

Chinnor Community Church

Sunday 30th October 2016

Philemon

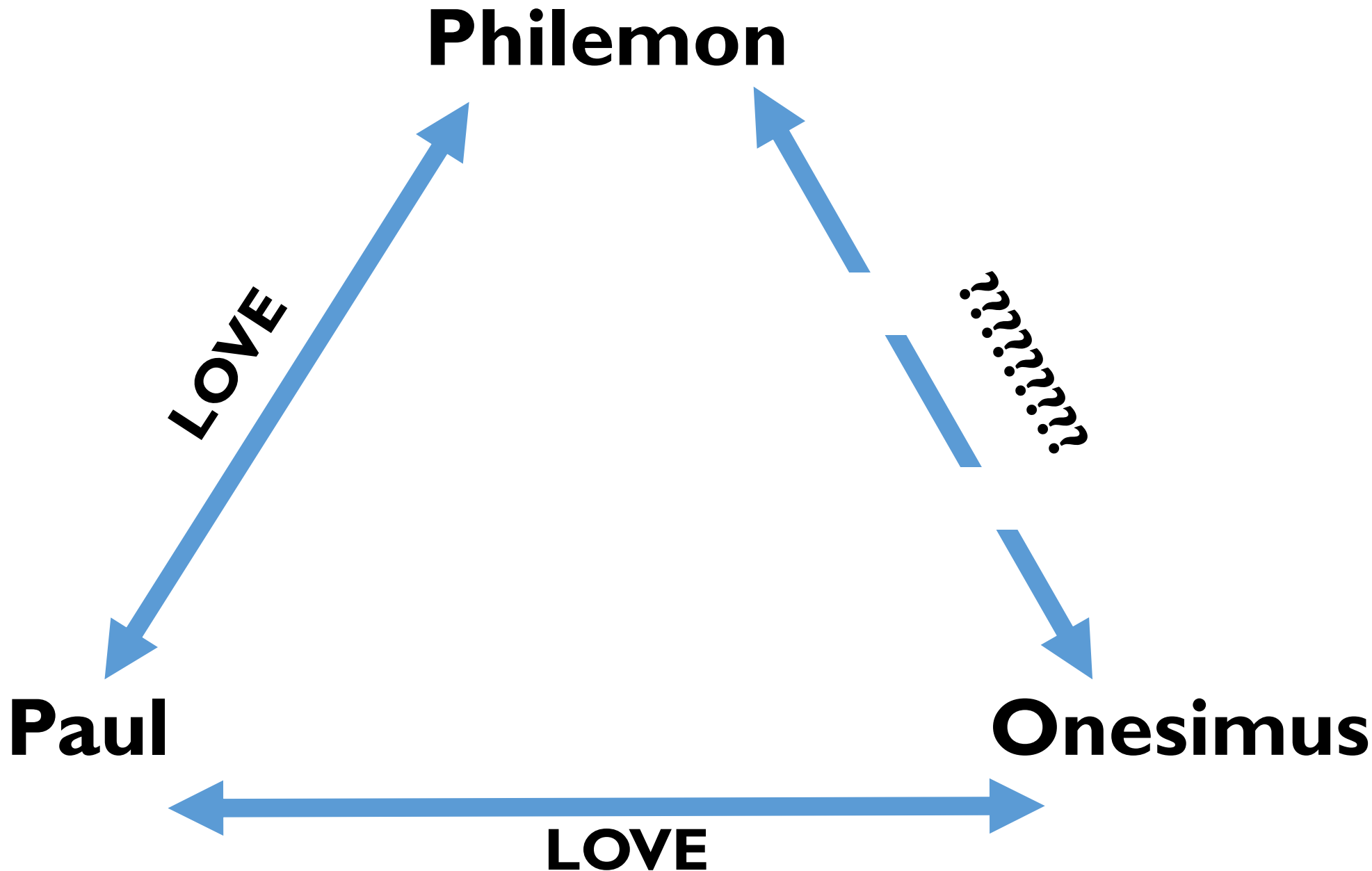
How love works



Philemon

If we somehow lost all the books of the New Testament, this short letter from Paul would still reveal to us the wonders of the Gospel message; it would be enough for us to see what God has done for us.

“...the funniest chapter in the New Testament”



Love between Paul and Philemon

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. **Your love has given me great joy** and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people. *verses 4-7*

Love between Paul and Philemon

Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet **I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love.** It is as none other than Paul – an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus – that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus.

verses 8-10a

Love between Paul and Onesimus

Onesimus became my son while I was in chains.

