

Exegetical Notes – 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

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2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Verse 1

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.

- This verse contrasts what follows in chapter five from what Paul was saying in chapter four. In chapter 4:16-18, Paul talked about how our physical bodies are “wasting away,” literally wearing out. He says that we all endure what he calls “light and momentary troubles.” But each day, God gives us strength to endure, and our struggles produce eternal glory for us which outweighs them all. He says that we refuse to be focused on these things because they are temporary and are passing away. Instead, we focus our eyes on what is ahead and unseen; for that is eternal.
- Paul says that we can focus on what is eternal because we know that if the “tent” in which we now live, our physical body, is destroyed we have a building from God, our heavenly body, which is eternal and cannot be destroyed.
- We focus on what is eternal, knowing that it is of God.

Verses 2-4

² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

- “Meanwhile,” while we remain in our earthly tent, our physical body, we “groan” struggle, perhaps even grumble and complain because we long to be clothed in our perfected eternal, heavenly bodies.
- In our physical body, we are constantly confronted with our shame. We are “naked” or exposed because this body is affected by the imperfection of

the world. Our physical bodies do not function properly because of sin. They are part of the curse which fell on us because we disobeyed God.

- Our perfected bodies will be set free from the curse of sin. In them, we will be clothed in God's righteousness. The mortal body clothed in sin will be swallowed up by life in the eternal body.
- Our physical bodies reveal the sin curse. They show us what we are. But in God's kingdom, we will be free of the curse of sin and our bodies will reflect that. They will be perfect.

Verse 5

⁵ Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

- All of this is God's doing. He has given us salvation through Jesus Christ. But as we suffer the effects of sin in our physical bodies, it might be hard for us to remember the glory that awaits us in the kingdom of God were it not for the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in us.
- God has given us the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit to guarantee that the eternal is coming. We will be set free from the consequences of our sin. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit of God which reminds us of what is eternal.

Verses 6-10

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

- "Therefore"... because of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, we are "ALWAYS CONFIDENT." Our faith in God and in the promises of God never waivers. We know that God is forever faithful. We know that we can trust Him and depend on Him, even as our physical bodies fall apart, and we face troubles of various kinds.
- While we are in our physical bodies, we know that we are away from God. We would rather be at home with Him. But we trust and obey Him. We make it our goal to please God in every way.

- While we live in these “earthy tents,” we seek to put God first in our lives and to keep focused on that which is eternal, because we know that we will be judged by God for the way we live while in our “earthy tent.” We will be rewarded in heaven for the way we live here (see 1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

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