

Being a Christian

Part 1

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[00:00:01] The subject we are to speak about tonight is that of being a Christian. Not becoming a Christian, but being a Christian.

Now, I have no books to recommend, and I have no commercials to run, so I thought I would like to tell you a short story to begin with.

I wondered for a little while whether I ought to tell you this story or not, because it is in fact a children's story, and I wouldn't like to insult any of your intelligences by telling you something that is very trivial. You'll find it's childish enough, but I think it does have a point, and therefore I think I would like to tell you it. I assure you I'll have something which will be rather more demanding on your intelligence a little bit later on. One of the things that I have had opportunity to see again and again in my life, and have been seeing again quite recently, [00:01:03] is the way in which young children mop up children's stories, and one can read them to them today, and one can read them to them again tomorrow morning, and then they'll be ready for the same story again tomorrow evening, and so on and on and on, the same story to the child seems to have a freshness and a newness every time that it's read, and needless to say, the adult tires before the child does.

And this process has the effect of ingraining these stories into the mind of the child, and into the mind of the adult too. Goodness knows how many children's stories I have in my subconscious mind now, but I have one or two still in my conscious mind, [00:02:03] and the one that I want to relate to you is not one that I have been reading to my grandchildren, or even that I read to my children, but one that was read to me. Goodness knows how many years ago when I was that sort of size. And as you will expect, it's a rather different children's story from present-day children's stories, it has a rather archaic flavour about it, but it has a point which I hope I can make later on.

Like modern children's stories, it was an illustrated story, and I still have in my mind's eye those pictures, and the pictures were three in number, and it was a story about two mice, which were more than ordinary mice because they walked on their hind feet like human beings, and they were out for a stroll on a beautiful summer's day, [00:03:04] and they were walking down this country lane, admiring the scenery and the sights, and really taking in all the blissful surroundings that they were enjoying. And as they went on this stroll, the second picture showed that they'd reached a point where there was a rather large boulder conveniently placed by the side of the path, and they had decided to sit down for a while, there they were in this second picture, having a rest with their legs crossed, they were tired I should have said, with top hats and frock coats and walking sticks and so on, there they were with their legs crossed and their pipes puffing, and really taking in this serene countryside view.

And then in the third episode, the picture was something totally different, [00:04:04] there was a picture of total disarray, the picture changed in a moment, because, in fact, the thing that they thought was a dead thing, that boulder that they were sitting on, was far from being dead and had a mind of its own, and it was in fact a tortoise.

And it had taken to its feet and decided to intervene into this pleasant episode, and these two mice were cartwheeling over, somersaulting, and the sticks were flying and the hats were flying, and one of them was shouting to the other, It's an earthquake!

And what had been a pleasant afternoon for them, took a turn which was rather different, and there they were feeling the shock of an intervention, [00:05:02] of something that was alive, into their pleasant Sunday afternoon stroll. And what I think is the point that I wish to make, is that Christianity, in practice, being a Christian, is not taking a pleasant Sunday afternoon stroll. It's not a dead activity.

If one looks at how Christians perform, of course, you can get all sorts of ideas as to what being a Christian is. But what we want to do today, is to concentrate on the biblical version of what it means to be a Christian, and I'm pretty sure I'm right in saying, the biblical version of what it means to be a Christian, doesn't envisage it as a dead, dull activity.

It's not a dead thing, it's a living thing.

Nor is it a part-time occupation, [00:06:04] nor is it a sideline in our lives, a pleasant sideline.

Some people make that of their Christianity, but Christianity, according to the Bible, is not such a thing as that. Christian faith, in reality, is a living thing, and it is a fervent thing, and it's something that consumes the person that's really involved in it, something that's all-consuming in character.

It's something that has a kind of compulsion about it. We've been reading verses that say that the Apostle Paul was constrained, in a certain direction, by the love of Christ.

One of the things I want to dwell on is those impulses and those compulsions and those constraints that are upon us, those of us who really understand the love that has been demonstrated to us, [00:07:05] and the love that has been showered upon us. It has a kind of compulsion about it. One is drawn and one is absorbed into the kind of life that true Christian faith follows.

The living Christ has confronted us, those of us who belong to him, with his amazing love and his amazing mercy to us.

