

## 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

10-3-12

### Crazy Christians!

#### Announce:

- Slide#1 SOAR Conf.

#### Intro:

Slide#2 Let's talk about *Crazy Christians!*

- No, not the ones that see Jesus in the **clouds** Slide#3a.
- Not the ones that see **Orange** Jesus Slide#3b.
- Not the ones that see **Tortilla** Jesus Slide#3c. [or my fav]
- Not the ones that see **Toast** Jesus Slide#3d.
- Slide#4,5 *oy vey to blank*

I'm talking about the biblically bona fide **Crazy**, *sold out, on fire, fool for Jesus, wrecking the world, kinda Christians*. Like what Paul is accused of here! (vs.13)

(13) **Beside ourselves** – To stand out of one's self, to stand beside one's self. Inferring mental imbalance. To be crazy.

- **Mwen fou pou Jezi!** (I'm a fool for Jesus/Creole)
  - Festus said of Paul, **Paul, you're beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!** Acts 26:24
  - Others said of Jesus, **He is out of His mind.** Mark 3:21
- **Has it ever been said of you?** – Do people think you're a little weird for being a Christian in our day & age, or for holding to your "archaic puritanical beliefs"?

It's **those men who** tediously copied the scriptures. **Those who** lit the torch of the reformation. **Men & women who** gave their lives as Martyrs. **Those who** speak openly for Christ. **Those who** have given up lucrative careers to quietly serve the Lord in ministry. **Those who** have given up working at a Christian Ministry to go back to the secular work force to reengage unbelievers. **Those that** have sold all to move to a foreign land or a different culture... **men & women of whom the world was not worthy.**

Paul says, "**Fool for Jesus**" or "**Sound mind for Jesus**"...either way... "**I'm for Jesus!**"

- Ok, so **how do I get tagged or targeted "Fool for Jesus?"**
  - With Paul's 7 simple reminders of **God's Crazy Love** towards His children.

#### I. Slide#6 We're Crazy Christians...BY BOTH OUR FEAR & LOVE! (11a,14a)

A. Let's talk having both the **terror of the Lord** & the **love of Christ!**

1. Note the tie between vs.10 & 11.

a) **How can the Christian prepare for the Judgment Seat of Christ?**

B. Slide#7a **The terror of the Lord** (11)

1. **Terror** = fear - It is not the sense of being afraid of being clubbed to death or whipped by an angry God.

a) It is an awesome reverence, a fear that grows out of respect. A healthy fear of God.

b) The fear excited by the thought of standing before the judgment seat of Christ & having one's whole life exposed & estimated.

C. How can such opposite emotions as fear and love(vs.14) dwell in the same heart?

1. Certainly they are found in the hearts of **children** who love their **parents** and yet **respect** them and their **authority**.

a) **Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.** Ps. 2:11

D. **Slide#7b The love of Christ** (14)

E. Paul **didn't say**, "my love **for** Christ is what compels me!"

1. **Compels** = *to hold together, to press together, to constrain*. It is a pressure that **confines & restricts** as well as **controls**.

2. And it is in the *pres. tense* indicating **the continual habit of life**.

F. **The love of Christ** - means *Jesus' love for us* as seen in His sacrificial death.

1. **We love Him, because He first loved us.** 1 John 4:19

2. It is then **His love** that empowers us to do what we do.

a) If we are not compelled by the love of Christ **then** the love of Christ is not in us!

b) "**Secret love**" is a love that never shows itself in **action**.

(1) **Open rebuke is better than secret love/love carefully concealed.** Prov.27:5

G. What makes a young families head off to the mission field? What power enables average believers to go into hospitals & lay hands on individuals with terrible deadly diseases?...**The Love of Christ compels them!**

## II. **Slide#8 We're Crazy Christians...BY MAINTAINING OUR MISSION! (11b)**

A. **We persuade men** - Christ has commanded us to spread the Gospel to all nations, and we must be obedient.

1. **Slide#9** Someone asked the Duke of Wellington what he thought of **foreign missions**, and his reply was, "**What are your marching orders?**"

a) Whether we be Christian or non-Christian or even anti-Christian, we all try to articulate as **persuasively** as we can, what it is that we believe, of course in the hope that others will be **persuaded!**

2. **We can't** kick back in our lounge chairs of life w/our remote control in hand...**We must** get involved. **We must** intervene. **We must** tell people their lives are not OK!

## III. **Slide#10 We're Crazy Christians...BY MAINTAINING OUR PERSPECTIVE! (15,16)**

A. **Why did He die?**

1. That we might live **through** Him - 1Jn.4:9

2. That we might live **with** Him - 1Thes.5:10
  3. That we might live **for** Him - 2 Cor.5:15
    - a) Christ **died** our death for **us** that we might **live** His life for **Him**.
- B. We not only **died** with Him, but we also were **raised with Him** that we might “walk in newness of life”.
1. **Slide#11** C.S.Lewis said, “It costs God nothing, so far as we know, to **create nice things**; but to **convert rebellious wills** cost Him crucifixion.”<sup>1</sup>
  2. [Preference this next quote w/*Morality is good. Moralism is bad*]
  3. Bill Hybels in his book, “Christianity's Toughest Competitor: Moralism,” (People thinking that they’re pretty good moral people) Quotes **Ted Turner** in a 1993 issue of USA today, “I don't want anybody to die for me. I've had a few drinks and a few girl friends. If that's going to put me in hell, then so be it.”
  4. In 1994 “**Good Friday**” of course being a Friday **also fell on** April 1st, known of course as, “**April fools day**”.
    - a) When Jesus died on that 1st **Good Friday**, truly it was a Good Friday to the **one thief**, & **yet** it was **April fools** to the world’s greatest fool, who rejected Christ’s provision of salvation! - **He missed heaven by 9 words...** *“Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”*

