

TALK IT UP



BIG IDEA: The proper motivation for evangelism should flow from biblical convictions. Mark McCloskey, author of, *Tell It Often, Tell It Well*, summarizes this point succinctly when he writes:

Sometimes our motivation for evangelism can hang on a thin thread of feelings, convenience, or circumstances. The result is that our evangelistic strength is sapped when we take our marching orders from our culture rather than from God and His Word. Our passion for souls is not an emotion, but rather a conviction based on well-thought-through theology of evangelism.

In this study, we'll look at the apostle Paul and see what fueled his passion to minister and pursue the work of evangelism.



DESIRED LIFE CHANGE: As a result of this study, your group should begin to examine their reasons/motivations for sharing Christ in light of the biblical convictions that Paul addresses in 2 Corinthians 5:11-21. In other words, this study is intended to produce a change in attitude which, in turn, can produce a change in action.



AUDIENCE: This lesson is written to students who have already begun sharing their faith but who could have a variety of reasons and motivations (proper and improper) for doing so.



LEADER'S PREPARATION: Be familiar with the 2 Corinthians 5 passage –know its context, the occasion of its writing, etc. Also, a quick read of *Tell It Often, Tell It Well* would be helpful (particularly chapter 12 on “The Content of a Conviction,” from which this study was derived) and would provide additional insight into the topic and this passage of scripture.



AT A GLANCE

As your group interacts in this study, they will observe . . .

This is my **WORLD:** I desire to be involved in evangelism, but it's easy to go about it with wrong motives, or not share my faith at all.

This is my **NEED:** I need to recognize barriers that affect my motivation for evangelism, seek to remove these barriers, and replace them with sound motives.

This is my **ANSWER:** Enduring motivation for evangelism flows from biblical convictions.

This is the **DIFFERENCE:** By establishing biblical convictions in evangelism, I will then have increased confidence, proper motivation, and proper perspective as I seek to reach out to other students with the love of Christ.

This is what I'll **DO:** I will examine my own reasons and motivations for sharing Christ in light of Paul's convictions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION - WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?




The students in your group may or may not be actively involved in evangelism. If they are, their involvement might be due to improper motives. Some improper motivations might be to do evangelism out of a sense of guilt, performance, acceptance by other students or CCC staff, or because “It's the CCC thing to do!”

This study seeks to help students move toward freedom and confidence in evangelism. Four of these motives are drawn from Paul's example in 2 Corinthians 5. The goal is to help students do the right thing (evangelism) from the right motive (biblical convictions) with the right power source—God's Holy Spirit.

1 **STATE:** "Today we'll explore biblical motivations for evangelism. First, we'll look at one man's journey."

2 **READ**



VERSION 1.1

TALK IT UP

TOOLBOX

- THINK
- OBSERVE
- CLOSE-UP
- WRITE
- DISCUSS
- FEELINGS
- BRAINSTORM
- REFERENCE
- PASSAGE
- ARTICLE
- BIG IDEA
- CROSSROAD

BLIND MAN

A blind man named Ling, who lived in the remote wilds of Asia, arrived at a crude Chinese hospital. An eye specialist recently started volunteering his time there to help natives in local villages. That afternoon, the physician examined the blind man's eyes and surgically removed cataracts from both of Ling's eyes. Wild sounds of daybreak screeched the next morning waking the physician and staff. They eagerly assembled at Ling's bed for the removal of his bandages. As cloth was slowly withdrawn from Ling's face vivid colors penetrated his senses and distinct lines clearly defined the inviting face of his physician. This blind man was no longer blind.

Ling's pilgrimage for sight was finally over. Even though Ling left the hospital the memory of his miracle remained. The hospital continued to aid local villagers over the next several months. One day the physician noticed something peculiar. He looked from a hospital window and counted 48 men approaching. It seemed odd because they were slowly walking toward the large hut in single file. Each man was linked to the other by one long rope tied around each man's waist—much like a team of mountain climbers approaching an alpine summit. But there were no mountains on this plain. Unknown to the doctor, these men walked 250 miles to come to the hospital. They traveled through rough terrain, dense vegetation, and past the ridicule of indifferent spectators. When the men arrived the staff discovered the 47 of the 48 were blind. Their guide at the front of the rope was the only man who could see. With amazement the physician realized the guide's identity. It was Ling.

