

RISKING ALL FOR LOVE

Ministry of Reconciliation

2 Corinthians 5:11–21

*“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced
that one died for all....” 2 Cor. 5:14*

Day 1: Read 2 Corinthians 5:11.

1. Verse 11 refers back to verse 10. What specifically is the “fear of the Lord” Paul has in mind?
2. Since we “must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ” one day (vs. 10), what does Paul feel impelled to do with his life?

Day 2: Read 2 Corinthians 5:11–13.

3. Why the strange and abrupt shift to a defensive posture in verses 11b to 13? Piecing it together with such clues as 1:17, 3:1, and 4:2, what inkling do you get of the background conflict that will be more fully addressed in following chapters? What slander is being spread against Paul?
4. Paul makes much of being “plain” (vs. 11) or transparent before people and God. Find related ideas in 1:12. How can you be “plain” in your relationships in a way that attracts people to God?
5. Based on 12b, what are the two possible contrasting ways of living among people?
6. In 13a, what do you read between the lines as being alleged against Paul? What “evidences” do his detractors have for this opinion? (11:23–27)

Day 3: Read 2 Corinthians 5:13–15.

7. If Paul’s trouble-filled life is not the evidence of madness, then just what is it that does control and drive Paul? (vs. 14)
8. State Paul’s brief summary of the gospel in verse 14.

9. To what end or purpose did Christ die for you, according to verse 15? How would living “for him who died for [you]” look different from living for yourself?
10. Why is it important that Paul tacks on, in the restating of his gospel, that Christ was also “raised” (vs. 15)? (1 Cor. 15:14, 17–20)

Day 4: Read 2 Corinthians 5:16–18.

11. Why do Christ’s death and being raised move Paul to change the way he regards other believers (vs. 16)? (vs. 17)
12. If your fellow Christian is a “new creation,” how should you look at him or her from now on, even if he or she is at the moment behaving badly? What is God’s work in progress in your fellow believer? (3:18) Is there a sister in your life that you must repent of judging or “writing off”?
13. With what words does Paul hasten to reaffirm that this new status in you and your saved neighbor is not the result of “pulling yourselves up by your bootstraps”? (vs. 18)

Day 5: Read 2 Corinthians 5:18–21.

14. Verse 15 stated the purpose for which you were saved. How does Paul refine that purpose in verses 18–20? What is your new job description now?
15. Think about what an ambassador is. Discuss how that imagery can give shape to your own daily life in terms of focus, purpose, zeal, choices, and self-control.
16. Paul makes one last appeal in verse 20 to those who may not have done what yet? Why is this act the most important thing a person can do? (Rom. 3:23; 5:1–2)

17. Yet again, Paul restates the simple gospel in verse 21. What do we learn here about the solemn transaction that wrought your salvation?