

3 Great Motivations to Love the Lord

by Paul Washer

Transcript

Second Corinthians chapter five. I noticed that some of you are still coming in and, and, and, um, don't worry about that. Just, just keep coming.

Also, I know that there are many of you that have children and things like that. It's not going to bother me a bit. If, if they start crying a whole lot, just take them out.

And then as soon as they stop, just bring them right back in. We want them to be under the word of God. And, um, I don't know really what you're expecting tonight.

I don't even know what I'm expecting. I know this. I want to move with a great deal of caution.

If, if the spirit of God is to bring revival, it will not be because I have offered you some strange fire, or I have kindled your emotions. As a matter of fact, the older that I am getting, the more I am seeking purposefully not to kindle the emotions of men. The times, the few times in my life that I have seen the spirit of God come and and do amazing things.

It was not because somehow I fired up the group or use some power of persuasion, but it was the sovereign spirit. It is in him that we ought to trust. He knows what we need.

I walk up here tonight weak, weak, very weak in more ways than one. But borrowing from an old preacher, thinking over and over in my mind, I believe in the Holy Spirit, I believe in the Holy Spirit. You are so precious to God.

Those of you who belong to him. There is so many things that he can and will do. As I teach on the fear of the Lord tonight.

I'm not trying to get you or hurt you, it's just that. Well, it's not that I want so much for you. It's that I want so much for you and me.

And I need this probably more than you do. Whitfield came to the United States and they asked him, why are the churches so dead? He said, because the preachers are dead. Much of the malady in America cannot be put on liberal politicians.

But upon my company. My circle. So I want us to look at the fear of the Lord and here's what we're going to do.

Some of you, many of you are probably going to walk away from here very disappointed because I do not want to fire you up for 20 minutes and then you go home and tomorrow you're unchanged. I want to teach you some things and because some of the things that I'm going to teach you are very, very difficult and very controversial. I'm going to be going to my notes and I'm going to be citing men so that you see this is not something that that I invented.

Now. Pray for me that I will stick to this text. That I will teach you the word of God.

That you'll walk out of here knowing something you did not know. But something that the spirit of God has taught you in order to change you, I want to be changed. I am so sick and tired of conferences and big preachers and big ministries and all the things that go on.

I don't care about it at all. I just want to be changed. And I know that's in your heart.

Some of you look at people like me and you look at us in a very, very long way. You think that we don't have problems like you. We have every problem you have.

As a matter of fact, one of the things that I have found most strengthens me to minister to God's people is that I have the same problems they have. You're able to just walk on incredible heights sometimes, aren't you? And yet other times you look worse than the most immature believer. Sometimes the beauty of Christ is just so manifested in your life.

You know that. And sometimes you're you're horrid. OK, can we talk now? That's me.

I don't want you to think something about me or my kind. It's a lie. I'm not going to scream at you that you need to get right with God and that you need to fear the Lord.

I need to fear the Lord. I need to be right with God. Yes, there's times when, yeah, I'm capable of jumping up on a park bench and preaching while everybody's throwing terrible things at me and saying worse things about me.

Then I come home and I'm impatient with my wife. What is that? I want to be changed. It's so easy to look powerful in this pulpit.

I want to look powerful in the secret places and with the people who are closest to me. Not on YouTube, in my home. And so now that we realize that we're on the same plane here.

Then let's talk about the ambition that we ought to have and the motivation for that ambition. Let's look in Second Corinthians, chapter five. Verse.

Nine. He says, therefore, we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Therefore, 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. We 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. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God, and if we are of sound mind, it is for you.

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died 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. Let's pray, but let's let's pray together. While I'm praying, just simply do not listen to what I'm saying, but cry out to God that it might be your ambition to be pleasing to his son.

And that he would teach you. The proper motivation, the things that you need and empower you so that you might live a life. Consistently with this as your ambition, let's pray.

Father. I come before you in the name of your son, with my brothers and sisters in Christ. We have nothing.

We have no righteousness. Of our own, we have no strength, we have no integrity, we have no loyalty. We cling violently to Christ.

We look to Christ. Our salvation, father, we acknowledge before you is in Christ. That we need him now as much for our sanctification as for our justification.

That we depend upon him, we need you, we need you to enlighten us, we need you to illumine our minds, we need you to give us strength, we need to be emboldened, we need to be changed. We need to be transformed. We need all the fullness of God.

We desire greater and greater manifestations of the character of God in our lives, greater and greater manifestations of the spirit of God in our lives. Father, in many ways, we are so sick. Of our failures, we don't want to be like we are.

Lord, we want to be real. We want this, these things to be real in our lives. We ask you, father, to help us.

To put within us. Ever increasing this desire, this this passion. To be pleasing to your son.

Father, we ask this in Jesus name. Amen. Let's look at verse nine.

Therefore, we also have is our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to him. Here we have the minister's great ambition, the Christian's great ambition, the apostle Paul's great ambition. Now, this is exceptionally important for all of us, but particularly it is important for those of us who minister the gospel.

There are so many things that can pull at us, so many things that can enter in and become competing loyalties in our heart that you and I need to study the scriptures. We need to seek Christ. We need to cry out for a purity of heart that would have a singleness of mind that would have one soul ambition.

And that is to be pleasing to Jesus Christ. If you had that, if I had that, absolutely everything else would fall in place in the Beatitudes. Do you remember what Jesus said? Blessed are what? The pure heart.

Now, many people think they have the idea of blessed are those with a heart as white as snow. That's not the idea in the text. But it's this, blessed are those who have no competing loyalties in their heart.

But they have one single ambition, and that is the kingdom of heaven and not the kingdom of heaven for the kingdom of heaven's sake, but the kingdom of heaven for Christ's sake, for him. I'm not like that. I look in the mirror of God's word and I find all sorts of competing loyalties.

That I have to struggle against, that I have to die to. And I have discovered that I am unable to die to these things apart from renewing my mind in the word of God, apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, apart from daily relying upon the power of Christ. Do you think that God uses a man because he's reached some level of purity in his heart that so far exceeds you that he has become a useful instrument? Well, maybe in some man's case, but not in mine.

I struggle with all sorts of competing loyalties in my heart. But I do know they can be overcome by the renewing of my mind, by a life of prayer and by fellowship with the godly to have one single motivation. Now, I want you to look at the word for a moment, ambition.

It actually comes from two Greek words that are put together, phallos, which means love, and time, which means honor. Now, what does the word mean? Well, literally, it means to love honor, to be actuated or motivated by a love for honor, to strive earnestly that you might gain honor. Now, in the world, that's exactly what it means, but in the kingdom of heaven, it means something else.

That you strive, that you desire, that with all your passion, you labor for one thing in order to please Christ. You see, it really is a matter of the heart, isn't it? Proverbs was right when it said, guard your heart, it's the wellspring of life. This is one of the reasons, dear young Christian, this is one of the reasons for separation.

