

It's Not About Me
Stewardship 2011 Sermon 2
2 Cor. 5:11-15
January 23 and 30, 2011

INTRODUCTION:

QUOTE: Too many people profess to be Christians but DON'T actually live the Christian life. Their Christianity consists mainly of going in and out of church on Sunday and special days. Friends, going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to a funeral home makes you a corpse! Religious form & outward show is not enough! A Christian is one who loves the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength. And he also loves his neighbor as he loves himself. *Rodelio Mallari, How Christians Should Live*

I. Paul's Emphasis (2 Cor. 5:11-12)

- Paul had contemplated the fact that he must one day stand before the Lord.
- This created in him a reverential "fear of the Lord."
- There are always those who can only think with the human eye.
- They do not realize that it is pleasing God that matters.

II. Paul's Earnestness/Enthusiasm (5:13)

A. The Opinion of Paul's Ministry (Acts 26:24; Mark 3:21)

- More than once, Paul is thought to be insane.
- In this, Paul is like His Master.

QUOTE: The real enthusiast always runs the risk of seeming crazy to lukewarm people. The real enthusiast does not care if others think he is a fool. If a man follows out the Christian way of generosity, forgiveness and utter loyalty, there will always be worldly-wise people who will bluntly call him crazy. Paul knew that there was a time for calm, sensible conduct, and he knew, too, that there was a time for the conduct which to the world looks mad. He was prepared to follow either for the sake of Christ and of men. *Barclay*

B. The Objective of Paul's Ministry

(5:13B; Acts 18:11; 1 Cor. 4:14-16; Mark 12:26-31)

III. Paul's Evaluation (5:14B; Eph. 2:1-5)

QUOTE: Commenting on Barabbas, Donald Grey Barnhouse wrote, "He was the only man in the world who could say that Jesus Christ took his physical place. But I can say that Jesus Christ took my spiritual place. For it was I who deserved to die. It was I who deserved to be on that cross."

IV. Paul's Example (5:14,15)

A. The Constraining Christ (5:14A; Luke 8:45; 19:43)

Gk., *sunecho* – To compress, press in, hold together.

B. The Crucified Christ (5:15A; 1 John 4:19)

QUOTE: As far as we know it cost God nothing to create the universe; but paying the price for our sin cost Him the blood of His Son on the cross. *Gerald Flury*

C. The Conquering Christ (5:15C)

V. Paul's Exhortation (5:15-17)

A. Focus on The Savior (5:15B; 2 Cor. 5:21-6:1)

B. Focus on The Spirit (5:16; Gal. 3:3; John 1:13; 3:6; 6:63)

- Paul rebukes those who look at faith and ministry from a human point of view.
- In Paul's use, the flesh is that which opposes God and is in contrast to the Spirit. (cf., Gal. 5)
- The flesh can also be the human point of view, the human way of doing things.

C. Focus on Sanctification (5:17)

QUOTE - "Our churches are in serious trouble today. There is virtually no difference between the average church member and the person who is not a Christian. God meant for the Christian to be different, to live a different kind of life, and to be on a different moral level from those who are not Christians. And yet, there is practically no difference in lifestyle." *Jerry Vines*

CONCLUSION:

ILLUS: "I am watching a man cut holes in the darkness." Robert Louis Stevenson