This first verse that Peter read to us says that we need to be under the effect of the mercies of God to us, and the living Christ has confronted us, and that amazing love of his and that amazing mercy that God has shown to us makes a difference, should make a difference in our manner of living. And henceforward, these verses that we've had read to us seem to say that we, [00:08:01] if we're in the proper good of what has reached us, are to be under the grip of this overwhelming thing that has reached us and has overpowered us, so to speak, this overwhelming grace of Christ.

I think I'd like to venture on another illustration for a moment. I feel a little bit nervous about this one, too, because I want to talk for a moment about fishing. And when we have low-staffed people in force amongst us and when we have conducting people in considerable numbers, too, with us, to start to

talk about fishing is rather wrong for me to think of doing. But I think I would like to say this, that I want to talk about fishing as a pastime rather than as a means of livelihood. Some people call it a sport, but to the observer, and I'm only an observer as far as fishing is concerned, [00:09:02] fishing seems a particularly dead and dull activity.

One seems to spend one's time endlessly waiting. This is what I observe to be happening when I watch people fishing.

One hauls in the line at times, and one recharges it at the business end of the line at times, but otherwise there's plenty of time, there's a lot of dead time, you just wait. That's what it seems to be like. And one has plenty of time to read the newspaper, one has plenty of time to have a little nap, one has plenty of time for all sorts of things. At the end of the day, one packs the bags and goes home, arrives early the next morning, repeats the whole process through the whole day, and that's fishing when nothing is happening. And it seems to the observer, anyway, to be a rather pointless sort of occupation.

[00:10:01] But I really suppose that when something is happening, it's altogether different. And I haven't observed this happening often, but I suppose this is why it's done at all.

All the idleness disappears, and all the passing of the time disappears, as soon as you've got a big one on the other end of the line. When there's something living there, it's all activity, and it's all concentration. And the link with that live thing on the far end of your line, especially if it's an active one and a busy one, a big one, it sharpens one's concentration a lot, I suppose it does, for those that are involved in this kind of thing. And it really dictates the pattern of the activity from that very moment onwards. The man drops his newspaper straight away, he's busy with getting the mastery of that fish which is on the far end of the line.

[00:11:06] And what I do want to say here, too, is that this is a little picture to me of the difference between being a Christian in a way that isn't in agreement with what it ought to be at all, and being a Christian in the way that it ought to be.

When the living Christ is in touch with us, and we in touch with him, when there's something very much alive at the other end of the line, so to speak, if I might put it that way, when he has the mastery over us, something totally different from just dawdling the time, and lip service to Christianity seems to be the right thing.

So that it seems to me that it's fair to say that being a Christian is not so much something that I do, [00:12:04] but something which dominates me being under the grip of something which dominates me.

And it's something that awareness of Christ, and of his beauty, and of his glory, and of his grace, and of his greatness, awareness of the greatness of the person who is our Lord and Saviour, makes of us awareness of his surpassing love to us, and our great indebtedness to him, the great mercy that has been shown to us that we should be brought into the wonderful position of knowing this great person, this one who is our Lord and Saviour. If we are aware of him in the proper kind of way, and if we are aware of that all-surpassing love that he has shown to us, we find a constraint upon our way of living. It dictates the way in which we go, so to speak, [00:13:05] the appreciation of what he is, and all that we owe to him.

And that's what makes a person really be a Christian. The love of Christ constrains the Apostle Paul. And the love of Christ leads, we need to be under the constraint of the love of Christ. It alters our outlook, and it alters our judgement of everything. It alters our attitudes to ourselves, and to God.

It makes us want to be into the path which is not our will, but his will, God's will, the will of God. We have to prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, these verses that we've had read to us and said.

So that you see, it is very important for us to ask the question, how much of our Christianity, and I would like us all to direct this kind of question to ourselves, [00:14:06] and include myself in this request, that we might just look at ourselves and say, how much of our Christianity is a kind of make-believe?

How much of it is going through the motions without much life and without much reality about it?

How much of it is adhering to the norms, so to speak, of what we are expected to be, because we are supposed to be Christians? And how much of it, on the other hand, is decisive and deliberately entered into, because of the fact that there are some claims upon us, the claims of Christ, which are so tremendous, and because of the fact that the love of Christ is such a great thing. And I begin to understand that it is such a great thing to me, [00:15:01] that it leaves me with no alternative to be the kind of person that's under the power of the constraining love of Christ. I want to ask you to face that question.

