

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 11TH-12TH, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

DWELLINGS (2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-5) TEMPORARY AND ETERNAL

In ch. 4, Paul compares our present lives to clay jars. Here he compares it to a temporary tent that we dwell in but is deteriorating.

- In the 1st Century, many people lived in tents as they constructed their permanent home. Similarly, **we are all in temporary skin while we "construct" our eternities.**

LONGING FOR A BETTER HOME

Our eternal bodies and homes are "not made with [human] hands." Christians should understand that human ability is far inferior to God's. This should make us "groan" for the life to come.

- **We're to steward and enjoy life, but we're not to "love" the things of the world (1 John 2). Do we long for heaven?**

BEING "CLOTHED" NOT "UNCLOTHED"

Before eternal judgment, everyone will receive an eternal body. Paul says we have assurance of being "clothed" by God. This alludes to Genesis 3 and the nakedness and shame as a result of sin.

- **Though all will have eternal bodies, some will live forever in shame and guilt, but others in security and perfection.**

WE WERE NEVER DESIGNED TO DIE

God created mankind to be eternal in a physical form. So, we will not only have physical bodies, but we will inherit a literal new earth in a new universe (Revelation 21).

- Heaven will be much more material than most people think. Imagine being perfect, in a perfect place, with a perfect God.

WE GET A TASTE OF THAT NOW

Paul says, "mortality [will] be swallowed up by life." This means eternity will overtake the temporary. We get a glimpse of the eternal when we are full of the Spirit of God.

- **The fruit and gifts of the Spirit give us a small taste of the good things that will envelope us forever in heaven.**

REPAID (2 CORINTHIANS 5:6-10)

"WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT"

As long as we're "at home in the body" we are distancing ourselves from God. This means if we cling too tightly to mortality and the things of this world, we're unable to grow close to God.

- In order to grow in God and experience His blessings **we must be willing to trust in Him, not just our natural sight.**

"WE MAKE IT OUR AIM TO BE PLEASING TO HIM"

Though we are to long for heaven and not grow too attached to this world, we should live this life in a way that honors God.

- Not only does this life offer some amazing blessings, but **the only way to be saved and experience a perfect afterlife is through submitting to and honoring Jesus.**

WE WILL ALL BE "REPAID" FOR WHAT WE HAVE DONE

We should strive to live "pleasing" lives because we will all be held into account by God. If we live in relationship with Jesus, we will receive grace and mercy (Is Jesus fair?), but if we reject Him, we also reject the things of Him.

- **True salvation is demonstrated through an obedient relationship with Jesus.**

URGENCY (2 CORINTHIANS 5:11-15)

"WE TRY TO PERSUADE PEOPLE"

Paul understood what it was to "fear the Lord." Proverbs 9 says, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." This means we not only respect God, but we understand **He holds all power and will judge and punish evil.**

- **Because we know this, we should have a desire to share this with others!**

THE OUTWARD VS. THE INWARD

The Corinthians looked at outward appearances more than the state of the heart. This is antithetical to Jesus' teachings (Matthew 23).

- We like to put this in the context of nice attire, but **all people can be manipulative or judge others by shallow standards. We can't fool God because He sees the heart.**

"FOR IF WE ARE OUT OF OUR MIND..."

Paul wanted to make the Corinthians "proud" and convince them his motives were sincere. He also addressed the criticism he received from many that he was crazy for choosing to sacrifice it all for Jesus and other people.

- **Biblical love looks crazy to people who haven't fallen in love with Jesus.**

CHOOSING TO LIVE FOR THE TRUE GOD

The reason Paul was sold out to Jesus is that "He died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves."

- **When we realize what Jesus has done for us, we should dedicate our lives to Him and not ourselves. Eternal life is only found when we willingly lay our lives down.**

RECONCILIATION (2 CORINTHIANS 5:16-6:2)

A NEW CREATION

When one genuinely gives their life to Jesus, repents, and is baptized out of obedience, they are a "new creation" (Romans 6).

- **Salvation begins a metamorphosis (sanctification) where we no longer view our lives and other people from a "worldly perspective," but from a biblical one.**

A "MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION"

Reconciliation is establishing harmony and peace between enemies. Because of rebellion and sin, humanity became distant from God.

- **It was God's desire to create a bridge (the cross) by which we can be personally reconciled to Him through forgiveness, grace, and a relationship with Jesus.**
- Paul felt responsible to tell others the gospel. Paul calls himself an "ambassador" for Christ who "plead[s] on Christ's behalf" for people to "Be reconciled to God."
- In order to share Christ, **we must also create a bridge by truly loving, honoring, and getting to know others.**

BECOMING THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD?

Jesus came as 100% God and 100% human. So, He "did not know sin" but took on our sin (the cross) "so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

- We're imperfect, but **if we truly depend on Jesus we can live in obedience to God and in His grace. In other words, righteous.**

"DON'T RECEIVE THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN"

"...now is the day of salvation" means we have the knowledge of how to be saved and the perfect example of how to live through Jesus.

- **We live in a time of great opportunity and great danger. The access we have to the Bible and God brings both freedom and severe judgment very close (James 4:17).**

TEMPORARY VS. ETERNAL

- Though **we are meant to steward and enjoy this life**, we must remember it is **fragile**, there will be **suffering**, and we are to **not get too attached because it is temporary.**
- **We should also long for the life to come**, but it is easy to get discouraged. This is why we have the Spirit to give us a taste of heaven.
- **We will also be held into account for how we live this life**, and since we are prone to failure and distraction, **we must "walk by faith" with Jesus instead of our limited abilities.**
- If we will seek to please God, we will not only live better now, we will **avoid punishment and experience incomprehensible rewards.**

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST?

- This knowledge is not to be hoarded. We're to be ambassadors for the message of Jesus.
- Society is in a place where many people are searching for hope and answers. **We have a great opportunity for the church to step up and love, serve, and honor the community around us!**

BIBLICAL LOVE IS THE KEY

- When we truly love Jesus, **we are able to become "the righteousness of God"** and not receive in vain what He has done for us. This means we live in a way that honors Him.
- When we love others and apply the teachings of the Word to our relationships, we **open the door for God to touch the hearts of man.**

TEMPORARY

- There must be a **sense of urgency** in Christians to love their neighbor and to not compromise the truth of the Word.