

2 Corinthians Chapter 5

2 Corinthians 5:1 "For we know that if our earthly house of [this] tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Christians should not fear death, because we have an eternal habitation with God in heaven. Death of our body on the earth is like stepping out of the door of this earth into the door of heaven. The tabernacle, spoken of here, is our body of flesh (our earthly house). We see in the next two verses in Jesus' own words that we have a home in heaven that Jesus has prepared for us.

John 14:2-3 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also."

2 Peter 1:14: "Knowing that shortly I must put off [this] my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."

"A building of God" is Paul's metaphor for the believer's resurrected, glorified body. A glorified body, by definition, is not of this earthly creation but one that has been made by God.

We see the tabernacle of God is with man in the following verse.

Revelation 21:3 "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, [and be] their God."

2 Corinthians 5:2 "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:"

We spoke earlier of how we shed this body of flesh as a man would shed his outer garment. In heaven, we Christians are dressed in a white linen garment washed in the blood of the Lamb (Jesus Christ). It is our robe of righteousness. It is in fact, Jesus' righteousness that we are clothed with. It could be said, that we are clothed with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:3 "If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked."

We would have been naked, but Jesus provided our garment acceptable to God. When God looks at us, He does not see the sin that we once had, but He sees His Son's shed blood. So that we won't be found naked and ashamed, we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

Paul had a passionate longing to be free from his earthly body and all the accompanying sins, frustrations, and weaknesses that were so relentless.

2 Corinthians 5:4 "For we that are in [this] tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

Our mortal body grows old, and full of pain, and suffering. Moses' snake, which represented life, swallowed up the snakes of the Pharaoh's magicians. The magician's snakes represented death, or Satan. Death must be swallowed up for life to come. This mortal must put on immortality. Death of the body has to come, for life of the spirit to begin.

Paul reiterated that he could hardly wait to get his glorified body. He wanted the fullness of all that God had planned for him in eternal life, when all that is earthly and human will cease to be.

2 Corinthians 5:5 "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing [is] God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

Romans 8:23 "And not only [they], but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, [to wit], the redemption of our body."

Jesus was the firstfruit, and we that follow are the first fruits of the harvest. Let us look at the following verses and find what this earnest of the spirit is.

Ephesians 1:13-14 "In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Jesus sent the Spirit of the Risen Christ to dwell in the Christian. That is our earnest. We have eternal Life within us. We must shed our body of flesh for the Spirit of life to make itself real to us.

The sealing of which Paul speaks here refers to an official mark of identification that was placed on a letter, contract, or other important document. The seal usually was made from hot wax, which was placed on the document and then impressed with a signet ring. The document was thereby officially identified with and under the authority of the person to who the signet belonged.

That is the idea of our being sealed in Him (Christ), with the Holy Spirit of promise. The seal of God's Spirit in the believer signifies four primary things: security, authenticity, ownership and authority.

Ephesians 4:30 "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

2 Corinthians 5:6 "Therefore [we are] always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:"

This body of flesh gets in the way of total fellowship with the Lord. This world, or this body, should not be thought of as our permanent home. We are just traveling through this earth on our way to the Promised Land (heaven).

While we are still in our body, we are attached to this earth. We are in the earth. To live in heaven, we must leave this earthly dwelling place. Just as the children of Israel had to leave Egypt (type of the world), before they could go to their Promised Land, we must leave this world to get to our Promised Land. The Lord is inside of us, but to fully enjoy fellowship with no boundaries, we would have to be with Him at the throne of God in Heaven.

“Absent from the Lord”: Paul was not saying he had absolutely no contact, because there is prayer, the indwelling Spirit, and fellowship through the Word. Paul was simply expressing a heavenly homesickness, a strong yearning to be at home with his Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:7 "(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"

Faith is the opposite of fact. If you can see it with your physical eyes, it takes no faith to believe.

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Abraham had faith, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. It is our faith that provides our righteousness in Jesus' blood, as well.

Christian's hope for a heaven they have not seen. They do so by believing what Scripture says about it and living by that belief.

2 Corinthians 5:8 "We are confident, [I say], and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

When we leave this body of flesh, we are instantly in heaven with the Lord in our spiritual body. Jesus told the thief on the cross that today he would be with Him in Paradise. Jesus dismissed His Spirit from His body and commanded it to go to the Father. Both the Spirit of Jesus and the spirit of the thief instantly went to paradise/heaven, when they left their bodies of flesh.

Revelation 2:7 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

The Tree of Life (Jesus), is in heaven with God. Paradise is now in heaven.

2 Corinthians 5:9 "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him."

The cry of all Christians should be, we'll work till Jesus comes. The desire of every Christian that I know is that when they stand before the Lord Jesus as Judge of the entire world, that they'll hear Jesus say: Well done, thy good and faithful servant. He will recognize us as His own, if we have stayed faithful to Him.

Paul demonstrated that it is right and noble for the believer to strive for excellence, spiritual goals, and all that is honorable before God. Paul's highest goal, and should be so for every believer was to be well pleasing to God and to be accepted of him.

2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad."

This is speaking of the Bema Seat, the judgment seat of Christ. "Judgment seat" metaphorically refers to the place where the Lord will sit to evaluate believers' lives for the purpose of giving them eternal rewards. It is translated from the Greek word bema, which was an elevated platform where victorious athletes (during the Olympic games), went to receive their crowns. The term is also used in the New Testament to refer to the place of judging, as when Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate, but here the reference is definitely from the athletic analogy.

"Done in his body" refers to the actions which happened during the believer's time of earthly ministry. This does not include sins, since their judgment took place at the cross. Paul was referring to all those activities believers do during their lifetimes, which relate to their eternal reward and praise from God.

What Christians do in their temporal bodies will, in His eyes, have an impact for eternity.

"Whether it be good or bad": Again, terms that do not refer to moral good and moral evil. Matters of sin have been completely dealt with by the death of the Savior. Rather, Paul was comparing worthwhile, eternally valuable activities with useless ones.

His point was not that believers should not enjoy certain wholesome, earthly things, but that they should glorify God in them and spend most of their energy and time with what has eternal value.

2 Corinthians Chapter 5 Questions

1. Why should Christians not fear death?
2. What is death of our body like?
3. What does John chapter 14 verses 2 and 3 promise us?
4. We shed this body of flesh, as a man sheds what?
5. What are the Christians clothed with in heaven?
6. When God looks at us, instead of seeing our past sin, what does He see?
7. Mortality might be swallowed up with _____.

8. What did the snake of Moses do to the snakes of Pharaoh's magicians?
9. Who were the firstfruits of the Spirit given to?
10. What is the earnest of the Spirit?
11. Whilst we are at home in the body, we are _____ from the _____.
12. Where is the Christian's Promised Land?
13. What was Egypt a type of?
14. To fully fellowship with the Lord with no boundaries, we would have to be where?
15. We walk by _____, not by _____.
16. Faith is the opposite of _____.
17. What is faith?
18. What was counted unto Abraham as righteousness?
19. If we are absent from the body, we are present _____ _____ _____.
20. Where did Jesus tell the thief on the cross that He would be with Him today?
21. Who will Jesus give permission to eat of the Tree of Life?
22. Where is Paradise?
23. What should be the cry of all Christians?
24. What do all believers want to hear Jesus say to them on judgment day?
25. We must all appear before the _____ seat of _____.
26. Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the _____ _____ _____.