go back in our thinking to some of our earlier lessons and the introduction to this—Paul had been estranged from the Corinthians and he worried about that, but he waited for Titus. And Titus came to him in Macedonia, (Paul speaks of this later, in chapter 7, verses 6 and 7), to tell them that, 'No, they had responded well to his letter of correction, they had repented and all is well between them.' So when Paul writes this, he realizes this 'breach' had been healed, and so now he was equipping them to refute his critics there in Corinth, (who had persuaded them for a time), but now, here are the answers that they are to give to these critics.]

"We...are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have *an answer* for those who take pride in appearance and not heart." (vs12). In other words, '...for those who are very concerned about having a great show before people, but their heart is not right with the Lord.'

His concern in all of this was not self-defense for pride's sake. The false charges of men couldn't hurt him, he had a clear conscience before God. His concern was for the church; his concern was for its unity and edification, that it would be united in orthodox teaching, in apostolic teaching. So really, this was a defense of the Gospel that he's

making here. What men thought of Paul was of little importance to him. What they thought of Christ, and what they thought of the Gospel, that was everything.

The fact is, men didn't think much of Paul...they still don't. Now they may honor the apostle Paul; they may speak of 'Saint Paul' to honor his name...but they reject what he taught: 'The sovereignty of God, the deity of Christ, salvation by grace alone through faith alone and by the cross of Christ alone...and the need of that cross and the need of salvation. They reject all of that—'That message is offensive!'

But his contemporaries did attack him directly: They attacked him personally, calling him '*mad*', calling him '*fanatical*'. Paul's response to that in verse 13 is, 'The things I do that people consider extreme or insane, I do for God. They're not extreme. They're not insane, but what I'm doing is an act of obedience to God.' So he didn't care what men thought of him. He wasn't 'performing' for their approval, he was, 'living for the Lord'. Think of the author of Hebrews: 'He had set his face and his mind and his eyes upon Christ, and he was running the race with that in mind, disregarding all that was around him, and focused upon Him.' (Heb 12:1). That's Paul, as well. His approval, (the Lord's approval), was the only thing that mattered for Paul.

Whatever approval he might have gained from men, well, it's gone like that! [*Snap!*]...because we're gone like that, we are just a vapor. And everything we obtain in this life, and all of the approval of the world that we can get, is gone in a moment...and then it's eternity and it's the approval of God that lasts forever, (and that's what mattered to Paul).

But why did he live for the Lord? Why was His approval so important to Paul? Why was he so single minded in his devotion to the task given to him...with such sacrifice that men would call him 'Mad!', 'Imbalanced!'?

Well, "the fear of the Lord", as I said; it's what he wrote in verse 11. But that's not all. He wrote in verse 14, "For...", (meaning here's the reason), "...the love of Christ controls us..." The great compelling motive in Paul's life was, 'the love of Christ'.

Now, **this is not Paul's love, or our love** for Christ, (although that becomes a part of it, of course), but that phrase is a reference to **Christ's love for Paul, Christ's love for us**. (Now I think this is obvious because Paul goes on to illustrate the greatness of Christ's love for us...not our love for Him.)

It was the love that Christ had for him that so moved Paul, so affected Paul, that he gladly sacrificed everything—his health, his safety, his security, his life...for Him. It controls him. It compels him, shuts him in, confines him to such a narrow path that he cannot veer away from it—from that single purpose of service and staying with the mission, he can't vary from that at all. He's compelled, constrained to do that—to carry out his work. Christ's love for Paul was the governing influence, the principle which controlled his life.

So, how does Christ so love Paul that he, (Paul), was so controlled by it...that he lived with *sacrificial devotion*? What act of love did Christ do for him?

Well obviously, He died for him. He sacrificed out of His love for him—and you. "For..." verse 14, "...the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;...". Christ took our place in death. He was our substitute on the cross, under the wrath of God, His Father. —And He saved us there at Calvary; He paid our debt there at Calvary. And the Father accepted that payment; and as Christ said, "It is finished."—And this is what Paul is saying; and unless we understand that, we will never understand the cross and the Gospel, or understand Paul and his motive.

It's all about *substitution*. In fact, there are three words that define the work of Christ: His death was a '*penal*', '*substitutionary*', '*atonement*'.

