

Two Very Different Constraints

Recently, where we live, the authorities have intensified their pressures on people who are not fully vaccinated against the Covid-19 virus. It is not my intention to take sides with this issue. These measures are from an authority over which we have no control. I am sensitive to the reasoning behind these constraints and also to that of those who resist or ignore them. These, however, are temporary constraints with no lasting consequences as this pandemic will find its end or have a different outcome.

But there is a constraint to which any resistance can entail eternal consequences. We read in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 14, verse 23: *And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel (or constrain) them to come in, that my house may be filled. The house* is the house of the Lord; *the Lord*, is the Lord Jesus and the constraining message is the good news of salvation. Refusing to submit to the constraint would find one outside where there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth forever.

Those who are compelled to come in, are all the potential hearers, like you at this very moment, being compelled. A constraint is more than just an invitation! It is insistent and warns of the dire consequences in case of refusal. Those who do not enter will be found outside and then before a great throne where their refusal will form the basis for their charge and conviction. The apostle Paul writes: *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men* (2 Corinthians 5:11). Then he writes: *we pray (beseech) you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God* (2 Corinthians 5:20). Compel! Beseech! Why? Because of the final tragic and eternal end of those who resist the divine constraint, closing their ears to the supplications of the messengers.

Whatever your attitude towards the human constraints to which you may submit or resist, the consequences of either are in no way comparable with those associated with the divine constraints, with the compelling invitation and urgent supplications of the gospel messengers.

How much longer will we be hearing God's compelling message leading to repentance and faith? No one can say! but we know that the horizon is darkening and that the time of God's patience is running out. We are on the verge of the great tribulation foretold in the Bible; all the elements are in place. People are being conditioned everywhere to submit to human constraints as situations evolve. Soon the constraint will be the mark of the beast in order to buy or sell! (Revelation 13:17.)

It was the love of Christ which constrained Paul (2 Corinthians 5:14). This divine constraint finds its source in the love of God for you. He wants to save you and has the power to save you; but his willingness and power are linked to your acceptance by faith of what He has done for you by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, because *God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life* (John 3:16).

Time is short. Like Paul, we are constrained to beseech you for Christ, be reconciled to God.

Michel for 2020 Vision in 2022

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