

Newsletter article

Christ's Love Compels Us

“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him Who died for them and was raised again” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

Some sons disobey their fathers. Others obey unwillingly with arguing and complaining, resentful of their fathers’ authority. Still others are compliant, but are there any who would be as submissive as Jesus was to His Father’s will? “. . . yet not My will, but Yours be done,” Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:42). Carrying out His Father’s will was no easy task, but, because His love for us is as great as the Father’s, He was willing to win our salvation for us by carrying out the plan the Triune God had established before the foundations of the world were laid. It was His love for us that caused Christ to give His very life so that we, who were dead in sin, might be alive forevermore in Him.

There is nothing we can do to earn this love; there is nothing we can do to “pay Him back.” The Christian life of stewardship is a response to His love. His love compels us to respond by loving Him first and best and loving others as ourselves. His love compels us to provide for our pastors, teachers, and missionaries who work to bring the Gospel to the world for which He died (1 Corinthians 9:9-12). His love compels us to look after the widow and the orphan (James 1:27). His love compels us to feed the hungry, extend hospitality to the homeless, clothe the destitute, and visit the prisoner (Matthew 25:37-40).

Stewardship is the use of life and all of life’s resources in response to the grace of God in our lives, poured out in service to others, even as Christ poured out His lifeblood for us. The prophet Micah clarifies to us what God requires of us: *“To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God”* (Micah 6:8b). These are not attitudes we can work up of our own accord. Only as we are renewed daily through Word and Sacrament can we respond to this great love of Christ and respond in joyful service and generous giving that please God.