It was *penal*, meaning it was punishment..."the wages of sin is death", (Rom 6:23)...*punishment*.

It was '*substitutionary*', meaning, 'it was done in our place', "the just for the unjust", (1Pe 3:18)...'the innocent for the guilty'.

And it was '*atonement*', meaning, 'It satisfied God's justice and turned His wrath against all of us, away...for all those for whom He suffered.'

Now that is it. And it seems clear enough. In fact, James Denney called that, "The most profound of all truths."

But it's disputed. There are some who say that the Greek preposition, "*for*", in "one died for all", (vs14b), primarily means, '*for the benefit of*', and not, 'in place of'... 'So, all Paul means here is that Christ died for our benefit. His death was an example of God's love for us, and assures us that in spite of our rebellion, in spite of our failures, He is *for* us, and He won't judge us and won't destroy us...and He demonstrated that by His Son's death.'

I find that a very unsatisfactory explanation of the cross: How does the death of Christ demonstrate God's love, if that death does not save us? Really, the idea, if you think about it, is monstrous. What moral, rational father, (and God is certainly both moral and rational), would kill his innocent son to prove his love for someone? None would!

Professor Denny illustrated this by saying, "If he were sitting on the end of pier, on a lake one day, and is enjoying the sunshine and the air, and someone jumped in the water and drowned to prove his love for me I should find it quite unintelligible. But," he said, "if I had fallen over and were drowning and someone sprang into the water and sacrificed his own life so that I may live, then I would say, 'Greater love hath no one than this.' "

That's what Christ did. His death does more than give an 'example', (now it certainly gives us an example, an example of the great love God has...it's the greatest example of that), but it's a great example of love because it delivers. That death rescues, it saves, it is effective—and Christ delivered us by becoming our substitute in *death*, our substitute in *judgment*.

The fact is, the preposition, "*for*", that Paul uses here does have substitutionary meaning. It has the idea of, 'in the place of'...and in this sentence, that is really the only meaning it could have! The only reason Paul could conclude, 'that all died because one

died for all', (vs14b), is because of *substitution*. Christ took our place in the judgment of God. He died the death we should have died—the eternal death that is the 'wage', (or punishment), we earned because of sin. His death was our death. That is what is significant about a substitute...He takes our place—so that what He did is what we did "in Him".

As a result, we have escaped God's wrath. The payment to divine justice, that is due for our sin, has been paid by another—no more payment need be made; and as a result, we go free. God has accepted the payment on our behalf; He can't then demand another payment when we die. The payment has been made.

That amazed Paul, that Christ would do that for him, of all people!...An implacable Pharisee, 'a man of the Law', (and not of grace), a persecutor of the church, a man who has the blood of the saints on his hands, "the chief of sinners"! That alone explains the controlling, compelling, constraining power of Christ's love on him.

It gives the reason for Paul's single-minded devotion to Christ and his service for Him. He understood that the cross was the instrument of his salvation; that on Calvary is where Christ secured Paul's forgiveness and new life; that His death for others was successful...It saves! Christ's work was complete—He accomplished what He came to do. So Paul embraced it, even though, (as he told the Corinthians), it "...is foolishness to those who are perishing." (1Cor 1:18). He embraced it because, 'it is the power of God for those being saved.' (ibid.). Now that's the Gospel; it has power in it.

In fact, he not only embraced the cross, he boasted in it. It was not in himself; he never boasted in himself, in his work, in his deeds, in his achievements, and never boasted in his faith itself...he only boasted in the cross. That's how he concludes the Book of Galatians, in chapter 6, verse 14; 'he boasted in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' That's the center of his ministry, the center and the focus of the Gospel.

But, this raises a question about the identity of the, "all", for whom He died. And I think that if there's a little bit of controversy in my sermon this morning, that's where we'll find it...but it shouldn't be there; it shouldn't be a controversy.

But I need to explain it because if not explained, it could lead to a bit of confusion; because if, "all", is 'universal', 'all with without exception', (meaning, 'every single individual in the history of the world, from beginning to end, from Adam to the end'), then all the people of the earth are saved, because 'He died their death'; 'They died when He died.'