We separate from things that are evil and that contaminate, not so that we can boast about being holy, but so that we can love Christ. So that our heart will be pure enough to seek his will and desire to please him over all things. Now, listen to a quote by Charles Hodge.

I'm going to be quoting him a lot this evening. Here, Paul intends to say, now listen to this. This is amazing.

Here, Paul intends to say that as ambitious men desire and strive after fame, so Christians long and labor to be acceptable to Christ. Love to him, the desire to please him and to be pleasing to him animates their hearts and governs their lives. And makes them do and suffer what heroes do for worldly glory.

Years ago, many, many years ago, a friend of mine brought me a track, just plain, simple track, and then I discovered that Leonard Ravenhill gave it to him to give to me. So I now still have that track. The track basically said others can, but you cannot.

And the point of this, and especially young people, listen to me. You've grown up in a Christianity that's learned all these beautiful phrases like the supremacy of God and the glory of God, and you've learned a lot of good theology, but it's not filtering down to cause you to separate from your wicked culture. You must learn separation.

I do not go places and I do not do certain things and I do not watch or listen to certain things. Why? Because I cannot be loyal to Christ. A heart that contaminated cannot serve him.

Young men, why should you not look upon another woman? Why should you not look at indecent things, television and media and all sorts of things? One of the reasons, of course, first of all, is for the glory of God. But the second reason is this, so that you might love your wife one day. You see, if you're looking at all these other things, you will never have a pure enough heart to love one woman.

In the same way, if you're going to be pleasing to Christ, you must keep your heart pure and fight against the competing loyalties that are there. We must be pleasing to Christ. Now, what does it mean to be pleasing to Christ? Because look in verse nine, it says, whether we are present, therefore, we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Christ.

What does it mean to be pleasing to Christ? Well, in verse 10, we get our answer for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Pleasing to Christ is defined in the context of good or bad. To be pleasing to Christ, what do we do? We discover in God's word what is bad and we run from it like the plague.

And we discover in God's word what is good and we run to it for glory. Do you see that? Young people, listen to me. You're not going to be able to get on well in the Christian life if you don't take this attitude that everything that is evil is a disease.

It is corrupt and it will corrupt you and it will hinder your life. My lack of knowledge does not so much hinder my Christian walk, but my lack of purity of heart. Guard your heart.

Guard your heart. Run from that which God determines is evil. And run to that which he determines is good.

So basically, what does it mean to be pleasing to Christ, to discover the will of Christ? And to do it. Now, I want to read a text for you in Romans 12 to and do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable. The word there is the same word in the Greek, pleasing and perfect.

You were not born into this world with wisdom. You were not born into the kingdom of heaven with a great deal of wisdom. You do not know your left hand from your right hand, though you have been given the Holy Spirit, if you have been regenerated and the Holy Spirit teaches you, he teaches you through the scriptures.

And what must you be doing? You must be renewing your mind. If someone tells me that I've got to have media in my church because culture needs media, it still will not be in my church. I am not called to conform to culture.

If you can't read, then when you get saved, I will teach you to read. If you can't sit 25, 35, 40, an hour and a half to hear a good sermon, then I will teach you how to do it. You have got to learn.

You are the first generation, young people, who think that in order to reach your age, you've got to become like your culture to be relevant in your culture. You're the first Christian generation to believe that. All other Christians said this, to be effective in my culture, I've got to be completely different than my culture.

Biblical, godly, holiness, simplicity. That is why. That is why all your noise is so useless.

Everything about you was taught to you by someone you should not have been listening to. I, for many years, I had a lot of hope the last 10 years looking at all the young men that were studying good theology and reading good books and going back to the old stuff. I had a lot of hope that hope has been dashed against the rocks because I've realized it's gone to the head, but they're still cool.

They're still worldly, they're basically saying, look, I can be worldly and theologically correct at the same time. You can't be worldly and godly at the same time. Don't go to culture and find out what culture wants in order for you to be able to reach them, go to scripture and say, Jesus, how do you want me to be? How do you want me to talk? How do you want me to walk? How do you want me to dress? What do you want my relationships like? Jesus, I submit to you.

My goal is to be pleasing to you, to him, to the wind with all your stuff. Every part of you belongs to him. I love the Puritans, I love reading the Puritans, it doesn't mean I agree with everything the Puritans say, but here's what I appreciate about the Puritans.

They honestly sought to ask the question, how does God's word apply to every aspect of my life? But you know what's amazing? You cross the board to people who are a little bit different than the Puritans, but just as holy as the Puritans, they ask the same question. Isn't that amazing? The godly voice had one thing in common, what does Jesus want? And then they didn't try to just figure it out using their own imagination or asking the world. They went to Jesus and his word and found the answer.

And to be pleasing to him, to find out what he desires. And then do it. Just just just do it.

Philip Hughes writes this, to be pleasing, to be well, pleasing to Christ is indeed the sum of all ambition, which is truly Christian. In a resting contrast to the ambition of this world, it is centered not on self, but on the Savior, its goal is to please him. Keith Green wrote a song many years ago that I that I sadly sometimes repeat in prayer.

And it's this, some of you older generation will remember it. I seem to have a wealth of so many thoughts about myself. We are a self-consumed people.

But we weren't made for self, we were made for him. Sometimes I'll see I'll see a person, a young person, especially that that's come to know something of Christ and and they're just so caught up in the things of the world. And since I now have children that I love, I don't I don't judge.

I think like I used to. I'm not quite as harsh. I look at them almost as my children.

And I go, oh, if you only knew what you were doing, what a rot your life is, because you're all consumed with self. You're all consumed with this world. Jesus calls us to deny ourself, to die to self, why? Because he wants to leave us there.

No, we die to self that we might have him, that we might have him. In the countries where we work around the world, I find an amazing thing that wherever there is great poverty. The church seems to be precious and simple.

Every night there's church, not because they have to go to church, it's just they don't have anything else. I remember in Peru during the social unrest, the war and everything, every night we met why we were afraid we could die. We had nothing.

You'd wait in line an hour and a half to get a bag of rice. We'd meet together and just sit and talk and everyone would talk about the things of God. But as the war ended and prosperity came back into the country.

All of that began to dissipate and the church began to look more and more like the church in America. We so need to be his and to do everything we do for him, and I assure you this is an extremely rare quality. Just listen to the apostle Paul.

Paul says of Timothy in Philippians 2, 20 and 21, for I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare, for they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. That is one of the most that's one of the hardest statements I believe I've ever read in the Bible from the apostle Paul. He's saying, look, all the other people, even some that are working with me.

They're all concerned about their own interests, but here's this Timothy, he's outstanding. Why? He's concerned about the things of God. You see how the heart is more important.

Having a true ambition for Christ is more important than gifts and talents and powers. I mean, when we look at Timothy, we discover that he really didn't know how to run a church. He was very, very timid in his evangelism, doesn't seem that he wanted to get out and he was very afraid to suffer.