How much of what we are as Christians is done by rote, so to speak, done according to the pattern that we've learned to follow, and perhaps for very little other reason? How much of it is done out of total awareness and total indebtedness to the Saviour and to that tremendous love that he has displayed to us and showered upon us and enveloped us with that revelation of himself that he has made to us? How much does that really activate us and move us and make us decisive and make us willing to be in the path that pleases him? Not the path that pleases ourselves, but the path that pleases him.

I think I'd like to give one or two illustrations, not now, which I've made up myself [00:16:06] or which I've recollected from a long time ago, but biblical illustrations of the kind of thing that I mean. I'd like to remind you of the story of Zacchaeus.

It's more fashionable to call him Zacchaeus nowadays, but I was brought up to call him Zacchaeus, and I'm sure I will have to continue to call him Zacchaeus. I don't think there's any difficulty with any of us here in remembering the story of Zacchaeus. It seems to me that among the subsidiary characters in the Bible, he's one of the best known of all, to all ages, the story of Zacchaeus. One of my grandchildren, when asked what she would suggest as a suitable name for the new baby that was shortly to arrive, suggested that we might call him Zacchaeus. [00:17:05] And the situation was saved by the baby being a girl.

But that just lets you see that three-year-olds know all about Zacchaeus, and I'm sure everybody that's older than three-year-old knows about Zacchaeus as well. And I think it's an interesting question for us to put to ourselves. Whereabouts in the story of Zacchaeus do we ourselves particularly fall? Because it's a story that has several stages, and Zacchaeus was a man that had a poor view to begin with.

He was small, as you will remember, and he certainly wanted to see Jesus, who he was, and he couldn't because he was in the back row and the crowd was a big one. And so he was not very good even at what he was trying to do. He was trying to see the Lord Jesus Christ, trying to get a good view, [00:18:02] trying to understand what was happening in Jericho that day. A big thing was happening in Jericho. Jesus of Nazareth entered into, passed through Jericho. Everybody knew it was a special day, it was a special occasion. Everybody wanted to see. Zacchaeus wanted to see, but he couldn't see very much of what was going on. And it might well be that we have a lot of conversation going on in our meetings here at St. Andrews this year about the things of the Lord Jesus Christ. And there will be folk here that are not closely in touch with everything that is being said and everything that is going on. They're in the position of having a rather poor view of things. And it was right, I'm sure, what Mr. Blackburn said this morning, that even those that have the best view haven't really properly entered into the deep things of Christ. There are deeper things than any of us can appreciate surrounding the name and surrounding the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. [00:19:05] Zacchaeus had a limited view, poor view, an almost non-existent view of Christ.

And it might well be that we have first-timers at this conference here tonight, people that know that something rather special is going on. It's a special occasion, certainly, a special week, this, that we're all enjoying. Great things are being talked about, a great subject is engaging us all, but we might not be in very close touch with what is happening. Well, one has to start. And Zacchaeus, at least, and I trust amongst us here as well, we have a desire to see things a little better. And Zacchaeus certainly had a strong desire to see things a little better. From being a person that had a poor view of the Lord Jesus Christ, he was a person that had a better view. In fact, he may very well have had the best view of anybody from that sycamore tree that he went up into, [00:20:03] as you very well know, so that he had a bit of initiative and he got into a position where he could see very well, and he could see all that was going on.

And it could well be that amongst us here in our conference we have people who have, they know the ropes now as far as Christian things is concerned, they know the ropes of our conferences, they've been to many a conference before perhaps, they've been on many of these occasions. They appreciate the finer points of the discussion, they appreciate the cut and thrust in the Bible readings when that happens, and they enjoy it, and they know the finer points of all the things that are being said and being discussed. They have a view, a better view, a far better view than perhaps first they had when they only began to enter into these kind of things. But what I really want to say, extracting from this story of Zacchaeus, [00:21:04] that to appreciate things and to know what's going on, and to observe what is happening in the Christian area and in the Christian activities, isn't quite the same thing as being face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ and under the power of his love confronting us.