The meaning of this passage is, as Charles Hodge wrote, "The death of the 'one', (Christ), was the death of "all" ...meaning, 'by dying in their place, He actually saved them.' The cross is the power of God for salvation."

Or, is the "all" restricted to 'His people'?...'All without distinction, not all without exception'. 'All without distinction': 'All kinds of people' ...Jews and Gentiles. —Those saved from, "...every tribe...and tongue and nation...", (Rev 13:7), in every generation, down through time, He saves those of *all* races, and *all* backgrounds.

The first suggestion is 'Universalism'...and I think it's fair to say that we can easily dismiss that based on the rest of Scripture, which clearly teaches that not all people are saved...it can't mean that. Jesus, Himself, taught that, 'not all are saved'. He said, "...the way is broad that leads to destruction,...and the way is narrow that leads to life...", Matthew 7, verses 13 and 14. He spoke in other places of, "the outer darkness", where "...there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Mat 8:12). He spoke often of "*gehenna*", (of hell)...the Scriptures do—Revelation concludes with that terrible picture that John gives us, (or vision he had), in Revelation 19:20, and chapter 20, verse 15... "the lake of fire" that burns forever and ever. Well, that's why Paul was out preaching the Gospel, because of that!

So the only option is the second one: 'Those who died when Christ died are His people.' They are His 'elect ones' and that was the design of the atonement. That is the reason Christ came into this world; and the angel told that to Joseph in Matthew chapter 1, verse 21: Joseph was disturbed by the fact that Mary, who was betrothed to him, was found to be 'with child'. So he was prepared to quietly, secretly, put her away. He was a very kind and godly man, and loved her in spite of this, so he was going to do it quietly, and not make a scene. But when he's told that, 'this is of the Lord', that, 'this is the Lord', the angel then explains the reason that He came...it says in verse 21, "He will save His people from their sins." 'He will save them!'

Now, some have argued for, 'a *universal* meaning for **all**', in the sense that, 'Christ died for all people without exception...He died for them 'potentially', or 'provisionally', or 'hypothetically', but not actually'. (It becomes 'actual' only when people respond and believe the Gospel).

But Paul did not say '*potential*'. He said, "He died..." (vs15). —And it was that death that actually produced the intended result, (or intended effect), and accomplished the very purpose for which He came. 'The death of the one was the death of the all.' (vs14-15).

Our Substitute actually bore our punishment in our place. He didn't die to somehow make us 'savable'. He actually saved those for whom He died. "He will save His people from their sins." (Mat 1:21).

To use James Denney's illustration, 'He was like that man who jumped in and saved the one that was drowning.' (Now illustrations don't always capture the full meaning, because if we apply that, 'He jumped in to save the dead', because that's what we are in and of ourselves—but I won't press that too much.) In other words, 'He didn't paddle around in the water and try to encourage the man to grab hold of Him...He actually jumped into the water, reached out and snatched him...and saved him.' That's the idea—Christ actually saved the lost that He came to save.

That's what Jesus said He would do in John chapter 12, verse 32. He said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." ...Meaning, 'all *kinds* of men', meaning, 'men of every tribe, and tongue, and peoples, and nations.' Not just Jews, but Gentiles as well. Male and female, young and old, intellectual and nonintellectual. The list goes on, and the varieties are there; 'Some of all kinds of people.'

That's what Paul wrote: "...one died for all, therefore all died." (vs14b). Both verbs there are in the *aorist* tense, (which is simply, 'a simple past tense'), both are pointing back to the same event though...the crucifixion: 'One died at the cross, all died at the cross.'

Of course, people must *believe* to be saved. We don't deny that...this is essential. The God, who ordained the end, has ordained the *means* to that end—and the *means* is evangelism...it is going out and preaching the Gospel.

So we have this confidence that God has saved His people—and they will respond. Those, 'for whom He died', they will believe. They must!...because unbelief cannot frustrate Christ's work of salvation. And it, (*unbelief*), cannot frustrate it...He won't allow that because He died for that sin, too. He died for all of the sins of all the people for whom He died. That includes their unbelief. And because He paid for unbelief, and removed it, "as far as the east is from the west", (Ps 103:12), as He did with all of our sins, 'those for whom He died will believe the Gospel.'