But Paul said, I have no one like him. Why? He had one ambition. And that was to please Christ, to please Christ.

Young men that go into the ministry, listen to me. Do you think that I do not know that many of you have heard me preach and that so many people think that if I come here, I'm going to carry a revival in my pocket? Do you not know that it's a burden on me, an ungodly, fleshly burden that when I stand up here, I know you're expecting me to be able to do something. Now, that's not I'm not lamenting that I'm not saying, oh, pitiful me, that is a sign of sin in me.

What do I care what you think? Maybe the best thing that could happen here tonight is I totally fail and dumbfounded and cannot even preach so that you realize that God, if he speaks through men, it's only because he still speaks through rocks and donkeys. But there are no men of God, great men of God, there are only pitiful, weak, useless, tiny, fearful men of a great and merciful God. But doesn't that give you hope? So now you say when you see that the man in the pulpit is quite like you, you go, well, then he can use me.

Grace, grace, grace. Grace, grace. Jesus said of the Pharisees, but they do all they do to be noticed by men, that is a great temptation in the ministry.

Oh, you can get great fame in the ministry, you can gain great wealth in the ministry. You can take your vision and go around the world with it, and maybe it's all rocked in the stomach of God. And again, let me say this, I am so sick and tired of men and all their visions.

The only vision we ought to be having is Christ crucified, resurrected and glorified, standing at the right hand of the father. And just because some great big vision is being fulfilled in your life does not mean you're an obedient man. Your desire should be simply to obey him, to please him and nothing more and rest in that.

There is a celebrityism that even conferences like this can promote, even though they do not want to, there is a celebrityism that if you're a faithful pastor over a small flock, you must be a failure because you're not in the conferences. That's that's from hell. It's damnable.

Your desire ought to be to serve and please Christ. Philosophical question for you, why would deity plant its most beautiful rose in a forest through which no man walks? How can that flower glorify God if no man sees it? Well, he glorifies God because God sees it 24 hours a day and rejoices in it. And I've come to think that it's the jesters and the fools that get to come up forward.

And the most beautiful of God's men and women are hidden from everyone's sight. I know that to be true. Many times I have preached and look down on the front row several years ago, it's preaching on the Old Testament.

I look down on the front row and they're sitting the Hebrew scholar, Dr. Muglia from India, he has forgotten more about the Old Testament than I will ever know. What am I doing up here? No one knows his name, and yet he knows more about Christ in the Old Testament than I will probably know in a thousand years. Your ambition is not to run some circuit or to get invited to a conference, your ambition is to be pleasing to Christ.

And on Judgment Day, the whole world is going to see such a flip flop. I'm terrified of Judgment Day. In a healthy sort of way, and we'll and we'll get to that.

I've put here, if the fear of man is a snare, the desire to please man is a prison from which there is no release. Our ambition should be to please Christ now in our ambition to please Christ, there are three motivations, and as I was studying this. I just.

The wisdom of God's word. Because when you talk about the fear of the Lord and judgment of the believer, you can take a sincere, godly believer who has a very timid heart and crush them into a thousand pieces. So how do you teach this truth? Putting a proper fear into the hearts of the people without crushing people? Well, I tell you how you do it, you do expository preaching because it's all in the text.

Everything is there. Paul gives us three motivations for being ambitious to please Christ in the center of those three motivations is the fear of the Lord. That we must all stand before the judgment throne of Christ, so there it is, but.

That's awesome reality, that awesome truth is sandwiched between two things that are not buffers, they're just beautiful. I must have as my ambition to please the Lord, I must have that ambition because I will stand before him on judgment day and be exposed. But if I go a little earlier in the text, I must have that ambition because.

I have a glorious future awaiting me in which I will be like Christ, regardless of what happens on that day of judgment, I am assured through faith in Christ, I will be with him. And then after him telling us about the judgment, as we go further on in the text, he tells us another motivation, the love of Christ constrains us to see what we have. Believer is this.

What are we motivated by? We're motivated by the fact that we are going to stand before Christ and we are going to be judged. That is an honest and real motivation, but we are not distraught, nor are we crushed by this truth. Why? Because we are told beforehand that by faith in Christ, we will be with him in glory.

And then we are told that it is the love of Christ, Christ's love for us that ought to constantly be motivating us. So now we're going to look at these three motivations. But before I do, I need to say something.

Many of you are thinking, hey, he was supposed to preach on the fear of the Lord and evangelism. Well, if you want me to preach on that, you better give me another text, because that's not what this text is teaching. This is the text you gave me.

And what this text is teaching is this, even though there is a secondary truth here that as a minister of the gospel, I need to warn people of judgment. That's only a secondary idea. The primary idea is this, as a minister of the gospel, I need to be warned of judgment.

I need to make sure I'm preaching a true gospel. I need to be sure that I am not compromising. I need to be sure that I am not presenting myself before people as something I'm not because on the day of judgment, I am going to be filleted and totally exposed before all of creation.

That's what the text means, so let's look at our first motivation to serve the Lord with all our heart, and I want you to look at verse nine. Let's look at verse nine. You see that first preposition there, therefore.

It's very important, he says, therefore, we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to him. So that therefore is connecting us to a motivation that precedes this verse nine. And what is that motivation? If we go back to chapter four and chapter five, this is what we see.

We see that Paul was motivated. To to please Christ because of future eschatological glory, I had to put that in there so that you would think I was smart. He was motivated because of what was coming for him, what God had done for him and Christ, he could suffer all sorts of things because he knew what did he know? He knew that even if they took his body from him, his body would be raised.

He would stand before Christ in glory. He would be glorified and he would forever be with the Lord. Do you see what a wonder that is? Let's look in verse seven of chapter four, but we have as this we have this treasure and earthen vessel so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not of ourselves.

He's saying we are weak on the outside. There's nothing really glorious about us. We're like an old earthen vessel, but inside of us there is the gospel message.

And not only that, he's going to tell us that inside of us is the indwelling spirit of God. And so he goes on in verse eight and he says, and we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed, perplexed, but not despairing, persecuted, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed, always caring about in the body, the dying of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body. Now, in verse 14, he says this, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and present us with you.

Verse 16, therefore, we do not lose heart. But though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day for momentary light. Affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.

Now, here's some things that I want us to look at that are very, very important. First of all, I do not like most songs that are written about heaven there, I said, I just don't like. Because they've missed it, not all of them, there are some beautiful songs about heaven, but they've missed it.

Heaven is not heaven because of streets of gold and gates of pearl, heaven is not heaven because of some utopia in which you have a perfect body and you're able to do everything that you want to do perfectly. I mean, think about it for a minute, heaven, eternity is a very long time, anything that is finite is

going to grow old, it's going to wear itself out, it's going to be boring. You can only you can only swing on gates of pearl so many times before you don't want to do it anymore.