DISCUSS

What motivated Ling?

– He was grateful for new sight.

WHY

Why do you think Ling returned to the hospital?

– Compassion, empathy, believed others could be cured

OUR EXPERIENCE

What are some of the barriers that hold us back from leading others to Christ?

-fear
-improper motivation
-lack of training

FACTOID

A recent *Christianity Today* survey of 1,500 randomly selected subscribers—with an unusually high 60 percent response rate—revealed a strong interest in evangelism but also areas where the respondents strongly felt the need for help:

72%	Applying what I already know about evangelism
57%	Overcoming my fear of sharing my faith
54%	Training in how to share the good news about Christ with others
46%	Learning how to befriend non-Christians

PAUL'S EXPERIENCE

What motivated Paul?

-obligation
-eagerness
-truth and power of the Gospel

"I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the Gospel also to you who are at Rome. I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." *Romans 1:14-16*

3 **ASK**

4 **ASK:** "Why are you not motivated to do certain things that at least seem to be right?"

5 **TRANSITION:** "Let's talk about witnessing."

6 **ASK**

7 **STATE:** "Let's examine Paul's experience."

8 **READ**

9 **ASK:** "From this passage what would you say motivated Paul?"

-obligation
-eagerness
-truth and power of the Gospel

1 **TRANSITION** : “Now we’ll explore Paul’s motivations in more depth as we look at 2 Corinthians 5:11-21.”

2 **READ**

3 **READ**

4 **ASK**

5 **ASK**: “How might a proper understanding of the fear of the Lord make a difference in your motivation for evangelism?”

6 **ASK**

7 **ASK**: “When the love of Christ controls you how does it affect your motivation toward evangelism?”

1. Fear of the Lord?
(verse 11)

WHAT DOES “FEAR OF THE LORD” MEAN?

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

2 Corinthians 5:11-15

11 *Since*, then, we know what it is to **fear the Lord, we try to persuade men.** What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

12 We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than what is in the heart.

13 If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.

14 **For Christ’s love compels us,** because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

15 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. (emphasis added)

CONTEXT

The epistle of 2 Corinthians was written to the Christians at Corinth by the Apostle Paul in A.D. 56.

Paul’s purpose in 2 Corinthians is to defend his message and ministry among the Corinthians in light of attacks from false apostles infiltrating the church.

Consequently, this is one of the most personal of Paul’s letters. Paul feared that the Corinthians would be “led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ” (11:3). In this instance, the Gospel was directly linked to the Corinthian acceptance of Paul’s genuine, God-given message.

The false apostles had mounted an effective campaign against Paul as evidenced by a growing rejection of Paul’s message and a lack of Corinthian giving to the poor in Jerusalem, (a charity program Paul had initiated). Paul feels compelled by the love of Christ to express the sincerity of his commitment to the Corinthians (Chapters 1-7), declare the propriety of his conduct (Chapters 8,9), and answer objections to the authority of his apostleship (Chapters 10-13).

2. The love of Christ compels me
(verse 14)

WHAT DOES “COMPEL” MEAN?

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

WHAT DOES ...?

Not in terror or fright, but rather ...

“Reverential awe that Paul had for Christ as his divine assessor and judge.” from the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Volume 10, p. 350.*

“Fear is the response of humbly bowing before God as Creator and Lord of history. It is recognizing that He is King of our lives, King of the universe, and therefore He alone deserves glory and our obedience.” from *Tell It Often, Tell It Well*, Mark McCloskey, HLP 1985, p. 140.

WHAT DIFFERENCE ...?

I would be motivated to share Christ out of humility and reverence for Him based on who He is and on what He has done for me.

WHAT DOES ...?

The Greek word “sunechei” means “to be held together,” “confirmed,” or “pressed from all sides.”

“The picture generated by this word is of the love of Christ pressing in on and surrounding Paul, removing from him all pursuit except unselfish, radical commitment to the person and purposes of Jesus.” *Tell It Often, Tell It Well*, pp. 143, 144.

