

Who Controls Your Life?
2 Corinthians 4:1-10

Introduction:

1. In Joshua 24:15, Joshua called upon the people of his day to decide whom they were going to let control their lives. However, he made it completely clear that he was going to serve the Lord.
2. Today, man still must decide whether to serve the Lord or the devil.
3. Paul in 2 Corinthians stressed the importance of making Christ, Lord in our lives. In fact, he calls Christ, Lord 30 times in this book.
4. In this lesson, I want us to answer the question, "Who controls your life?"

Body:

1. **Paul stated that some were letting the god of this world or age control their lives (2 Cor. 4 :3,4).**
 - A. Who is the god of this world?
 1. Satan the adversary of both God and man (2 Cor. 2:11 and 1 Peter 5:8).
 2. The devil the slander of God is our enemy.
 3. The cunning serpent who deceived Eve will also try to deceive us (2 Cor.11:3).
 4. The devil also disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).
 - B. How do people become controlled by the god of this world or age (Eph. 2:1-3)?
 1. They rebel against authority.
 2. They follow after and are controlled by their lust.
 3. They enjoy and are ensnared in the pleasure of sin.
2. **Paul gave the alternative to serving the devil when he declared Christ as Lord (2 Cor. 4:5).**
 - A. To accept Christ as Lord means we accept Him as the ruler and master of our lives.
 - B. We may recognize Jesus as Christ, King, Savior and even as the son of God, but still fail to give Him control of our lives.
 - C. Why should we serve the Lord?
 1. He gave up the riches of heaven to die for us (2 Cor. 8:9).
 2. Because His love for us should move or constrain us to live for Him (2 Cor. 5:14).
 3. We will be judged by him some day (2 Cor. 5:10).
3. **Paul said we must decide in our hearts who we will serve.**
 - A. The actions of life spring forth from the heart (Pro. 4:23).
 - B. Satan will try to blind and harden the hearts of men (2 Cor. 4: 4).
 - C. The Lord can help us serve Him.
 - D. We must consider the truth of Jesus to be set free (John 8:32).
 - E. We must seek Christ humbly, and above all else.
 - F. We must "put to death" the old man of sin and follow Jesus all the way to heaven (Rom. 6; Col. 3:1).

Conclusion:

1. People must choose whom they will serve.
2. The only two choices are: Christ or Satan.
3. Christ calls you by His love and His gospel to serve Him and live with Him in heaven.

How to Be an Effective Christian**Introduction:**

1. What does it mean to be effective? The dictionary tells us that to be effective is to be successful in producing a desired or intended result; to fulfill a specified function; or in one instance a soldier fit and service.
2. It should be our goal as Christians to be effective in our service to God by following the example of Christ (2 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6).

Body:**To Be Effective as a Christian, One Must Be —**

- 1. Unselfish Like Christ (Phil. 2: 5-11; James 1:22; 2:15-16).**
 - A. Christ was unselfish when He gave up heaven to live among men and to die on a cross.
 - B. Christians must be unselfish and willing to sometimes put the need of others first.
 - C. Christians must be totally committed in living for God (Rom. 12: 1-2) and to really make a difference in the lives of others (James 2: 15-16).
- 2. Understanding by Showing Mercy and Compassion to Others Like Christ (Zech. 7:9).**
 - A. Christ was a man of compassion and mercy. He saw the suffering, sorrow, and even the sinfulness of others and wanted to help make a difference in their lives (Matt. 9:36).
 - B. Effective Christians will be understanding and feel sympathy for the infirmities of others and be able to sympathize with those who go through the testing and trials of life.
- 3. Useful by Working Like Christ Did to Please the Father.**
 - A. Christ lived to be please and to do the work of the Father (John 4:34; John 6: 38-39; 1 Cor. 3:9).
 - B. Christ not only understands, He helps the needy, lifts the fallen, and seeks to save the sinful.
 - C. Effective Christians work for the Lord in His Kingdom.
- 4. Undaunted Like Christ was so They Can Fulfill the Task Given to Them.**
 - A. Christ knew the Father would be with Him, and Christians need to realize God will be there for them.
 - B. Read the promises of God found in Deuteronomy 31: 6-8; 1 Samuel. 12:22 and 1 John 4:4).
 - C. Christians can find strength in these promises to serve God no matter what the price as they carry out His will for them.
- 5. Uplifted Like Christ as They Yield Their Lives to God (John 12:32).**
 - A. Christ gave His life for God and man.
 - B. He was "lifted" up from the grave to become victorious over death and the grave.
 - C. Christians need to die to sin and be "lifted" up from the watery grave of baptism to serve a risen Savior (Rom. 6).

Are You Effective as a Christian?