Heaven is heaven because of the glory and the beauty of Christ, he is infinite. He's infinite, do you understand what I'm saying? Even though you will be glorified, you will not be infinite, you will still be a finite creature in heaven is basically this. You as a finite creature running through all of eternity like a madman chasing down the infinite glories of an infinite God manifested in the face and person of Christ.

Do you see that? Now, herein lies the problem. I don't want you to raise your hands. I want you to think about this, how many of you.

Have had, let's say, at least three years of expository preaching on the attributes of God. How many of you have had a year in which you've sat under expository preaching on the attributes of God? How many of you have had six months or three months? Therein lies our problem. Instead of following Jonathan Edwards, the church in America followed Benjamin Franklin.

Instead of following theology, we followed pragmatism. And so you have to get believers all souped up about heaven. Through different little methodologies and strategies and moving their emotion and dimming the lights and playing the music and pitching a fit on stage.

You know what your greatest need is? A great ambition for Christ. You know where that comes from, one of the sources is this. The knowledge that you will be with him, but that means very little unless you know who he is.

Our people are dull apart because they know almost nothing of God, because preachers rarely teach on the attributes of God or the glories of God in the face of Christ or the manifestations of God through the cross, which was the greatest revelation of the glory of God that could ever be given. And. You know, I just hate it, you know, preachers will look at a congregation and say you need to love God more, everyone in the congregation is beaten down by.

Yes, I know you want to throw off a sermon, just stand up and ask him how. Because most won't be able to tell you. You say, I know I need to love God more.

I know that I hate myself because I do not love God more. But what do I do? I mean, how does a man pick himself up by his bootstraps? How do I make myself love God more? Let me give you an illustration. I love my wife of 19 years more than when I first met her.

And when I first saw her, she was so beautiful, I I just I passed out or something. I think I hit a car. I know I pulled out of a driveway and I backed into a car and had to fix it.

But I love her now so much. Why? Because I know more about her virtue now than I knew 19 years ago. And it is that virtue that draws out of my out of my regenerate heart affection.

And that affection causes me to want to be with her and serve her. I know her. Do you know what the church's greatest need? It's not to be hit over the head with you need to fear God more.

Needs to be taught about the God they ought to fear. You show them who God is and you won't have any problems with fear. You show them who God is and who God is in Christ.

That's why coming up here, I was just battling back and forth because I really didn't want to teach on this, I wanted to teach on what I teach on all the time, every time, over and over again, so many times that most people think I only have one sermon, and that is Christ dying on a train. Because in that is manifested such glory. I have spent the last 12 years of my life, many times hours a day, one thing, looking at the cross.

It cannot be exhausted. It will not be exhausted. And the more I see the glory of God in the cross of Christ and the person of Christ, the more my desire, my ambition grows.

Christ. Do you know, believer? That God, that Christ, I teach this to my boys, we were we were studying this the other day, we're studying the beauty of God. That Christ is so beautiful.

That if you were to catch a glimpse of his beauty, it would disintegrate your mind, it would drive you mad, it would kill you so that you will have to be supernaturally strengthened, transformed to something of his glory for you to even begin to behold the foothills of his glory. I was telling my boys, I said, you know, when we go out camping or we're kayaking and the sun comes up and you see all that red glow in the sky and the beauty, I said, Ian, does sometimes it just take your breath away? He goes, yeah, dad, you go. He says, yes.

Christ's glory and beauty is so great, it would pulverize your heart. That's what's waiting for me. That's what's waiting for you.

C.S. Lewis said that if we could take a look into the future at the transformation that will occur in our life, if we could see ourselves as we will be, we would have a tendency to want to fall down in worship, thinking we had come into contact with deity that is waiting for you and for me. So when Paul talks about this, this eternity, he's not talking about some materialistic, fundamental idea of heaven as a place with streets of gold and gates of pearl, although I'm sure it has much more than that. He is Christocentric.

You see, he had a glimpse of that glory and he said, I'm going, I'm going to see him and I'm going to see him in his fullness. And because of that, all this affliction is nothing more than light, momentary affliction. What you need more than anything is a revelation of God in Christ.

I know that there are times and this is also the thing that God has given me, at least for a time, sometimes we have to stand up and we have to speak negatively about things that are wrong. But that's not who we are as preachers. We don't walk around just talking about everything that is wrong.

We talk about the glories of God. Let me give you an application for street preaching and for evangelism here. I see so many street preachers and I applaud the fact that God seems to be raising up street preachers, but some of them, I wish they would quit and work at Lowe's or Home Depot.

They're just angry people who want to hurt other people and call them names and film themselves while they're doing it so they can put it on YouTube and then hope that somehow they'll be known as a martyr. How I would give to just walk around a corner and see a street preacher who was just telling people about how glorious Christ is. He's just glorious.

Oh, if you could only see what I see. Oh, if you'd only stop for a moment, let me talk to you about the beauty of Christ, about the beauty of God, about what he has done and what he can do in your life. Believers, you ought to be so excited about what's ahead of you.

It's just absolutely mind boggling. Sometimes you just sit up at night and your brain is just going back and forth in your head. Well, mine does, because I have a lot of room in there.

It's just going back and forth and back and forth, thinking I'm one day closer. I mean, I'm really going home. I turned 50 a few weeks ago.

I know it's hard to believe. I turned 50 a few weeks ago and I realized I'm on the other side. And I'm not trying to slow it down.

Because of Christ, believers, if you want to do something, go home and study Christ, cry out that God would show you Christ and he would show you what he's done and who he is. And that will motivate you to want to be pleasing to him. Now, Charles Hodge says this, it is impossible that those who regard the presence of Christ are being with him as heaven.

Now, listen to that. They're regarding being with Christ as heaven. It is impossible that those who regard the presence of Christ are being with him as heaven should not desire and labor to be pleasing to him by living in obedience to his commands.

Now, let's go to the second motivation and it's chapter five, verse 10. The second motivation is that we must all stand before the judgment throne of Christ. Now, before we get there, I want to remind you.

The issue of the genuine believers place before God was settled on Calvary, you must hold this in attention. Now, before I even get into this, let me explain this. When we're talking about the Trinity, do you realize that there were heresies regarding the Trinity and they were committed by two sources? There are heresies, historical heresies regarding the Trinity, which were invented by people seeking to deny the Trinity.

That's logical. But the heresies also came from people who were trying to defend the Trinity. Because they were saying too much, they were speaking where the Bible was silent.

Let me give an example, if you've ever tried to explain the Trinity to someone by saying, you know, well, the Trinity is like water because it's a liquid and it's a vapor and it's ice. Congratulations, you're a heretic. That's modalism.

You can't do that. That's a horrible thing to say. That's not what.

And I know you're laughing because you've done it. Now, we all do so many stupid things, and that's why when you see another believer do something stupid, realize you've been there, done that, done it and got the T-shirt for it. OK, but when we come to the Trinity, what do we see? We say God is one.