WHAT DIFFERENCE ...?

As a proper understanding of Christ’s love for me and His love for the world controls me, other’s spiritual needs become my priority. I begin to see that introducing someone to Christ is the most loving thing that I can do for them.

1 READ

2 ASK

3 ASK: "In what ways might we inaccurately view students around us?"

4 ASK: "What difference would it make in your motivation for evangelism if you viewed people in terms of their spiritual status rather than a worldly status?"

WHAT DOES ...?

Paul ceased to make superficial judgements (i.e., regarding men from a worldly point of view) based on external appearances (vs. 12). It was now his custom to view men not primarily in terms of nationality but in terms of spiritual status. The Jew-Gentile division was less important for him than the Christian-unbeliever distinction. *Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 10, p. 353.*

WHAT DIFFERENCE ...?

I will begin to view people through different "lenses." My perspective of their condition will go beyond what I can see on the outside. I will be concerned with their true spiritual status.

3. Worldly point of view (verse 16)

WHAT DOES THIS PHRASE MEAN?

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

16 So from now on **we regard no one from a worldly point of view.** Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.

17 *Therefore,* if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

20 **We are therefore Christ's ambassadors,** as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God.

21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. *(emphasis added)*

4. Christ's ambassadors

WHAT DOES BEING AN AMBASSADOR MEAN?

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

RECONCILIATION

How man is brought from his alienation from God to fellowship with God.

5 ASK



6 ASK: "If you understood your role as Christ's ambassador, how would you approach evangelism?"

WHAT DOES ...?

Paul viewed himself as one commissioned as an envoy or messenger for Jesus Christ. Similarly, we are representatives of Christ to the world.



WHAT DIFFERENCE ...?

As I am convinced of the responsibilities of my own ambassadorial calling, I will be compelled to share the Gospel clearly and faithfully.


  **SUMMARY**

Four motivations for a lasting ministry:

1. Fear of the Lord
2. Love of Christ
3. Spiritual View of Others
4. Calling as Ambassadors

 **PERSONAL REFLECTION** 

If you were writing in a devotional journal how would you express the truths of 2 Corinthians 5:11-21 in your own words?

 **LIFE APPLICATION** 

What is one way you can represent Christ to others this week?

1 REVIEW: State

2 ASK

3 WRITE: Take a couple of minutes and have the group write the truths of this passage in their own words. Then, share with the group.

4 ASK

5 WRITE

6 SHARE: With the group

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are taken from the *New International Version*, ©1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society. Published by Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

L E A D E R ' S R E S O U R C E



BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Talk Through the New Testament – Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa

The Bible Knowledge Commentary – John Walvoord and Roy Zuck, ed.

Tell It Often, Tell It Well – Mark McCloskey



TOPIC CONNECTIONS

Related *InterACTA* small group studies: *Two Worlds; and Who Cares?*

Note on 2 Corinthians 5:11

The meaning of “we persuade men” must be understood in light of Paul’s argument throughout the book for the purity of his motives and the authenticity of his apostleship. Some say this refers to preaching of the Gospel (Bruce, F.F. *The New Century Bible Commentary: 1 & 2 Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1971, p. 206). Others suggest that he is not referring to evangelism but to persuading members of the Corinthian church regarding his personal character and apostleship (Hughes, Philip E. *Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1962, pp. 186-187). A mediating view is that Paul is referring to both because his message is bound up in the integrity of his life and ministry. (Walvoord, John and Roy Zuck, ed. “2 Corinthians.” *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983, p.567.).

O V E R V I E W O F M E E T I N G T I M E



Planning your group session

Allocating your time

	INTERACTION AS A GROUP	INTERACTION WITH THE STUDY & WORD	INTERACTION WITH GOD	UPCOMING INFORMATION	OTHER IDEAS
	Ice breaker? Refreshments?	Provided. Add personal story?	Worship / Praise / Prayer time?	Next meeting? Special event?	Music / Video?
	_____ min.	_____ min.	_____ min.	_____ min.	_____ min.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Thompson & Thompson