

# 2 Corinthians 5:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge,  
that if one died for all, then were all dead:

## Analysis

**For the love of Christ constraineth us**—Hē gar agapē tou Christou synechei hēmas (ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς). Synechō (συνέχω) means "to hold together, compress, constrain, compel." Genitive tou Christou (τοῦ Χριστοῦ) is likely objective—"the love FOR Christ" (our love toward Him) or subjective—"Christ's love FOR us." Context favors the latter: Christ's love demonstrated in His death (vv. 14-15) compels Paul's ministry. This love is irresistible pressure, narrowing options to single-minded devotion.

**Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead**—Krinantas touto, hoti heis hyper pantōn apethanen, ara hoi pantes apethanon (κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον). Paul's theological reasoning: Christ's substitutionary death means all died in Him. Hyper (ὑπὲρ, "on behalf of, instead of") indicates substitution—Christ died in humanity's place. Ara (ἄρα, "therefore, consequently") draws the conclusion: Christ's death implies all were under death's sentence. His death represents and accomplishes ours. This is forensic: Christ's death credits to all who believe, satisfying divine justice (Romans 6:3-11).

## Historical Context

Substitutionary atonement was scandalous—Greeks considered crucifixion disgraceful, Jews saw it as cursed (Deuteronomy 21:23, Galatians 3:13). Paul insists Christ's shameful death was cosmic victory—bearing humanity's death

sentence, liberating captives. This became Christianity's central distinctive: salvation through a crucified Messiah.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Christ's love constrain your choices—what pursuits has His love made impossible for you?
2. Do you truly grasp that Christ died because you deserved death—how does this sober reality intensify gratitude?
3. What evidence exists in your life that you have "died" with Christ—what old patterns and identities have been crucified?

## Interlinear Text

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ἡ	γὰρ	ἀγάπη	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ	συνέχει	ἡμᾶς	κρίναντας	
G3588	<b>For</b>	<b>the love</b>	G3588	<b>of Christ</b>	<b>constraineth</b>	<b>us</b>	<b>judge</b>	
	G1063	G26		G5547	G4912	G2248	G2919	
τοῦτο	ὅτι	εἰ	εἷς	ὑπὲρ	πάντες	ἀπέθανον·	ἄρα	οἱ
<b>because we thus</b>	<b>that</b>	<b>if</b>	<b>one</b>	<b>for</b>	<b>all</b>	<b>dead</b>	<b>then</b>	G3588
G5124	G3754	G1487	G1520	G5228	G3956	G599	G686	
πάντες	ἀπέθανον·							
<b>all</b>	<b>dead</b>							
G3956	G599							

## Additional Cross-References

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**Galatians 2:20** (Love): I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

**Romans 5:15** (References Christ): But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

**Matthew 20:28** (Parallel theme): Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

**1 Peter 1:8** (Love): Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

**John 1:29** (Parallel theme): The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

**Hebrews 6:10** (Love): For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

**Hebrews 2:9** (Parallel theme): But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

**1 Corinthians 16:22** (Love): If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

**1 Timothy 5:6** (Parallel theme): But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

**2 Corinthians 3:9** (Parallel theme): For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.