

## **Here Today Gone Tomorrow!**

### **2 Corinthians 5: 1-10 NIV**

*“<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, <sup>3</sup> because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> 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.*

*<sup>6</sup> Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. <sup>7</sup> **For we live by faith, not by sight.** <sup>8</sup> We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> **So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.** <sup>10</sup> **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.”***

I wonder how many of us enjoy camping? I mean, real camping, perhaps near a lake, stream or a body of water, with a tent, lantern, camping stove, or, even just a fire to cook on. Sleeping outside under the stars and enjoying the creation the Lord has given us. I use to, not so much anymore.

Paul uses as the illustration of our lives, physical bodies, as **“tents,”** to speak about our living in this world. He speaks, as I have heard many people speak, about that time when we will no longer live in this body, here, but rather with Him in heaven in our new spiritual bodies. That time, when we will join those who have gone before us to live in our heavenly mansion’s He has prepared for us.

So, as we are now into another year, it has crossed my mind that we should check to see if we are ready to meet our Lord face to face. Not that, that day is today or tomorrow, although none of us knows when that days will come, yet, are we ready to meet Him face to face?

**Illustration:** (Do you remember this story?)

*On November 25, 1895, a cornerstone of ice was laid in Leadville, Colorado -- the beginning of the largest ice palace ever built in America. In an effort to bolster the town's sagging economy, the citizens staged a winter carnival.*

*On New Year's Day of 1896, a little over a month later, the town turned out for the grand opening. The immense palace measured 450 x 320 feet, all built with ICE blocks. There were two towers that flanked the entrance which were 90 feet high. Inside, there was a 16,000-square-foot ice skating rink. However, by the end of March, the palace was melting away, along with the hopes of regenerating the sagging economy of Leadville. The dream of rekindling the Leadville, faded away, as the thousands of visitors to that community had spent very little, and the rink was almost gone. **At times, we place far too much hope in the temporary things of this world, and not enough hope in the lasting things found in Christ!***

Why do I say that? Look at what we prioritize... What we consider to be so important that we will sacrifice to get them? Paul starts out by speaking of those things which we tend to hold on to too tightly, which are often so temporary. Things of this world we cherish so much.

He compares the things of the world, with the things of heaven. In particular, Paul talks about our earthly bodies, the **“worn down tents”** in which we live. Most of us do not like talking about this, because it reminds us that we have an expiration date. A limited time to live upon this earth. Very few people even want to address this thought. If there is one thing I have noticed, is that most of the things we hold on to seem to melt away in time. Have you ever noticed that. At least I see that most things we think we own or have, always need repairs. It’s a never-ending project to keep up with.

Paul reminds us that our bodies, our lives, are temporary tents, that will fade away one day. That this shell, or tent, is not the entire picture of who we are. If you own a tent, you know that it cannot hold everything you have, or own, within it. The same is true for our lives. This body is but a reflection of who we are, not the sum total. And it will only last for a period of time!

So, let’s start there and see what Paul has to say to us...

### ***First ~ Built by man verses Built by God***

***“<sup>1</sup> 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.”***

When I go to purchase something, I try hard to find out who made it, how it was made, and where it is from, to determine if it is worth what I pay for it. I would bet most of us do the same thing.

As I have aged, I have noticed that no matter how good we are at taking care of our bodies it will wear out, eventually. In Paul’s day, it was not uncommon to put a tent up, dwell in it for a while, as needed, then **“fell it,”** or **take it down**, and move to another location. That was a major undertaking, yet commonly done over and over.

If you are like me, I didn’t always enjoy setting up camp when we went camping. To me, that was but a necessary function, we went through, to enjoy that moment in life. It was what took place after we set up camp that created desire to participate in camping. We should know that life was never meant to be everlasting, on earth, it was meant to be everlasting in Heaven. In the meantime, we may have to setup and take down camp multiple times. ***(Like moving)***

The Lord revealed to Paul, and then Paul shares with us, that we all have a limited amount of time upon earth. That we, those who accept Jesus and follow Him, have a home built for us in heaven, by the Master Builder, which lasts forever, if we want it? That is key, we each have to accept this new home.

We consider our first tent or home, to be built by man, although life is a gift from God. Then later, once we leave this house, we receive a house built by the Lord Himself. What Paul is

revealing to us, is that God is building, us, you and me, all who accept Jesus as Lord, a home right now, which has already been purchased, ***(praise the Lord for that)*** and that my friends is much more costly than any home we have acquired. We can receive it, if we are willing to accept Him as Lord, because of His payment. A HOME which will never wear out. Praise God.

When Paul starts, by saying, ***“For we know...”*** he is saying, ***“the Lord tells us this fact and His Word is a promise to those who are His children.”*** This is not a guess, it is His Word, His promise to all of us.

A whole NEW home with every furnishing we need to live for an eternity. It will be the result of our ***“Hope”*** in Christ, and by our living by ***“faith.”*** Those are the two tools we must have and use, to help build it. ***Hope*** and ***Faith!*** That goes for everyone who, ***believes and receives.*** The tent we live in now, will be destroyed, count on that, but the House He builds in heaven, will last forever. Do you want it? I am not sure many of us can afford a home in this world, but we can in Heaven because He paid for it for us.

