

## Compelling Forces

**Text: Luke 14:23**

### Introduction

The parable of Luke 14:15–24 clearly points out the human tendency to be occupied with material things, totally disregarding the claims and call of Christ. Perhaps the greatest enemy of the gospel is not open opposition, but gross indifference.

To press through spiritual barriers and win the lost, a Christian must have supernatural compelling forces operating through his life.

Paul was an anointed witness. His life reflected a divine glow that captured and held the hearts and minds of his listeners.

### Message

#### 1. A compelling message.

God inspired Paul's thoughts, and the force of Paul's message rested on this fact. He was faithful in declaring God's words, not his own.

##### a. Punishment for sin (Galatians 6:7).

The message of sin and judgment is never popular, but it is compelling since it causes man to face his spiritual predicament. Until man realizes he is a sinner, scheduled to appear before a holy God, he has little interest in the plan of redemption. But when the hopelessness of his situation is made real to him, he is compelled to seek an answer to his soul's need.

##### b. Pardon for the penitent (2 Corinthians 7:10).

A sorrow over our sins and a desire to be cleansed and forgiven are healthy signs. God's offer of pardon and relief from the burden and guilt of sin is the glorious, compelling attraction of the gospel. This is what the sinner is unconsciously seeking in his pursuit of soul-numbing pleasure and material security. He can find inner satisfaction only through reconciliation to God (2 Corinthians 5:17–21).

#### 2. A compelling manner.

Paul felt the urgency of his message and spoke with conviction. His fervent spirit caused some to say he was "beside himself." He was a messenger aflame with the truth he proclaimed to others.

##### a. Positive (Philippians 4:13).

Paul's confidence was anchored in the authority and ability of Jesus Christ. His personal faith in God added to the force of his message. He lived in the Spirit and therefore could communicate the things of God effectively. His own spiritual victory compelled others to have confidence in his ministry. The radiance of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life is a positive, attracting force. Our joy and positive outlook should compel others to desire the Christian way.

##### b. Persuasive (2 Corinthians 5:11) Paul was so sure of his message that he did not hesitate to bring pressure upon his listeners to place their trust in Christ. There were no doubts or uncertainties in his mind concerning the reality of Jesus Christ, and he spoke with the intent of turning hearts to Him. After hearing Paul's testimony, even King Agrippa admitted, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28).

#### 3. A compelling ministry.

Paul's ministry was effective because it was characterized by the same compelling motivation as was portrayed in the ministry of Christ.

##### a. Passionate (2 Corinthians 5:14).

Paul's ministry was based on an all-consuming love for God and for lost humanity. This was not a passing emotion, but his chief reason for being. It was Paul's wholehearted devotion and dedication to the will of God that enabled him to endure suffering and hardship for the cause of Christ. His ministry was based on love and love is, indeed, a compelling force.

##### b. Powerful (1 Corinthians 2:4,5).

Paul's ministry also bore the supernatural thrust of the power of God. His conversion brought him in contact with God's miraculous working, and this experience took him on to further demonstrations of divine might. The supernatural signs bore witness to the truth of the Resurrection that Paul preached. The power of God is a compelling force, pointing men to the living Christ.

### Conclusion

God's table is spread. The needy and hungry are all around us. We are His witnesses, commissioned to bring the lost to Him. We can compel them to come when we permit the Holy Spirit to work through us (Acts 1:8).  
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