That's what Scripture affirms. God is one. There is not more than one God.

God is one. And what else do we see in Scripture that there are three persons, distinct persons of the same essence and equality, the father, the son and the Holy Spirit? We know that it's true. Now, when we try to put it together.

It's when we get confused. I do the same thing in sovereignty, people say, Brother Paul, do you actually believe that God has decreed everything before the foundation of the world? Yep. So what I believe.

And I also believe I have not because I asked not. And I can't put the two together. I'm not called to.

I see the two things in Scripture. And so I'm not I'm not called to live according to my system, I'm called to live according to the evident truths of Scripture, God is sovereign and I have not because I ask not. Now, it's the same way when we come to judgment, is the believer going to be judged by Christ and recompense for what he has done good or bad in the body? Yes.

Has the believer been justified through faith and now he may say there is therefore no condemnation? Yes. Is he completely and entirely accepted in the beloved? Absolutely. Will he be judged? Absolutely.

I don't know how that goes. But if I lose in either one of those. I've denied the scriptures.

Now, let's look at what we have here. I want to read to you something I've written in our text. Paul leaves behind the theme of future glory and turns to the solemn reality of future judgment.

His ambition to be pleasing is also the result of his knowing that his life and ministry would be manifested or exposed before the throne of Christ, that he would be evaluated and that he would receive payback for what he had done, whether good or bad. I meant every word of that, we're going to see that it is in Scripture. Now, I want to call in some scholars on this so that you see that I'm just not running like a rogue and inventing something.

Philip Hughes writes love for the master because of his matchless love for us should be sufficient incentive for us to follow devotedly in his steps. But there is further consideration to which the apostle draws attention here, namely that even for the Christians, there will be a day of reckoning, we must all apostles and the rest, whether living or dead at Christ's coming, be made manifest before the tribunal of Christ. Brothers, this is true.

This is going to happen and it is such a solemn and magnificent event that it caused the apostle Paul to live in healthy, biblical, godly fear of it. Now, I want us to look at verse 10, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad. I want us to look at three key words in verse 10 just for now, the word all must and each one.

All will appear, all every one of us, the apostles, the church in Corinth, the believers throughout all the ages and even unbelievers will stand before judgment. But. It's all it's all inclusive, no one will escape, there'll be no one to hide behind.

Now, look at the word must. Plummer writes this, it is a divine decree which cannot be evaded. You must.

You as a believer have an appointment. And. In which you will stand before the very one.

From whom the entire universe will flee. Does that make you afraid, according to the apostle Paul, it should, and yet the same apostle Paul gives us comfort, he is able to make a stand. Now, also look at the word each or the phrase each one here in verse 10.

And this is very important. Paul Barnett says this, it is not a judgment in mass. Now, what does he mean? He has said that all will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, but then he says it is not a judgment in mass.

We will not be merely judged collectively. We will be judged individually. Every one of us.

By our cells. Will stand before Christ. We will be judged.

And we will or will not be recompensed. Now, when does it happen? If you look in verse 10, we have two words that are very important. The words appear and recompense, appear and recompense.

Both of these words are found in the Ares tense, and this is very important. It indicates a single action. Let me just read this phrase.

It is a judgment at the end of the age that will determine once and for all our lot in eternity. Now, with regard to the believer, we're not talking about the difference between condemnation and salvation, but eternity will be affected by what you do as a believer here on Earth. You will stand on that great day before the judgment throne of Christ.

Now here it's called the Bema of Christ. What is a Bema? In the earliest stages, the Bema was simply a step and then it became known as a platform or a judgment bench upon which a Roman official would either stand or sit. And from there.

With all power, at least in the context of humanity, the context of men, he would declare judgment upon those who stood before him. Now, Paul Barnett writes, the imagery used here is that of a forensic process. That means a legal process whereby the Roman governor sat on his tribunal to hear the accusation in defense of an accused person standing before him.

If he judged the accused person guilty, the governor would order immediate punishment. Now, again, he's writing in the context of the Roman Empire, but I want you to see something for the believer. We're not talking about immediate punishment.

We're not talking about condemnation. We are justified by faith, but we are talking about something, aren't we? Something is going to happen on that day in which you as a Christian are going to be recompensed in a way different from all your other brothers and sisters in Christ, or you are going to suffer loss in a manner different than all your brothers and sisters in Christ. You will be judged.

That is a solemn truth. I only hope that the spirit of God will impress it upon your heart, that it might be solemn to you. I am warning you.

A fearful day is coming. And no, I cannot fit it perfectly into my systematic, but neither can the New Testament scholars have studied. And we have to hold this in attention.

Now, let's go on. What will happen? And for those of you who are ministers, I want you to take particular caution here, I want you to really listen, because of all the things that I studied to prepare for this message, this shook me up and kept me for a couple of days, very solemn, quiet. But.

What will happen if you look here in verse 10, it says we must all appear, the word appear here is planar, and it's the translation of it is it just doesn't do it justice when you read that we must all appear. You're probably thinking we must all be present or we must all be there. But that's not the idea.

The idea is this. That we must all be exposed, we must all be made manifest. That on that day and another thing that's very, very important, this is a passive tense, the verb is, and so it means we will all be made manifest.

It's something that God is going to do to you. God is going to make you manifest, God is going to reveal to you and to everybody else and to himself what he already knew everything about you now for the minister.

Maybe you'll understand now something of my introduction.

As a minister. I would rather that my congregation. And.

Know the truth about me. Then for me to hide things from them with the pretense of trying to look like something I'm not. I do not get up in front of a congregation and share all my sins or confess all my sins, that would be unwise.

I don't tell everybody everything I'm battling with, that would be unwise, but as a minister, I must not live with a pretense. I must work and labor that people not think too much of me. They should hopefully see of us ministers that we are genuine, that we are sincere, that we that we are without hypocrisy, that we truly want to be like Christ.

But that's all that they should see. They should not believe a lie about us, because what a great shame it will be for us on that day when it's exposed and everyone sees what we really are. That's why I do not like the language, great man of God, even used for a Ravenhill.

Because there are no great men of God, I find not one in the scriptures except for the man. The one man, Christ Jesus. Yahweh's only had one servant, Jehovah's only had one witness, and it was his son.

He's the only covenant keeper. The rest of us. We're saved by him, and that is all.

Now, young man, listen to me. Don't you walk out of here, though, saying, well, you know, these ministers, these older men, Brother Paul, you know, they they do all this stuff, too, but God still uses them. No, that's not what I'm saying.

You probably do a whole bunch of stuff that I know I can't do. You probably have a whole bunch of supposed freedoms in Christ that I don't have. Young man, listen to me, I've used this illustration a million times, but that's OK.

No violinist playing his last concert. Young man walked up to him and said, sir, I'd give my life to play like you. And the old man looked at him and said, son, I have given my life to play like me.

If you want God's hand upon you, you must be a rare bird in this world. You must separate. And listen to me.