## ***Second ~ Clothed or Naked?***

***<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, <sup>3</sup> because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> 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.”***

I find it interesting, that Paul speaks here about things of the world being difficult, causing us to ***“Groan”*** and ***“Moan.”*** What do you think? Have you ever heard anyone moan and groan about life? I certainly have heard it and perhaps have some myself.

To even be found naked, meaning, to discover that things of this world will not last forever but only a short time. We don't want to be found naked, without, so we keep seeking things to fill the void, or feelings of loss.

Let's be honest, living in this world comes with all kinds of struggles, I don't care who we are, or what kind of life we live. Paul implies, that while we live here, we are unclothed, naked, and living with many struggles. ***(Boy is he right)*** And living here comes with an immense amount of trials and struggles.

Listen to what Paul says, ***“so that what is mortal, may be swallowed up by life.”*** Sometimes, we hold so tightly to things, that we harm ourselves. Things Paul says will fade away. What we think to be so important, once we find Jesus and discover our eternal home, will seem so silly and worthless. Even death – living here on earth – will be swallowed up by life.

One commentator said this: ***“Think of a snake swallowing a mouse. The mouse is no longer alive in this world. It is completely conquered. It is no more.”*** He is saying – most of us will be

swallowed up by life, struggling to find what bring real life to our being. – While living with the Lord in Heaven brings life forever. Trying to help us see that what we may have thought was so important now, is often not that important. Then, He says something very important: **“Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose...”** God when He created us, planned that one day we would live in His mansion, in Heaven with Him, forever. Praise the Lord. He has a Purpose, a plan, for each of us! However, there is something, which many call, the flaw in His plan, He gave us free will to choose.

For those of us who accept Jesus, God makes a **“deposit” “a guarantee of our reservation”** with Him, known as **“the Holy Spirit.”** Giving us His power to seek a better life and live above the level of sinning all the time. Following the Him rather than following world.

In essence, God made a deposit on our NEW HOUSE for us. He gave us the Holy Spirit so that we might follow Him and find His strength to do it. Do you want to stop groaning and moaning? Accept Jesus, and start living for Him as best as we can each day. The Holy Spirit is the Lord’s guarantee helping hand. You are not alone! The things we tend to grasp, and hold on to, are temporary in all reality. Yet, because of the impact of this world, we don’t see it. While all along, God has a plan for us and gave us the strength to reach this plan through the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Third ~ The goals set before us!**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. **(Did we hear that)** Listen now – (<sup>7</sup> **For we live by faith, not by sight.**)

<sup>8</sup> We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body, and at home with the Lord. **(Here comes the goal Paul speaks of)** <sup>9</sup> **So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.** <sup>10</sup> 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.”

As we read chapter 5, we find several important comments for us to take to heart. He says as long as we are living on earth, we are not home with the Lord. That should remind us of our goal in life, which is of greater value than the things in this world.

But it is the next sentence where Paul says, **“<sup>7</sup> For we live by faith, not by sight.”** Most of us are **“visual”** people, thus, this is difficult. What I mean is, that when we see something, it is easier for us to put it into context, and realize what is being said. Paul is telling us, that as God’s children, are called to live by Faith. Faith is defined by His Word, as - **“The confident assurance of things hoped for but not seen.”** In all honesty, our eyes can be, and have been, deceived at times. What we see is not always what we need, or really want. The world sensationalized everything. Causing us to think what the world has will do it for us. That is a lie.

Paul says, “**9 So we make it our goal to please him, (who are we to please? God) (Who are we pleasing?) whether we are at home in the body or away from it.**” (Where or when are we to do this?) (Today, right now, as long as we are here, and/or when we go to be with him) I wonder how hard it would be to make pleasing Him our primary goal in life? “**Pleasing the Lord?**” He says “**so we make it our goal to please him...**” Many of us set goals all the time. Here is one we are called to make right now!

May I ask, “**Is this our goal? Your goal?**” Then Paul says, that reality sets in, “**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.**”

Oh Lord, forgive us as we seek to understand what You are telling us. He is not saying that we should give up because we have done far too many wrong things, things opposite of what He asks of us. Rather, He is inviting us to fall on our knees, asking for His forgiveness, discover His power through His grace, so that the mess fades away.

**Let me state something important here**, the eternal consequences are dealt with because of what Christ does, thus, we will be with Him in heaven forever. However, there are worldly consequences for our sins, we may have to deal with within our early bodies and lives, which we may not escape from. Life will be better each day, as His Grace is sufficient to lead, protect and rebuild our lives. Yet what we have done, may cause issues with our earthly tent today.

Paul reminds us, that life and things are temporary, so we dare not count upon them. They are “**Here Today and Gone Tomorrow.**” When they are gone, people tend to lose hope. They may even fall apart. Sometimes completely fall apart. It doesn’t have to be that way!

Please hear what Paul is saying to us today, we are being called to place our lives in God’s hands, right now. And when we do, we will receive and build a relationship with Christ, something which will change our lives dramatically. Then, there will be a mansion in heaven built by God, for each and every one of us to inherit one day. And it will never – let me say that again, never – fade away or be destroyed. We will live Him in the House of God forever!

God will never be **Here today and Gone Tomorrow**, He will always be here!

As for me and my house, I want to do my best to live for Christ every day, so that one day I will stand before Him, and He will stretch out His arms and say, “**Well Done My Good and Faithful Servant, rest, you are home forever!**”

**Closing Prayer:**