And you know, it seems to me that Zacchaeus tells us this, that observing things, Christian things, agreeing with them even, being in a well-informed position about Christianity, isn't quite the same thing as being a Christian. Zacchaeus, I very well believe, would have been very content with that excellent view of Christ as he passed under that sycamore tree. The good view, he would have been much more content with that than the poor view, needless to say. [00:22:05] He might very well have been content with that full stop, so to speak. That would have been all that he would have wished, to have seen the Lord Jesus Christ go by, to have had a specially good view of him, to see him as an observer, and yet not to know him as a person who would speak to him face to face and have a certain authority over him. And what Zacchaeus would have been content with, was what the Lord Jesus Christ was not content with.

And it didn't content the Lord Jesus Christ to have Zacchaeus watching him from the top of a sycamore tree. And the Lord Jesus Christ, as you very well know, confronted Zacchaeus on that day.

I guess that Zacchaeus' heart stopped to beat when the procession, as it went down the road, [00:23:01] the crowd following the Lord Jesus Christ came to a sudden halt under the sycamore tree. And that person that Zacchaeus was interested in, anxious to observe, was confronting Zacchaeus, using his name.

And the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to him was something that expressed itself in that call to Zacchaeus. And he heard that word from below that sycamore tree where he was. Zacchaeus, make haste and come down for today.

I must abide at thy house.

What I want to ask you here tonight is whether you are going to, having enjoyed this conference and having been a bit better well informed as a result of having been at this conference, knowing a good deal more about what Christianity is, whether you're going to go home and say, we've had a whale of a time at St. Andrews and we've had some very good meetings [00:24:04] and everything has been great, we've learned a lot. But what I do want to ask is whether you are going to go home and say that the living Christ has spoken to you as you were present here in one of these meetings, or in many of these meetings, and whether the greatness of that love of his to you has so touched you and so grasped you and so impelled you with its greatness and with its command over you. It's all commandeering power, so to speak. Whether that is going to move you, whether that is going to be the upshot of what takes place here at this conference. Because being a Christian is not knowing all about it.

It's coming face to face with Christ and feeling the power of his love and feeling the weight of his mastery over us.

[00:25:03] And nothing will ever make us Christians unless we appreciate the magnitude of the mercy that has been shown to us and the wonder and the wealth of the grace that has been lavished upon us that, if the Lord Jesus Christ reveals himself to us and speaks to our hearts, it's better than a lot of knowledge of truth.

This, the knowledge of the person who is at the centre of all Christian truth, is the first and foremost requirement.

And it's fairly easy to be well informed, but it's vital that we should be in touch with that living person who speaks to us and whose love to us is so great that we need to be responsive to it and we need to be commanded by it. We need to be constrained by it.

We need to present our bodies, as these verses say, a living sacrifice.

[00:26:05] We need to be prepared to give our all to this one who gave his all for us.

That love of Christ constrained the Apostle Paul and it moved him in certain directions which were not his own kind of directions at all. Not I, but Christ, he says.

The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, gave himself for me.

That was his kind of life. That was being a Christian. The love of Christ constraineth us, I believe he's talking about, how he is impelled in his kind of living for the Lord Jesus Christ.

We're not engaged in our own activities, so to speak.

We preach not ourselves, he says in one of those earlier verses, but Christ Jesus, the Lord. We are labouring.

[00:27:03] Our one ambition in life is that whether present or absent, we may be acceptable unto him.

And it's a life that's lived to him and not to oneself.

And it does seem to me that that's very important for us to realize, that it's not a self-interested and a self-promoting, self-pleasing life, but it's a life that is under the power of the love of Christ. And it's what he would wish our lives to be and the direction in which he would wish our lives to go that should be our commanding desire to follow. Not I, but Christ.

One could make a further illustration, of course, of this from persons in the New Testament by speaking about the Apostle Paul himself.

And I'll do that only briefly. But we all know the story of the Apostle Paul, he certainly was not a mere observer of Christianity. [00:28:04] He was a person that knew what he thought and would go about completing it and go about doing what he thought to be right. He wasn't a quiescent person. He wasn't a mere observer of this Christianity that had suddenly sprung up in his area.

No, he was an activist. He was an angry young man, you might call him, and yet he was a very ardent traditionalist also. Paul was a man that was bent on doing what he saw to be right and he did see it to be right. But he was a man that was moving rather strongly against the Lord Jesus Christ.