#### IV. **Slide#12 We’re Crazy Christians...BY EMBRACING OUR NEWNESS! (17)**

- A. **New Creature/creation** – The rabbis used this term to describe those whose sins had been forgiven.
- B. **All things are become new** – **not** turned over a new leaf, **not** reformed, **not** rehabilitated!...**But All New...Transformed!**
  1. One of the questions on the *Hunter & Safety course* I took years ago was, “**What was the 3 main parts to a rifle?**” (Lock, stock, and barrel)
    - a) We’re changed...“**Lock, stock, and barrel**”!
  2. “**We are not saved by evolution but by creation!**” (Spurg)
- C. **New?**
  1. **We now have a new view of Christ.**
  2. **We now have a new view of people around us.**
    - a) We see them as sinners for whom Christ died. - **We no longer see them as friends or enemies; customers or coworkers; Republicans or Democrats; we see them the way Christ sees them...as lost sheep who need a shepherd!**
  3. **We now have a new view of other Christians.**

<sup>1</sup> C. S. Lewis in Mere Christianity. Christianity Today, Vol. 40, no. 9.

a) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Gal. 3:28

4. We now have a **new** view of our value system, relationships, our philosophy of life.

D. **Slide#13** The best story I've heard of being a "New Creation" is of St. Augustine.

1. In his younger years he had indulged in great sins. After his conversion he met a woman who had been the sharer of his wicked follies. She had approached him winningly & said, to him "**Augustine,**" but he ran away from her w/all speed. She called after him, "**Augustine it is I**". He turned around & said "*But it is not I. The old Augustine is dead, & I am a new creature in Christ Jesus!*"

E. Note vs. 18 says all things are of God – "We can't don this new wardrobe **ourselves** anymore than a caterpillar can clip on a set of wings & call itself a butterfly. An inward transformation must take place." Swindoll

1. A lizard w/snorkel gear is **not equal** to a frog.

a) Christ invades our life & performs a creative act, a metamorphosis transformation.

## V. **Slide#14 We're Crazy Christians...BY OWNING RECONCILIATION! (18,19)**

A. It's a Ministry of Reconciliation!

1. Because of his rebellion, man was the **enemy** of God and **out of fellowship** with Him.

2. **The Cross** has brought man and God together again.

a) **Reconcile** = "*to effect a change, to exchange, to change thoroughly.*"

3. God does not have to be reconciled to man, it is sinful man who must be reconciled to God.

a) "**Religion**" is man's feeble effort to be reconciled to God.

4. **So, the Person** who reconciles us to God is Jesus Christ, and **the place** where He reconciles us is His cross.

## VI. **Slide#15 We're Crazy Christians...BY REMEMBERING OUR AMBASSADORSHIP!(20)**

A. In the Roman Empire, there were two kinds of provinces: **Senatorial provinces** and **Imperial provinces**.

1. **Slide#16 The Senatorial provinces** were made up of people who were **peaceful** and not at war with Rome. They had surrendered and submitted.

2. **The Imperial provinces** were **not peaceful**; they were dangerous because they would rebel against Rome if they could.

a) It was necessary for Rome to send **ambassadors** to the **imperial provinces** to make sure that rebellion did not break out.

- (1) Since **Christians** in this world are the **ambassadors** of Christ, this means that the world is in rebellion against God.
- (2) This world is an **imperial province** as far as God is concerned. He has sent His ambassadors into the world to declare **peace**, not war.

#### B. Some facts about Ambassadors:

1. An Ambassador spends their lives on foreign soil.
2. An Ambassador is chosen to represent someone.
3. Ambassadors are protected (a nation provides its ambassadors w/every need & stands ready to protect him).
4. Ambassadors are held accountable (they must say what they are told to say).
5. Ambassadors are called home before war is declared (God has yet to declare war on this world & before he does he will pull out his Ambassadors).
  - a) Shame on U.S. For not protecting our Ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens on 9-11.

C. **Slide#17 George Shultz**, when **Secretary of State** during the **Reagan administration**, kept a **large globe** in his office. When **newly appointed ambassadors** had an interview with him and when ambassadors returning from their posts for their first visit with him were leaving his office, Shultz would test them. He would say, "You have to go over the globe and prove to me that you can identify your country." They would go over, spin the globe, and put their finger on the country to which sent - unerringly.

When Shultz's old friend and former **Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield** was appointed ambassador to **Japan**, even he was put to the test. **This time, however**, Ambassador Mansfield spun the globe and put his hand on **the United States**. He said: "**That's my country.**" Said the secretary: "I've told that story, subsequently, to all the ambassadors going out. 'Never forget you're over there in that country, but **your country is the United States**. You're there to **represent us**. **Take care of our interests** and never forget it, and you're representing the best country in the world.' "

1. **Christians**, never forget whatever country, whatever piece of soil he has placed you on temporarily. First & foremost you are a citizen in the greatest country ever "**Heaven**"...don't ever forget that!

#### VII. **Slide#18 We're Crazy Christians...BY ACKNOWLEDGING THE RT OF GOD! (21)**

- A. (21) This is the righteousness both that **God requires & provides** in justification.
  1. "God treats Christ like he lived our life, He treats us as if we lived His life!"
  2. **This is our simple message folks!** (i.e. **vs.21**)
    - a) Know it. Understand it as best you can. Memorize it. Share it!

- B. **Slide#19,20 Tell the good news!** - What does a honey bee do when he finds a field of flowers. When he arrives back at the hive does he selfishly try to keep its location to himself? - Is he afraid the nectar will run out? No, he quickly does a little GPS dance, telling everybody his good news. He explains what it is & how to get there! Soon, many are blessed by the much awaited nectar!