

Studies from 2 Corinthians, Pt. 9
2 Corinthians 5:14-21

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.

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

—2 Corinthians 5:6-11(ESV)

The Christian life is utterly different than and far beyond what most unbelievers think that it is—even though they may think that they know what it is! It is our call and our joyful commission to live it faithfully and to help the world to understand the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.

v14 – the love of Christ controls us...
controls – binds us; has seized us
Christ's love—for one another and for a lost world
The love of *Christ*—not the love of *self*!
This is the fork in the road

“that one has died for all, therefore all have died”
How many unbelievers know this about Christianity?
Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. —Romans 6:3-7
“The world behind me, the cross before me...”
We must die to sin and self in order to follow Christ.
One has died for all—Christ—therefore all have died—because we are in Christ, born again, to walk in “newness of life.”
(Does this sound like the “prosperity gospel”?)

v 15 – and he died for all...
“All” includes us!
“That those who live”—that’s us!

“Might no longer live for themselves...”

And this is the question that so many things come down to—“Who am I living for?”
For myself? or for Him who for my sake “having died and having been raised again”?

v 16 – “From now on, therefore...”

We don’t judge with the world’s values—we have died to that!

We seek to judge according to spiritual discernment—and this includes among the Church!

The world itself regards Christ “according to the flesh”—with little to now understanding of who He really is and what it really means to follow Him.

V 17 – Therefore...

Therefore – because we have died to sin and self and been given new life in Christ. For this reason...

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Not reformed. Not improved. Dead and raised again! A new *creation*.

Spiritual transformation—done for us. Given to us. The work of Christ.

The “old” has passed away

“old” refers to ourselves without Christ. Living for self, not living for God. That is gone. Dead.

Behold, the new has “come into being”!

New birth. The ChristLife. Born again!

v 18 – “all this is from God...”

This is God’s work—not ours. Something He is doing.

Who *through Christ* [more lit] having reconciled us to Himself

Through Christ! God’s way—the only way

He did it—it is not something we “accomplish”—we receive it

And he [more lit] having given us the ministry of reconciliation

We need to get this right—not wrong. We have this ministry from God.

This is the way that people are brought back into right relationship with God—and it is the only way.

“That is” - so here—is—our—ministry:

In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself

Christ’s sacrifice was according to the will of the Father—so great is His love and desire for reconciliation

“not counting their trespasses against them”—because of Christ and only because of Christ!

And [more lit] having put into us the word of reconciliation

A word we need to get right

There is no reconciliation without the cross of Christ

There is no reconciliation without repentance, dying to self, and new life in Christ

“We are, then, ambassadors for Christ...”

God making His appeal through us
Ambassadors do not speak for themselves; the ambassador's opinion is irrelevant
Their job is to represent someone else, or some government

God's appeal is this:

Any other message, any personal "version" of this message is unfaithful
"We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."—God's desire
"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become
the righteousness of God"—God's method. The greatest act of love ever known. The
greatest sacrifice given, that we might be reconciled with God.

God does not "reconcile" with sin—and anyone who is unwilling to give up sin is choosing sin
over reconciliation.

May we be—and may our church be—true ambassadors for Christ!