But you know the story as well as I do that one stroke from heaven he was made into a humble man and he was found to be without defense, [00:29:01] without any answer as to what he was doing. There was no shelving of the issue as far as he was concerned. There was no dodging the lights that shone down from heaven. He came face to face with something that was greater and brighter, far more wonderful than he ever could have imagined. Something that was beyond his ken altogether. Something that was great and glorious. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God has shone into our hearts. He'd seen it in the face of Jesus Christ. And this only happened to the Apostle Paul, you know. It's happened to us if we're Christians. Something tremendously great. Something that ought to stop our breath every time we think about it. Something that is so amazing that it should shock us into ways that are in accord with it.

And it's a sad thing if we get indolent and feeble and familiar with these great things [00:30:03] that I'm talking about here tonight. The love of Christ isn't something to talk about in a familiar way. The marvellous, amazing grace that reached the Apostle Paul made him into a person that wasn't pursuing what he thought to be right any longer. Pursuing his own ends, even though he thought them to be right, made him into a person that asked the question, Lord, what would thou have me to

do?

And he became a channel for the service of that wonderful person who had interrupted into his life and intervened into his life and picked him up not to be merely saved and rescued, though he was saved and rescued and couldn't believe the wonder of the grace that had reached him in that way, but made him a person that was to be used, a person that was to be a channel of the same kind of grace to others, a person that was to carry the name of the Lord Jesus Christ wherever he went. [00:31:03] And these are things that are, in a sense, especially true of the Apostle Paul, and yet these are the facts about those of us that are Christians. If we are Christians at all, something of earthquake proportions has happened within our lives and we need never to lose the sense of the greatness of what Christ has intervened to do with us and we need to be under the impulse of these things and under the constraint of these things. And these will provide the energy and these will provide the willingness and these will provide the desire and these will provide the obedience to follow the things that are not acceptable to us so much as are acceptable unto him, things that are in accordance with the will of God for us.

The great question is not what I'm going to get out of life but what Christ is going to get out of my life and now that he has rescued me, now that he has lavished his love upon me, [00:32:02] what my life needs to be for him, not what it needs to be for myself.

You will notice perhaps that Paul, in these verses that have been read to you here, makes the contrast between what Christianity is not and what it is.

I have wondered sometimes in these last weeks whether my subject and whether John Rice's subject last night were all that vastly different. Not I, but Christ, that was his subject and here we reach a verse, we've read a verse tonight that says those that feel the power of these things in the proper way live not unto themselves but unto him who died for them and rose again. Not one kind of thing, not a self-pleasing, self-interested life but unto him who died for them and rose again. And in our two verses at the beginning of Romans [00:33:01] it says not conformed to this world but transformed by the renewing of your mind.

And I think I must attempt in very brief just to say what being a Christian is not as well as to come back to say a few final sentences about what it is in addition to what I've said already.

Being a Christian is not to be conformed to this world and I'd like to spend a word or two on that kind of topic. What being a Christian is not, it's not having the worldly stamp upon our actions and thoughts, not being conformed to this world.

And what I'd like to say to you here tonight that we need to be recognising and aware and a bit more sensitive to the fact that confirmation to this world is something that is very easy to be, [00:34:04] to be conformed to this world.

There are many attitudes to life that are around us that are so normal and so treated as being the normal thing that are far from being Christian. And because these things are so conventional and because they are so normal, it's natural and it's easy for us to be in the same pattern without knowing we are being like this. It is so normal.

And I would like just to say that there are some very common norms around us that we need to

recognise as not being Christian and ask the question whether we ourselves are being like this in any shape or form.

Not conformed to this world.

There seem to me to be one or two different kinds of attitudes all of which are worldly in form, so to speak. Worldly norms.

[00:35:03] The self-promoting attitude, something that I've mentioned already, is worldly in the extreme.

Let me just mention a few things that are often advised to young people.

Be a go-ahead type, is often said.

Be an individualist.

Do your own thing.

Develop your own capabilities.

Take good care of your living standards.

Get to the top of the tree.

Make a name for yourself. Now those are different kinds of statements that are often thought as good advice to young people and yet every one of those that I've mentioned to you concentrates on yourself, [00:36:02] what you're going to get out of life for yourself. And to be a pushing person who is interested in one's own advancement primarily and who is interested in self-advancement and self-promotion, to be really battling hard in one's own interests, pushing hard, devoting all one's time and energy in one's own kind of groove.

It certainly is living to oneself and it's not living to him who died for us and rose again. So that joining the rat race, pushing your own case as strongly as possible, that's not Christian living and that's not being a Christian.