All these young guys thinking they got to look like the world to be relevant to the world. When I worked for three years on the street ministry in Fort Worth, Dallas, I looked like what I was. I was in inner city metro, big, gigantic place.

And all I was was a Illinois plow boy with cloth converse all stars on who didn't know anything about being cool. And you know what? None of those people on the street cared. What they cared about was preaching the gospel to them, trying to keep them out of jail, feeding them when they were hungry.

They didn't care whether or not I had moose in my hair and a 60 dollar pair of glasses and a tattoo on my arm and holes in my jeans. I didn't need that. And neither did David Wilkerson.

Stop being cool, you just look ridiculous. It's it's it's true. That's why I said it.

OK, let's let's go on. I want us to look at some things that. Expositors Greek New Testament.

It says the authorized version word appear weakens the force of the word, the day of judgment is to be a day when men's characters shall be made known to the world. Now, listen to this is very, very good, made known to the world, made known to themselves. Do you know there are many things about me I do not know, do you know that there are many sins and many wrong things about me that even you can see that I can't see? On the day of judgment, there's going to be a great revelation, not just of the things I've possibly hidden, but the things I didn't even know about, but the things that God always knew.

That is why, my dear friend, we should say, oh, Lord, in the in the heart of Jeremiah, examine me. David, examine me, Lord, and here's the wonderful thing. It is so wonderful to be examined and even exposed by someone who shed his own blood for you.

I don't have fear of being exposed before him. One time I was getting ready to preach, I was very, very young and I was like 27 years old, I was going to preach and Ian Murray and other people were in the audience, some of my heroes. I mean, he knew Martyn Lloyd-Jones and people like I was just scared to death.

And someone said to me, why are you shaking so bad? I said, what are you talking about? Ian Murray's out there and Mark Devers out there and this guy's out there and I'm going to go preach. And they said, this is what they said. Well, you shouldn't fear men, you preach before God.

I said, I know, but God's a lot more merciful than men are. He doesn't pick you apart. He opens you and fillets you to take the poison out.

Shannon and I were praying before the meeting and and just God just seemed to overwhelm us with the idea of we have nothing but Christ, nothing but Christ. But when you're laying there before the Lord and you realize that here you are, that your best deeds, everything else would only lead to your condemnation and you're open and flayed before him. And you know, though, that Christ has done it all.

It's like being wrapped up in a warm blanket in the midst of a storm. It's wonderful. To have him clean you.

To have him clean you. Let us do it now, brethren, brethren, let's do it now. Let's allow him to expose us now, let's be in his his word.

It is a mirror. You ladies would know this better than we would. You look in that mirror, you adjust yourself.

I have a wife and a daughter and they adjust themselves in the mirror. They're always looking in the mirror to find out what's out of place. But that's what we should be doing with the word.

Lord, show me. Now, Philip Hughes writes to be made manifest means not just to appear, but to be laid bare, stripped of every outward facade of respectability. Pastor, preacher.

This ought to make us free facades. Facades. They're so dangerous.

Facades sent the Pharisees to hell. Facades. You can't be a broken man with a facade.

That's why church young people is so important. Real biblical church is so important, and that's why iron sharpening iron, and that's why brothers and sisters admonishing one another and being open to rebuke. This is God's way of allowing us to deal with these things now.

Church discipline is not some horrible thing, it is a gift from God to deal with these things now. He says, and openly revealed in the full and true reality of one's character, all our hypocrisies and concealments, all our secret, intimate sins of thought and deed will be open to the scrutiny of Christ. A few weeks ago.

I had to take my car for inspection, and so I go to there and I put my car to the people and I say, OK, inspect it and put the sticker on. They said be ready in a couple hours. I go back a couple hours.

It's not ready. They found all kinds of things wrong. I had to pay a couple hundred dollars and then I go back and I get in my car and I drive it home and something just told me, hey, you know, do the blinkers and go see if they work.

Well, I go do the blinkers. Blinkers don't work. Nothing works.

And I'm like, they've done something bad here. And so I go back and I pull in and I say this is not working at all. That's why I brought it here.

It's supposed to be inspected with a state sticker and this is supposed to happen and it's not happening. And I can tell that there's dust around this encasing. You haven't even taken it off.

And they knew they'd been caught. And then I said, would you would you help me on this and fix my car? The guy goes, what? I said, would you would you help me and fix my car? He goes and they start fixing the car after they got done, I said, you know what? I thank you so much. You've been so helpful in fixing my car.

What do I owe you? And the guys were standing there, the owners, and they're like. One of them goes, how can you say that? I mean. How can you be this way? Now, you're all thinking, man, he is so wonderful.

All right, but here's why I'm telling this. So I impressed everybody. I was a light in the darkness.

I was showing mercy everywhere, patience and kindness. I get in my car. And I drive home.

And. And. All I could tell you was that impressed upon my mind.

We're just images of when I was impatient with my wife. Or I was struggling because my son couldn't get a math problem while I was homeschooling. And God's going, look at you.

Look at you. If you cannot be this in the secret place and in the closest relationships, then don't shine anywhere else. Do you see? But that's good.

Isn't that good? Because then I get to repent and I get to be healed and I get to go home and ask my wife, forgive me. You see that we should invite back the wounds of a friend and there's no friend like Jesus. Now we go on.

Why will we be judged? And this is really the difficult part of the text so that we can be recompensed for what we did. The phrase that each one may be recompensed is translated from the Greek word commiso, which is middle voice. It's best translated this way, that we will receive back or receive back what is our own.

Every individual Christian is judged so that every individual Christian might receive back what is due him according to his deeds as a Christian. Now, that's what the text says, how we put it together, we must be very, very careful. Very careful, but it is what the text says.

Now, I'm going to have to skip over a lot of things to get to the end here, but I want to bring up a point that's very, very important. Notice that he says the things that have been done in the body. Now, this is very important, it reminds me of what Paul is telling us in Romans chapter 12, one and two.

About offering our bodies as living sacrifices, we have such a disconnect in America. Like when I people ask me, what is repentance, Brother Paul? And they say, what's I say, what's to change your mind? They say, well, that's kind of superficial. I say, you don't understand what the mind is.

The mind is the control center of everything you are, it is the control center of your intellect, your will, your emotions, it determines everything. You change that mind. Everything else changes.

I'll give you a perfect example. The Apostle Paul. He thought that Jesus was the greatest blasphemer who ever lived, and he thought that all of the Christians ought to be killed or at least thrown in prison.

He has an encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus and he changed his mind. He realized that the one he thought was a blasphemer was the long awaited Messiah and the very son of God, and he realized that the ones he were persecuting as a sect were actually the true Israel of God. And what did he do? He's sitting there in the darkness, just totally and completely disintegrated.

His reality is disintegrated. He realizes that he was wrong in absolutely everything. And what happened? He rose up, he was baptized, he ate something and he started preaching.

