

INTRODUCTION

- * As we began our study of Paul's second epistle to the church of Corinth, we considered the purpose of affliction in the life of the believer. Through afflictions, we have the opportunity to receive the encouragement of God and, subsequently, to dispense that same encouragement to others who are experiencing afflictions. Afflictions are a means by which we can give testimony to the greatness of our God!
- * Over the past two weeks, we have seen that at the core of "Embracing Afflictions" is the constant battle between the physical and the spiritual realms. As we have seen meteorologically, when two fronts collide there is a storm! Paul told the Ephesians, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood ..." Though we live in a physical plane, as spirit beings we must learn to think beyond the moment.
- * Today's passage, continues the thought process from the past two messages and brings our consideration of events of this world to a crescendo. This is where the rubber meets the road; where proclaimed belief meets actual actions. For if we are in Christ, we are new creations with a new focus and a new calling!

INSTRUCTION**I. THE M_____ OF OUR MINISTRY (5:6-15)****A. Knowing -Factually- The Fear of God (v. 10-12)**

cf. Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:5-10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Galatians 6:7-8; Ephesians 6:8; Colossians 3:24-25; Revelation 2:23
 cf. LXX – Psalm 19:9; 34:11; 111:10; Prov 1:7; 1:29; 2:5; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:26; 15:16,33; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17

1. THE R_____ OF OUR J_____

2. THE M_____ OF OUR L_____

B. Knowing -Experientially- The Love of Christ (v. 13-15)

1. BECAUSE OF D_____ (cf. 1 John 4:19)

2. BECAUSE OF D_____ (v. 15)

II. THE M_____ OF OUR MINISTRY (5:16-17)

A. Toward People in General (v. 16; Ephesians 6:12; James 2:1-4; 3:17; Colossians 3:11)

B. Toward People in Christ (v. 17)

III. THE M_____ OF OUR MINISTRY (5:18-21)

A. The A_____ of Reconciliation (v. 18)

B. The A_____ of Reconciliation (v. 19)

C. The A_____ of Reconciliation (v. 20-21)

1. THE POWER OF OUR C_____

2. THE POWER OF OUR M_____

INTROSPECTION

* If you are in Christ, you are a new creation with a new focus and a new calling.

How does your life compare with that statement?

* Are you focusing more on the physical or the eternal?

* What is the fruit of your Ambassadorship?

* Is there a need to change the way you think ... and therefore act?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

It may be helpful to re-read the passage before the discussion.

* Read Romans 8:1-11; how does it apply to the consideration of the balance between the judgment of Christ and the love of Christ?

* Read the following passages: John 20:21; Luke 10:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:8; and Matthew 28:18-20. How do these apply to the concept of our being Ambassadors of Christ?