On the other hand, people can adopt a rather different kind of attitude and this is something that's pretty familiar. We see it all around us and it's fairly normal in many circles. [00:37:03] They take an easy kind of life.

They take an easy kind of life.

They're persons that go drifting along, pleasing themselves in rather different ways, enjoying life, ordinary things, filling their horizon with all their time, filched away, so to speak, by empty activities and empty pursuits, sights and sounds and activities filling their minds, filling their horizon.

The life that is associated with trivial things, trivial activities, that's undisciplined, that's disorganized.

That's a way of life that many people follow and that certainly is satisfying oneself and enjoying oneself in a different kind of way, living to oneself, not to him that died for us and rose again.

[00:38:03] And, you know, we have to examine ourselves in the light of these kind of statements. Are our lives centered around ourselves or are they centered around the Lord Jesus Christ, the person who died for us and rose again? Pretty challenging, isn't it? This self-interested kind of way, satisfying all my own appetites, all my own desires, this life that's full of self-promotion, is so easily done without knowing that it's being done.

And we need to examine ourselves and ask the question to what extent our lives are being lived not to ourselves but to him that died for us and rose again.

There are one or two other things that I might have said there but I think I'd perhaps better leave that. But we must move over to what being a Christian is.

This I've been hinting at all along [00:39:02] and I think in the five minutes that remain to me I will have sufficient time to say what I want to say about this. Being a Christian is giving a serious attention to what the will of God for me might be.

Being a Christian is awareness and appreciation in some measure at least of the tremendous things that God and Christ have done for us.

Being a Christian is response to a love that cannot be measured and a love that cannot be described, a love that's unfathomable, a love that is so great that it must have its impulse upon us if we really understand how great it is.

Being a Christian is recognising that there are other claims on one's body [00:40:01] and one's mind and one's time than my own.

That Christ has the claim and Christ has the right to be in charge of my life.

This is love to me, that that is what my life ought to recognise and that everything is done in the light of his rights over me and his claims over me.

And if we are seeking the will of God and if we are presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice in the kind of way that these expressions say, it's the best kind of life as well.

One knows if one gets into this kind of line that this is the good life and this is the acceptable life and this is the best life of all to be in. This is the perfect, ideal path for any person to be in.

[00:41:01] It's much the best life. It might be a bit more demanding on me. It certainly is more demanding on the person that's properly in this line.

While it might make its demands upon one, it's the life that's worthwhile and the life that has its recompenses and has its rewards and has its joys and has its satisfactions. Nothing like being a Christian in the right kind of way to know the values, the good values that there are in this kind of life as compared with all those other kind of attitudes. When you think of the tremendous mercy that has been shown to us and the wonderful love that has stooped down to grasp us to live the life that's

pursuing our own ends is a pretty shameful and shoddy sort of life to be living. It's pretty ugly, you know, to be interested in yourself after Christ has shown such tremendous love to you.

[00:42:01] It's the worldly norms that are so totally inconsistent and shameful in the light of the tremendous mercy of God and the tremendous love of Christ to us.

Being a Christian then is recognizing that that tremendous mercy that has been shown to us, forgiving us so much, sparing us so much, bringing us into such a blessing that's beyond telling, recognizing how weighty that action for us is that God has made, and recognizing that it imposes constraints upon our lives with certain things that are not suitable. Our lives are constrained to go in directions that are not those other directions but into directions which are pleasing to the one that died for us and rose again.

Our lives are constrained and our lives are impelled as an impulse in these directions. [00:43:02] Being a Christian imposes those kinds of constraints and injects those kinds of energies into our lives.

Being a Christian in this kind of way begets humility and awareness of tremendous love shown to us and tremendous mercy sparing us so much makes us full of low thoughts of ourselves.

It promotes great attachment to Christ. You remember the story in the gospel? She was forgiven much and therefore she loved much. Those that recognize how much they have been forgiven and how much they have been blessed. That's the seat of responsive love to Christ.

Action for the Lord Jesus Christ because of his tremendous gifts to us, something that is a characteristic of being a Christian.

These verses say let us be persuaded in these directions. Paul says I beseech you by the mercies of God. [00:44:04] It isn't only Paul beseeching them but it's the mercies of God beseeching us to hand over our bodies.