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

I am sending him – **who is my very heart** – back to you. I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. *verses 10b-13*

Love between Philemon and Onesimus

I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favour you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary. Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for ever – no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but **even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.** *verses 14-16*

Love between Philemon and Onesimus

So if you consider me a partner, **welcome him as you would welcome me.** If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back – not to mention that you owe me your very self. *verses 17-19*

Love between Philemon and Onesimus

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Philemon - the 'funny' side

ton pote soi **achreston** nuni de soi kai emoi **euchreston**

the once to you useless now yet to you & to me useful

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me. *verse 11*

Onesimus means useful

euchreston also sounds awfully like en Christo 'in Christ' ...

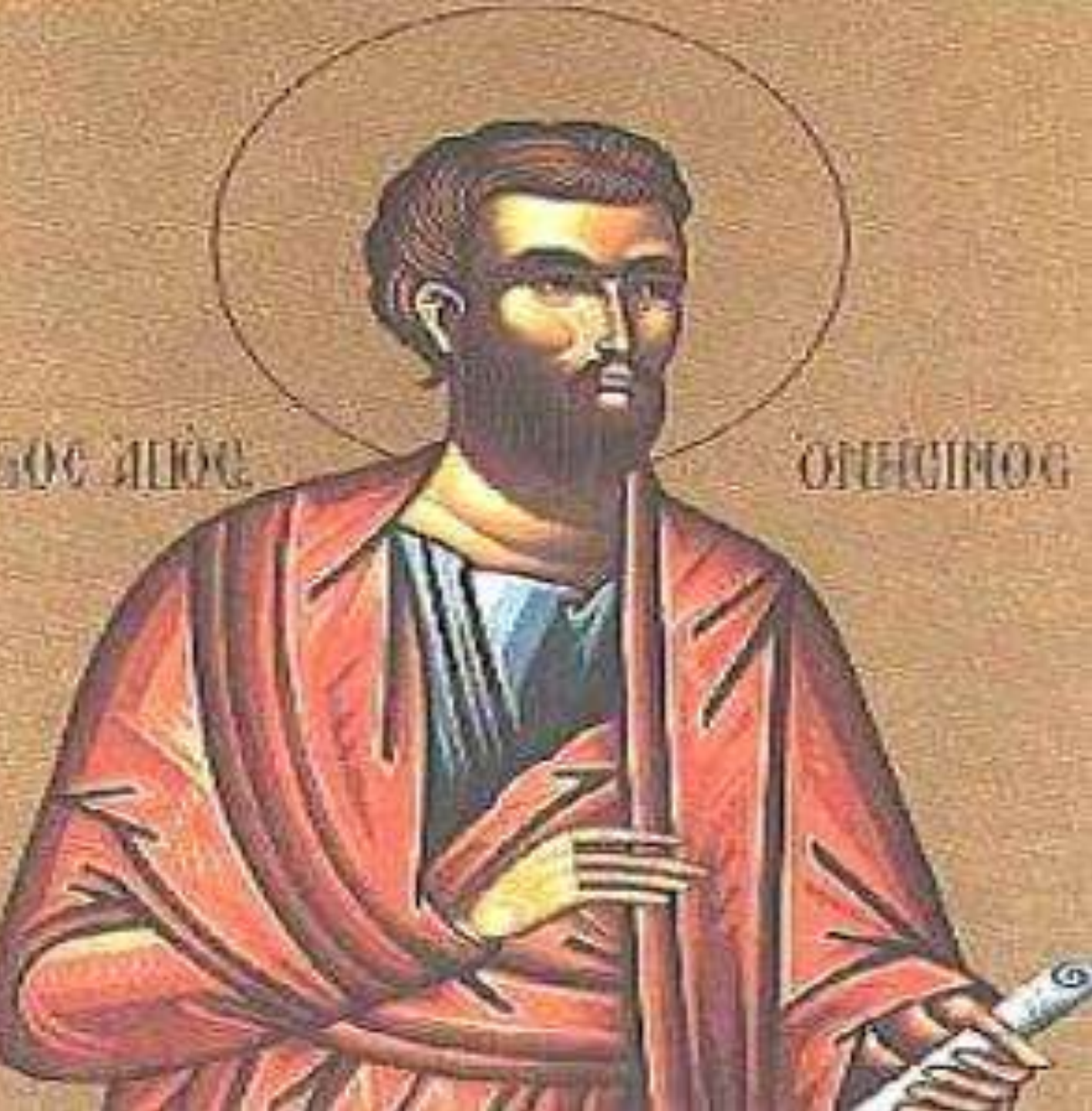
Philemon - the 'funny' side

nai, adelphe, ego sou **onaimen** en kurio

Yes brother I of-you may-be-profiting in the Lord

I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you
in the Lord. *verse 20*

I'd like to see some Onesim-ing in the Lord from you!