His entire life was different. It's the same way he's saying here, we're not talking about what you feel like in your heart. We're not talking about the good things you thought about doing.

We're not talking about good intentions. We're not talking about hallelujahs. We're talking about what you actually did and did not do in the body.

Now, Charles Hodge writes, this is the rule according to which the retributions of the final judgment are to be administered. Philip Hughes, the declaration of Christ's judgment seat is not the ultimate sentence of salvation or damnation, for it is the redeemed alone who stand before it. And they're doing so results either on one hand in their hearing the Lord's well done and the receiving of a reward, or on the other hand, in their suffering loss that is that is through failing to receive the reward.

This is true. Listen to me, this is not taught today because it is difficult to understand. And we never want to indicate to any believer that they're standing before God is determined by anything other than the perfect work of Christ.

Yet at the same time, Paul said he feared because he knew he would stand before Christ, he would be exposed and he would be recompensed. How much of what we have done is going to burn? Why are you alive? My greatest fear for my children, other than not knowing Christ, is that they'll waste their life. Young person, listen to me.

I have no regrets about the things I have given to Jesus Christ, but I have all sorts of regrets about the things I have kept for myself. People say to me, well, you don't have to suffer in America, then choose to

suffer in America. You don't have to go without, then choose to go without some things.

That the believer starving to death and dying and being persecuted and rotting in prisons around the world might be helped. What are we doing? What are we doing? Why? Because that is what will be or will not be rewarded. Now, I want to hold on to some truths here.

First of all, believers are justified and reconciled to God in Christ and Christ alone. Secondly, believers will be judged according to their works. Romans 2, 6 through 11, Romans 14, 10, 1 Corinthians 14, 13, Ephesians 6, 8, Colossians 3, 25, Matthew 16, 27, 1 Peter 1, 17, Revelation 2, 23, 20, 12, 22, 12.

Paul Barnett writes this, though we may have a problem with this tension. They were clearly reconcilable in the mind of Paul. Hold these things in a proper biblical tension.

Denny comments, it is not necessary for us to seek a formal reconciliation of this verse with Paul's teaching that the faithful are accepted in Christ Jesus. We can feel that both must be true. And if the doctrine of justification freely by God's grace is that which has been preached to sinful men, the doctrine of exact retribution taught in this passage has as its main interest and importance for Christians.

Christomacher, the famous reformed commentary writer, he says this, each individual appears in court and hears the verdict based on one's conduct on earth. When the Lord returns, all works, whether good or bad, will be revealed. At that time, he assigns recompense to each individual for deeds performed through the instrumentality of the body while one is on the earth.

Jesus says, behold, I am coming quickly. My reward is with me and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. Next, the judgment is not to be meant or taught as a cloud for the believer.

Or to cloud his future blessedness, but to act as a stimulus, as a strong stimulus to dethrone the most high handed of human ambitions. Now, listen to that again. The judgment is not meant to cloud the believer's prospect of future blessedness.

But to act as a stimulus, a strong stimulus to dethrone the most high handed human ambitions. High handed ambitions, any ambition that is not an ambition to please Christ is high handed. It's an offense against the throne of God.

Now, believers, I have written here, do not face condemnation at the tribunal of Christ, but they do face self-revelation, evaluation and recompense. Now, I know we have gone on. Let me finish up this last part, please.

Just just bear with me. I want to give special attention here in verse 11, therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men. Knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men.

Paul, when he refers to the fear of the Lord, what is he talking about in this context? And you have to determine meaning not by just word studies. That's extremely dangerous. You determine meaning by context, especially in Hebrew, but also in Greek.

What is the context? The fear of the Lord refers to the solemn weight that rested upon Paul's life because he knew that he would stand before the judgment seat of Christ, be exposed for what he was and be recompensed for what he did. Now, he says because of this, he persuades men. Now, here's the idea.

I want to go back to primary and secondary idea. Most people think the primary idea is this, since as a preacher, I know that all of you are going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. I'm going to tell you, get ready.

And in evangelism, I'm going to tell you, be warned now. That's biblical. That's true.

But the primary emphasis in this text is about faith. Paul saying, because I know as a minister, I'm going to stand before the judgment throne of Christ, I'm going to tell you the truth, I'm not going to compromise. But now hear this also.

I'm not going to manipulate you. I'm not going to pull you here and there with false fire, I'm not going to play on your emotions. I'm not going to guilt you into things.

I'm not going to condemn you into my vision. I am going to speak the truth to you. I am going to persuade you.

Now, the act of persuading was really big in Paul's ministry in Acts 18, 4, and he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. Acts 19, 8. And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. Acts 19, 26.

And you see in here that not only in Ephesus, but almost in all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people. Acts 26, 28. And Agrippa replied to Paul in a short time, will you persuade me to be a Christian? It just goes on and on.

One of my favorite passages, although it's a different word, Parakaleo in Greek, in 2nd Corinthians 5, 20. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ as though God were entreating through us. We beg you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God.

Now, if I am a gospel minister, I make a universal call of the gospel to absolutely everyone. I desire for everyone to be saved. I tell everyone they can be saved because anyone who comes can be saved.

And I beg and plead with men. I would want to follow the Whitfield of Edwards and Baxter and Whitfield and Spurgeon and Martin Lloyd Jones and the Wesleys and the Raven Hills that would plead with men to come to Christ and to even warn them. Judgment is coming.

Yet in this text, the announcement that judgment is coming is for me. And it's for those of us who preach. Now, I want to read to you, Paul, knowing the fear of judgment, sought to persuade men with truth, even though it might cost him their affections and cause him great hardship.

He knew that he himself must stand before Christ, be exposed in recompense. Therefore, he sought to carry out his ministry in complete submission to the will of Christ. Paul was always conscious of his responsibility as a steward to not only act, but also to speak according to the will of Christ.

Now, I'm going to read a few scholars on this matter. Paul himself has a deep consciousness of the awe which should be inspired in the heart of every servant who will be required to give an account of his stewardship to his master. The recollection of this fact fills him with a wholesome reverence for his divine master and causes him to treat the ministry which has been entrusted to him with the utmost seriousness.

Now, my favorite, Tasker writes, Paul's primary work is to persuade men of the truth of the gospel. Listen to this. And had he not continually walked in the fear of the Lord, he might have yielded to the temptation to curry favor with his hearers by whittling down his message to suit their tastes.

But the knowledge that his innermost motives were fully known to God, to whom alone he was responsible, and that they would stand the test of his scrutiny acted as a break upon the natural desire to please others, freed him from paralyzing inhibitions and remove the undue sensitivity he might otherwise have felt when subjected to the unjust criticism of others. Someone asked me one time, they said, you know, how do you you know, you just got through preaching and half the people in this building want to kill you. How I mean, how do you do that? I said, first of all.

I live in the reality that when Jesus was persecuted, his persecutors were never right. I can't say that about mine. Sometimes those who disagree with me and criticize me, they are right.

