



LOVE COMPELS US

“FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST COMPELS US . . .”

2 Corinthians 5:14 NKJV

In the King James Version, we are told, “Love constrains us.” What does that mean—constrain? Newer translations say, “Love compels us.” When we are constrained or compelled to do something, it means that we can’t help ourselves. We are motivated to act. We simply *must* do a thing.

There are plenty of examples in life of things people do, almost compulsively. If the phone rings, we drop what we’re doing and make a dash to answer it. If there’s a catchy tune playing, we tap our feet in time. When we see someone yawn, we cannot help but yawn as well. When we enter the sanctuary of a great cathedral, we are compelled to whisper, if we speak at all.



CLEARING + THE + COBWEBS

Have you ever been pregnant, and had some complete stranger walk up and put their hand on your bulging abdomen, and wondered why they felt compelled to do so?



Receiving God's Love

When we see a penny lying on the ground, we bend over and pick it up. And when someone smiles at us, we smile at them in turn.

In this same way, God's love in our hearts constrains us to act in a certain way. It changes our behavior. It compels us.

1. We often hear Christian liberty played up—"We are free in Christ!"—without any mention of the obligations that such liberty carries. What does Galatians 5:13 say about liberty and the opportunity it brings?

Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Philippians 2:2 NKJV

2. What would give Paul great joy, according to Philippians 2:2?

3. What is Paul's prayer for believers in 1 Thessalonians 3:12?



4. Paul uses a unique imagery to describe the lives of believers in Colossians 2:2. What does he say love does for us in this verse?

I turn to the Word of God to remind myself who God is and who He longs to be in our lives.

Patsy Clarimont

5. This same illustration is used in Ephesians 4:16:

The whole _____ (all the believers that make up the Church) _____ and _____ together (intertwined, and united for a purpose)

By what every _____ (each having a special part to play)

According to the _____ (together accomplishing much more)

By which every _____ does its _____ (than we could ever do alone)

Causes _____ of the _____ (both in numbers and in maturity)

For the _____ of itself in _____ (each one strengthened because they know they have a place and they are loved)



How do we truly give up our agendas? How do we genuinely say, "not my will but Yours, Lord"?

Marilyn Meberg

As children, we generally needed help in getting ourselves on to the path of good behavior. Mothers were always prompting us to remember our manners and say the polite thing. We needed strong urging to eat our vegetables and keep our room clean. Teachers had to enforce their assignments with pop quizzes and report cards. All these things compelled us to do the right thing. But even as adults, the right thing doesn't always come easily. As believers, we are compelled to do the right thing by God. He saved our lives, and our gratitude compels us to live for Him. His love for us compels us to love Him in return. We might not have a mother prompting us to remember our P's and Q's, but the Spirit compels us. He nudges us in the right direction.

6. Here is a good rule of thumb from the pen of Paul. What does he desire us to do, according to 1 Corinthians 16:14?



7. Just as we said earlier in this study that we cannot be kind if we do not have someone to be kind to, we cannot be loving with no one to love. Perhaps that's why some of the best verses about love in the Bible have to do with our relationships with other people.

- According to 1 Peter 1:22, when we obey the truth, we do what?
- Sometimes, it just isn't easy to be loving. How does Ephesians 4:2 describe our love then?

- What proverb does Peter quote about loving one another in 1 Peter 4:8?

*And above all things have
fervent love for one
another, for love will cover
a multitude of sins.*

1 Peter 4:8 NKJV



*We might hear a child's
laughter or feel a loved
one's hand squeezing ours
and suddenly feel
overwhelmed with the
abundant joy God
provides us in our
ordinary, humdrum lives.*

Barbara Johnson

8. What interesting aspects of love are brought up in Hebrews 10:24?

9. What does Hebrews 13:1 exhort us to do?

DIGGING DEEPER

There are more examples of love and its compelling force in the lives of believers. Here are just a few examples:

- 1 Timothy 4:12—Our lives can serve as an example of love.
- Titus 2:4—Love compels our actions within our homes.
- Proverbs 17:9—Love knows when to forgive and forget.



PONDER & PRAY

This week, ponder over God's plan for His people. Why did He want us to be so knit together? What gets in the way of unity in the Church? Who has God placed in your path that you feel compelled to love? Then pray. Pray for sensitivity to the compelling of the Spirit in your heart. Pray for a love that can bear with the ones you find hard to warm up to. Pray for a love that can cover a multitude of sins. And pray for a love that will last, and continue to compel you into good works for the rest of your life.



TRINKET TO TREASURE

"See a penny, pick it up, all the day you'll have good luck!" Whether we're motivated by that silly little children's rhyme or by the frugality of a penny-pincher, most of us will bend over and pick up a penny in a parking lot. It's one of those things we're just compelled to do. Your trinket this week is a penny, and it can serve to remind you of the other things we're compelled to do. God's love compels us to do things we mightn't have done otherwise. His love compels us to live as loving people.