The Postscript

Ignatius, of Antioch tells us of a bishop in Ephesus around 110 AD who was called Onesimus....

Philemon: how love works

Love liberates: it leads to grace

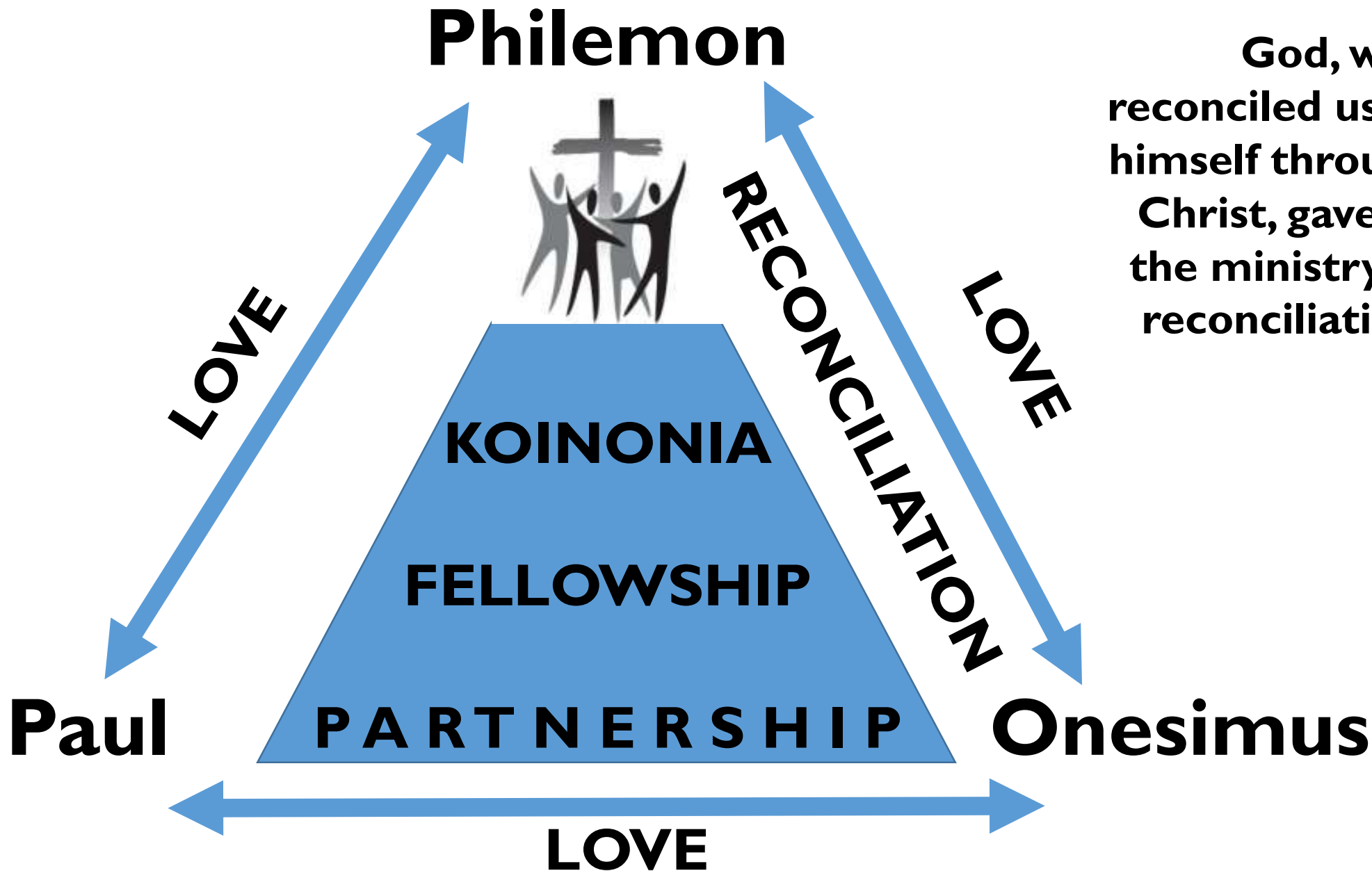
Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.' So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir..... It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. *Galatians 4:6-7 and 5:1*

Love constrains: it shows us what to do

For Christ's love compels us... *2 Corinthians 5:14*

Love redeems: it brings together

God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, gave us the ministry of reconciliation. *2 Corinthians 5:18*



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