I have to learn from them. We're not perfect, man, and even our enemies can be used by God to teach us something we need to know. That's one thing.

The second thing is this, and this is true. I told him I'm probably the one of the most frightful and insecure human beings you've ever met. And I said, but two things happen.

One, sometimes I feel like Jeremiah, that God played a trick on me. I know I've got to preach and I know I've got to say something that's going to make a lot of people mad and I'm terrified. I'm so nauseous when I'm in the back, I don't even know what to do.

But when I turn around and look at them, it's like God just infused my backbone with steel and I'm afraid of nothing. And then when I finish the sermon, all the steel is gone and I'm afraid again. And I walk down from the pulpit, terrified at what I've just done.

But here's something I learned a long time ago. Let's say I'm the biggest coward in this room. OK.

And you bring up a 90 pound weakling up on the platform and you say, Paul, fight him. And I go, no way, I'm scared. My knees are knocking, I won't fight him.

But there's a way that you can get me to fight him. You bring a seven foot tall, 600 pound man of solid muscle, who's a mixed martial artist. And you say, Paul, you either fight the 90 pound weakling or you fight this guy.

I'm going to jump on that 90 pound weakling like a rat on a Cheeto. I'm going to fight him. Well, you're that 90 pound weakling.

Do you see that? You see, young man, listen to me. Do you think courage means that you've got this John Wayne-ness about you? That would be in the flesh. I know a man, I can't even tell you where he works.

He is a highly honored scholar in the Middle East. One of the most brilliant men I know. He is called upon to do things so dangerous.

And yet, even to do the simplest tasks, he gets so afraid, he almost throws up. God always uses mice. So the courage doesn't come from the fact that there's some John Wayne backbone in the creature.

It comes from a knowledge of I've got to fight somebody. And if I have to choose between God and all of humanity, I'm fighting humanity. Because if all of humanity and all the demons of hell and everything that ever was and is and will be amassed themselves together in a great army to come against the throne of Christ, it would be like a tiny gnat beating its head against the world of granite.

So if you have to fight someone. You don't want to fight him. And this was the thing that Paul knew he had a healthy fear, a healthy fear.

And now I'm going to close with the last motivation here, and we won't spend much time on it, we've kind of touched on it. Paul was ambitious to please Christ, why? Because of the future glory that awaited him. Because of the reality also of the judgment throne of Christ, but also verse 14, for the love of Christ controls us.

Having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died 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. I didn't bring it with me because it's too long, but on this text, I would encourage every one of you to read Charles Hodge, Second Corinthians, Charles Hodge, Geneva series. Produced by Banner Truth, read what he says about this text.

He says that the controlling factor in any Christian's life is the love of Christ. Now, what I want you to see here is very, very important. This is a subjective genitive and it's not an objective genitive, and this is very important.

Paul is not saying that his love for Christ constrained him. Pushed him on and motivated him. He's not saying that at all, he says, Christ's love for me.

Motivates me to give my life away, to live the selfless life, it is the love of Christ for me, that's what I so appreciate about the Apostle John. He doesn't say the one who loved Jesus. He says the one whom Jesus loved.

Sometimes when there's songs like that one song, Oh, how I love Jesus, I turned it around. Oh, how Jesus loves me, because when I look in the mirror, I don't see a whole lot to sing about my love. I see a very feeble thing, but the power of his love for the believer is absolutely phenomenal.

It is that the thing that will most empower you, believer, is to become convinced that his is a perfect love, a settled love in heaven, which shall not be moved. That even when he disciplines, he disciplines in love all that he does. He does in love his disposition toward you shall not change.

It was fixed on Calvary. And it's the most powerful thing, you do not have to move an inch to the left or an inch to the right to be any more or any less loved. That is why not only the attributes of God, but the love of God manifested in the cross of Christ is the thing you must know.

Give your life to studying the gospel. That's what I hate about the American contemporary gospel and hate for me is not a strong enough word. I hate when the cross of my Lord is dumbed down to four laws or five things God wants you to know.

I hate it when a romantic gospel is preached by a preacher who talks about the thorns on his brow and the nails in his hands and feet and the spear in his side and gets all the people weeping, but does not explain to them the true pain of the cross is that he bore our sin and the father in heaven crushed him under the full force of his wrath. Because the greatest theological problem in all the Bible is that if God is just, he

cannot forgive you. And the only way a just God can forgive wicked men.

Is for his justice to first be satisfied because he cannot contradict his attributes. Do you know, I preach that and I have Christians, 30 years, Christians for 30 years come up to me crying and say, I've never, never heard that in my life. That's why America's in the way it is, because no one understands the gospel, because no one's preaching this romantic, soupy, martyrdom type of thing that is preached and sung about.

No, it was a deep chested and a broad shouldered Christ who went to that tree and was and was judged, damned, crushed by his father in our law place. When it is finished, the payment was finished, justice was satisfied, the wrath of God was appeased. And now a holy God can take up to himself an unholy man because he's been sanctified by the blood of Christ.

And a just judge can forgive the iniquity of the criminal because it's been paid. You see, it is studying this gospel. Listen to me, I am not a, I am not a, I'm not a person who dots eyes and crosses tees.

I'm not pretty, I'm not neat. And almost anything I do in my religion, just a wild boar who got saved, what controls me is this. I am a man imprisoned by what? The love of Christ for me.

And if it wasn't for that strong medicine, I would bolt from the stall. It is he loves me, he died for me. In that there is no condemnation.

And that's what I want, I want you to be not, I don't want you to be living under this fear of judgment. I don't want you to be living under comparing yourself to other people and other ministers and other piety and other things. No, I want you to just look to Jesus and keep your eyes there and study him and learn him.

And if you are a preacher, if you are a pastor, lock yourself in the study. Go down like in the book of Job, where people do not go, carry a light with you and mine the treasures of the beauties of Christ and bring them forward on Sunday morning for God's people. Then you won't have to manipulate them emotionally and other things.

You won't have to coerce them with condemnation. You put Christ before them. And if their heart has truly been regenerated, their affections will flow towards them and drive them like madmen to serve him.

It's Christ. It's Christ, Christ. Christ.

Christ. What a savior. What a savior.

And when I look up in the face of my judge. I will find an elder brother and a friend. Whatever happens on that day.

Oh, how Paul feared it, whatever happens on that day, I fear it and I don't. And I can't explain how those two things go together. I fear it and I don't.

He is such a wonderful savior. It's just wonderful. It's pitiful to preach.

I hate preaching. It's just such a failure, just never works. You can't explain that.

You can't explain how wonderful he is. You just might as well everybody go home. It's just that is the pain of preaching.

You do all that you can do and you've done nothing. Because of who he is. He loves you.

He loves you. He loves you so much. God bless you.

Have a good night. Think on these things and be aware that the devil does not steal them from you.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/nwAB433TxKI.mp4>

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