

The Love of Christ Compels Us

--When Ken asked me to preach this weekend, I asked the Lord: "What do you want this old preacher to tell them?"

--I don't get "impressions" from the Holy Spirit every day.

(God speaks to the disciple through his word; that's why we are to be in the Bible frequently, and that's why I am writing down and printing my years of Bible study notes in the form of a commentary. Something I share from being in God's word through my years, might be an eternal blessing to some hungry soul.)

--But this time was different! As soon as I made that prayer, I was impressed with God's Spirit saying to me: **"Tell them that I love them, and want them to love Me."**

--There are many stories and teachings in the Bible, which was written over the course of sixteen hundred years. The Bible covers the entire time of human history---from God's creation, until the prophetic end of the age.

--**But through all that is written, the Bible conveys the passionate love of God; this is the Bible's theme.**

--God started His redemptive plan by first making His covenant with the little nation through which the Savior of the world would come---Israel. To them God said: "*Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*" (**Deuteronomy 6:4, 5**)

--Centuries later, when Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was, he quoted from **Deuteronomy**: "*Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*" (**Mark 12:29, 30**)

--The word "passion" has taken on several inferences and meanings...some are positive and wholesome and some are not.

But to understand our context, we'll go with Merriam-webster.com definition #5: **ardent affection; love**

--Hear the passion of God...

the love of the Father: "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*" (**John 3:16**)

the faithfulness of the Son: "*Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!*" (**John 12:27, 28**)

the comfort of the Holy Spirit: "*In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.*" (**Romans 8:26, 27**)

--Even among our predecessors in the Faith, there have been many expressions of passionate love:

"If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith." (**Philippians 1:22-25**)

--Christian, in all this passionate love which surrounds us and has proceeded us, let us never give a tepid response. "...*be filled with the Holy Spirit!*"