

The Power of the Gospel - Pt 4

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I. Recap

A. There is radical mercy in the Gospel. Jesus runs to the Samaritans and the Prodigals.

B. Jesus always presents himself as a friend and so we are to present ourselves as a friend,

C. We pray, proclaim and manifest power in presenting the gospel.

D. Today I want to talk about the motivation and actions of love

II. Love Compels Us

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

—2 Corinthians 5:14-15

A. This verse is translated three different ways by different English versions. The

NKJV/NIV use the word “compels”. The ESV uses the words “controls”.

The KJV

uses the word “constrains”

B. These three English words give a full sense of how the love of God actively impacts our hearts.

- Compels – It motivates us and urges us to move forward and act
- Constrains – It restrains us from doing things we shouldn't

- Controls – It governs us, inspiring our decisions for good

III. Biblical Instructions to Love

A. Love God

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

—Matthew 22:37

B. Love Ourselves

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

—Mark 12:31

C. Love One Another (Fellow Believers)

Love one another: just as I have loved you.

—John 13:34-35

D. Love our Neighbor

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

—Leviticus 19:18

D. Love Strangers / Foreigners

You shall treat the stranger... as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself.

—Leviticus 19:34

E. Love the Poor and Oppressed

If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or tongue, but in deed and in truth.

—1 John 3:17-18

F. Love our Enemies

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

—Matthew 5:44

IV. Love Acts

*...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts
through the Holy
Spirit who was given to us.*

—Romans 5:5

*But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother
in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's
love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word
or talk but in deed and in truth.*

—1 John 3:17-18

A. There is no question that the Love of God transforms us. It has the power to take a soul that is selfish and self-serving and turn it into a selfless, generous and sacrificial lover of others.

B. When we allow love to transform us from selfishness to selflessness, that's when we see the power of the gospel most manifest.

C. I was taught that whatever God gives us we can try to give it away, but you can't out-give God. When we give what He gives us, He gives it back to us. This is a foundational idea of love. He loves us and from that well, we then we love others.

D. I am concerned that today most believers withhold love because of fear. They reason, "the world is a dark place, if I love, I may get hurt." But the bible is clear, perfect love casts out all fear (1 John 4:18). I will tell you I would rather love and get hurt than never experience the wonder of loving.

E. I have come to believe that when love is not expressed, it is either hidden, untrue, or simply wasted. Love must love. Love gives (John 3:16), Love is

demonstrated (Rom 5:8), Love Acts (Luke 10:33-37).

F. And then there is the admonition that loveless actions are worthless:

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not
love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
2 And though I have
the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all
knowledge, and though I
have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have
not love, I am nothing. 3
And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and
though I give my body to
be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*

—1Co 13:1-3

G. C.T. Studd quotes, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last" and "Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell."