

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 12TH, 2024 // 2 CORINTHIANS

## DWELLINGS (2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-10)

### EARTHLY

In Chapter 4, Paul compared our lives to clay jars. Now, he compares our current bodies to tents. Tents are not made to be permanent dwellings, and our earthly bodies will not last forever.

- **No matter how hard we try, we can clean them, exercise them, and put only the best things in them, but they still wear out and eventually collapse.**

### HEAVENLY

Paul also writes about our eternal dwelling in the heavens. It is our resurrected bodies that will not be affected by sin or death. Paul looks forward to eternal life.

- **When we think of eternity and the physical bodies God will give us, we can endure the weaknesses of our current "tents."**

### CONFIDENT LIVING

Understandably, Paul desired to get to heaven, see Jesus face to face, and live forever with Him. Staying here may have caused him to groan, but he rejoiced that he could still live in faith and serve.

- **God has given us His Holy Spirit as a down payment. He reveals His plan for this life and the next. We can live with purpose now and excitement for the future.**

### PLEASEING FAITH

Paul said that their goal would be to please the Lord, whether here or in heaven. Paul knew there would be a judgment for every good or evil thing he did. He lived in faith, not in fear.

- **We know that our faith is expressed in works, but those works are not the basis of our relationship with God; they are the evidence of our relationship.**

### JUDGMENT

Paul acknowledges that there will be a judgment for all. All sins from all time will be exposed. For the unbeliever, it will reveal their rejection of Christ. For the Believer, it will reveal how much has been forgiven.

- **In the end, it won't be about us. We will finally, humbly, completely glorify God for all that He has done.**

## COMPELLED (2 CORINTHIANS 5:11-15)

### FEAR

Paul has a healthy fear of the Lord and knows that God searches the heart of everyone. So, he desires to be transparent and not hide any sin or motive.

- **God has the right and power to judge. We should live in awe of His grace and mercy, knowing we can't hide anything from Him. Why do we try to hide so much from each other?**

### APPEARANCE

The "false apostles" were all about the show and talked bad about Paul because of his weaknesses: weak voice, low pay, affliction, suffering, and no references. Paul focused on the heart. His life might look crazy to others, but his motive was always to please Christ by serving others.

- **What name are we afraid to be called? What matters most: heart or fame?**

### THE LOVE OF CHRIST

The thing that propelled Paul into suffering, sustained him in afflictions and gave him strength in the face of opposition was the love of Christ. NOT his love for Christ, but Christ's love for him.

- **Knowing that Christ loves us will motivate us to live for Him, serve others for His glory, and give us strength to endure.**

### DIED FOR ALL

Paul states that Christ died for everyone who would believe and that every Believer dies to themselves and the world to truly live for Christ.

- **What is our motivation for living? Do we realize that the One God of the universe sees us, loves us, died, and resurrected for us? Believers surrender their lives and live for Him.**

## RECONCILED (2 CORINTHIANS 5:16-21)

### FROM NOW ON

Paul was a changed man. He no longer saw people the way he used to, and his view of Christ changed the most. It stopped being about appearances. Now, their position with Christ mattered most.

- **The change Christ brings into our lives will make us see everything differently. Is the most important thing to Christ, important to us?**

### A NEW CREATION

Paul describes Believers as a new creation because they are completely changed. It wasn't their look; it was their nature. Paul implies the power behind that change is the same power that created the world.

- **We should look at other Christians as part of the new creation and not evaluate them based on worldly positions.**

### FROM GOD

Paul makes it clear that God is the one who changes people and reconciles them to Himself. Because the price is beyond anyone's ability to pay, God paid the price in Christ and through Christ.

- **In Christ, our sins are forgiven at the cross. Through Christ, we are called by God to be followers. God initiates this relationship because of His love for us!**

### AMBASSADORS

Paul knows that God is in the reconciliation business and wants everyone to know it! His ministry was to share this truth, and he became an ambassador for Christ.

- **Ambassadors are more than advertising specialists. We aren't selling the gospel; we represent it! Our changed lives will speak on behalf of the gospel, as well as our words.**

### PLEADING

As an ambassador, a first-century representative of Christ, Paul could have been proud. Instead, he humbly pleaded with people to hear the message of reconciliation, restoration, and resurrection.

- **Following Christ and realizing we have been forgiven so much should compel us to humbly share the gospel with everyone who will listen.**

## RIGHTEOUSNESS

As the final part of being reconciled to God, Paul says we become the righteousness of God. The perfectly righteous Christ took our sins and gave us His righteousness.

- **Now, God sees His Son in us because He has given us His Son. How do we respond to this gift? How do we live? What are we really looking for?**

## HOME

- We all want to go home.
- **This isn't it, but we are on the way.**
- **We know that Heaven is our destination if we follow Christ. But, there is a life to live here until that time comes. How we view eternity will determine how we live for God, others, and ourselves.**

## LIVING

- We want to look good.
- **Looking good isn't always living right.**
- **When we live to look the best, we deceive everyone, even ourselves. When we live to love others with the love that God has given us, we find peace with who we are because God is in us.**

## REPRESENT

- Living for Christ is more than effort.
- **Living for Christ is a result of God's gift of reconciliation.**
- **We follow Christ because He called us, forgave us, and made a home for us in heaven. Living for Christ is others seeing what He has done in us. Are we trying to "look good," or are we compelled to re-present the gospel that changed our lives to the world around us?**