Now they may not believe the Gospel when you present it to them...they may resist it. And we're certainly to be as persuasive as we can be, that's what Paul was. He sought to be persuasive: "we persuade men", he says in verse 11, (and we seek that too). So, they may not respond to you, but they will respond in their time; because He paid for their unbelief, and removed it, and that will be their response. He not only secured their salvation at the cross, He secured their faith by which they lay hold of that salvation. That's grace; that's sovereign grace.

So at the end of it all, we look up and say, 'He's done it all! I cannot boast in one thing. —Not even my faith! Not even my intellect! —None of that! ...It's all of Him! Salvation is of the LORD!'

Christ accomplished just what He intended to accomplish. He never fails in His purpose. He saved His people, His elect ones. Salvation is altogether of the Lord.

'Oh,' but some will say, 'that diminishes the love of God, which is magnified in the very idea that He loves *all*, and He wants *all* to be save, and has provided for that.' But B. B. Warfield, the great Princeton theologian wrote, "We have to choose between an atonement of high value, or an atonement of wide extension." In other words, 'Choose between a sacrifice that is intended for only 'some' but saves them all—or a sacrifice made for *all*, but saves none.'

Now, the sacrifice is of high value; it is effective. 2 Corinthians 5:14 teaches that He actually saved us. And the 'some', He came to save, are not few in number, but *many*. He saved, 'an innumerable multitude, like the stars of heaven', the Bible says, 'the sand of the seashore', (Heb 11:12), ...'the dust of the earth'...you can't count the number!

So His grace is wide, and it's also deep. It reaches across the globe, and it reaches down through time to save multitudes out of every tribe and nation, and into the very depths of humanity, to redeem the very worst of men—even "the chief of sinners"...and that thrilled Paul. Christ's love for him motivated Paul to serve Him and sacrifice for Him out of a thankful heart, out of gratitude, out of his own love for Him.

And that's not all; Paul adds in verse 15, "...and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf." Now the inference, or conclusion, from this is inevitable: The death and resurrection of Christ are inseparable. So, 'all who died with Christ', all for whom Christ died will be raised with Christ...they have been. The "all" for whom Christ died are those who died... but they not only died to sin and judgment, they now, "live to righteousness." (1Pe 2:24).

And that is the ultimate purpose of Christ's death. —That we who were dead in sin would, “live to righteousness.” (ibid.) That we who once lived for self, (and still do), would die to self and live for Christ, and live for others.

So what can break the tyranny of ‘self’ over a person's life? Only the cross of Christ can slay that old self, and the power of Christ in the new life, (that He gives), that enables us to sacrifice ourselves for others.

God had done that for Paul. And Paul understood what God's grace had accomplished for him: It delivered him from death and gave him life...and He did that for Saul of Tarsus, Saul the Pharisee...(of all people!). He could hardly get over that fact, hardly get over the fact that Christ loved him. The eternal Son of God actually became a man in order to die for Paul in particular, and to save him by His death from his sins and the judgment he deserved. He left heaven specifically for him—and specifically for you, if you are a believer in Christ.

From all eternity He saw you ruined in sin, and He set His love on you, in particular, and came to save you. That unconditional, unfathomable love for him, (Saul of Tarsus), so moved him, the new man, the apostle Paul, that he gladly gave up his life for the Savior, and stormed the beaches like a soldier. That's the motivation of the Christian life. That's the mainspring of action in the spiritual life.

It's not duty to commands, (though we have that). It's not spiritual discipline, (though we need that). It's, ‘We don't want to be *ashamed* when Christ returns.’, (John warns against that in 1 John chapter 2, verse 28). We don't want to be ashamed at the *béma* seat of Christ.

But the greatest motivation is, ‘love for the Savior’—and ‘particular redemption’, (as it's called, or ‘definite atonement’), rightly understood, produces that...it should!

From it we learn what divine love is—that it is personal, and purposeful, and effective. He came out of eternity to enter time specifically to save you. He had you on His heart as He hung on the cross; thinking of you personally, (at least in His divine

nature, if not His human nature)... had you on His mind through all of that, knowing He was there, (suffering the wrath of God), to save you.

The author of Hebrews wrote in chapter 12, verse 2, "...who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." What was "the joy" that motivated Him to go to the cross and undergo the awful judgment of His Father? Well, I think, 'the joy of doing His Father's will', for sure; but chiefly, I think, it was the joy of knowing He would save us and gain for Himself a family—brothers and sisters, children of God through His death. He would make friends out of enemies.

He rejoiced to die for *you*, to save *you* because He loves *you* from all eternity, and now He sits enthroned in glory, praying for *you*, (and all of His people)—guarding them, helping them, helping *you*, at every moment regardless of your experiences and the trials you're going through. He knows it; He's even using it to transform you. He ever-lives to do that...He's faithful, not feckless.

He, 'snatched us like brands from the burning' at Calvary, and promises to complete the work of salvation in our lives and not lose one of us. His love is eternal, it is historical, it is personal, individual—and it is effective. He rescued Paul, 'the chief of sinners', and He did that for you. He did that for every believer in Christ. In fact, if you had been the only sinner in all of the world and of all mankind, He would have left glory to come into this world to die for you, because He wanted you with Him for all eternity.

But Christ actually saved a multitude beyond counting; a multitude that is vast. And yet, you're not lost in the crowd. He knows you personally; He came specifically for you as much as if you were the only person in the world to be saved. And in an age in which we hear of people being 'separated', 'losing contact', 'alienated and alone'—when there is what's been called, 'an epidemic of loneliness', Christ is always with us....really with us; personally with us.

That's part of what He gained for those He saved. That's why there is nothing more beneficial to our lives than studying these things. And just to be specific: 'Studying

the person and the work of Christ', because when we get a sense of His glory and sacrifice for us, that He laid all that aside, His great infinite glory to come and be a servant for us, and die the death that He died for us, then we want to live for Him; we want to sacrifice for Him. We want to, "live to righteousness." (1Pe 2:24).

I love what the old Scottish theologian, Thomas Chalmers, wrote; he's the author of this expression...in fact, this expression is actually the title of his sermon. And if you understand the expression, (which is easy to do), you understand the whole sermon. But it is this: He spoke of, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*. We can tell ourselves to stop loving the world, and to hate sin, (and that's right; we should do that), but what moves us to act and serve gladly, willingly, joyfully, is understanding the greatness of Christ's love for us. It did that for Paul.

'The love of Christ for us', is an *expulsive power* in us—as it fills our mind it pushes out the old desires, the improper desires. It expels them because it fills us up, and just pushes them out and drives them away. The knowledge of God sanctifies. The knowledge of God transforms us. It will have a life changing effect upon us to produce love in us, and move us to live a life that matters and really counts— both now and for all eternity.

But, 'Am I speaking to a congregation full of believers? Every one of you is shaking your head yes, and likes what you heard...you like that idea of definite atonement.'

There may be some here who don't...(I have to assume that). Maybe you're worried that you might not be one of the 'all' Christ died for. 'It's restricted to the elect.', you say, 'Maybe I'm not one of the elect.'

But you can settle that by believing in Him; it's simple: Trust in the Lord...believe and you are in that blessed company.

If you reject Him because it seems foolish to you, or offensive that His sacrifice is limited to the elect, well then you reject the only hope that you have...and you condemn

yourself. Christ has opened His arms to sinners...and He receives *all*—regardless of who they are, what they are, He receives *all* who come to Him, who trust in Him.

And so, come to Him. Trust in Him as God's eternal Son, and mankind's only Savior —believe and be saved. Believe and you will be saved and part of that great company...and then live for Him unto righteousness.

(Closing prayer) LORD, we give You thanks, so we can sing that and sing it with great joy and confidence that You've made us by Your grace, part of 'the church victorious', and someday we'll be 'the church at rest'—eternal rest. This doesn't mean inactivity; there will be great activity for all eternity. We can only imagine, and really can't even begin to imagine that, but we will be at rest. We won't have fatigue over anything. We'll be full of joy, and You've made us a part of that by the death of Your Son. Thank You for that; thank You for Your grace.

We will spend all eternity reflecting on that, and never come to the end of the greatness of it, and what we learn about it. We do pray in the meantime, give us an understanding of what Your Son has done for us. Expand our understanding of that; make us grateful, and through that, obedient servants of You.

We thank You for Christ, for His death for us, The Servant who laid down His life for us. And it's in His name we pray. Amen.

(End of Audio)