



PRIMARY SCRIPTURES

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. 12 We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. 13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14 For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; 15 and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

2 Corinthians 5:11-15

SUMMARY

How can you be sure that your life in Christian ministry will be rewarded by God? Is it possible to be certain? In 2 Corinthians 5, the Apostle Paul wrote that there will be a reckoning before Christ of the deeds we did in this life. Some of our deeds will result in reward and some will be burned up in judgment. 2 Corinthians 5:11-15 provides believers with two motivations that we can be certain will result in rich reward by our King.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Verse 11 states that Paul understood the fear of the Lord. Because of this, his heart was to encourage and persuade others. Meditate on this verse in addition to Proverbs 9:10. How is wisdom obtained from fearing the Lord? How does knowledge of Him give us insight? How does this cause your heart to encourage and persuade others?
2. Paul strives to convince his listeners that he is sincere. Review 2 Cor. 1:12: “For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you.” Read 1 Thess. 1:5-6. Explain what role the Holy Spirit plays in us as sincere ambassadors of Christ.
3. Read 2 Cor. 5:14. The ESV version says that “the love of Christ *controls* us.” The NIV version says “Christ’s love *compels* us.” The CEV version says “We are *ruled by Christ’s love* for us.” Compare these different versions. How are they alike? How are they different?
4. Christ’s love converted us, and now compels us. 1 John 3:16 says we know what love is because Jesus gave His life for us. Read Philippians 2:1-11. What actions can we choose to show Christ how grateful we are for Him? Consider putting this in a prayer.
5. In verse 16, Paul has learned to *not* regard others from a worldly point of view. I Samuel 16:7 says “For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.” Be reminded of how important our heart thoughts and intentions are in the following verses: Psalm 44:21; Proverbs 4:23; Proverbs 16:2; Proverbs 21:2; Matthew 5:8; Matthew 6:21; 1 Tim. 1:5; Hebrews 10:22; James 4:8; and other verses that you recall. How do these verses teach and encourage us to look at others in this dark and difficult world?
6. If you have accepted Jesus Christ as your savior, you are a new creation, shaped by the cross! How do you demonstrate this transformation in your life?

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