

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Paul continues to explain the life that is experienced in death and the glory that is manifest in suffering that has been his theme through chapter 4. In fact, he begins the book talking about comfort in suffering.

As usual, scholars are divided on how to understand these verses. Are the literal or figurative, present or future, experienced in a heavenly kingdom or in an millennial kingdom, etc? Are the rewards and the glory for all men or just believing men and are the equal or are they earned?

Paul's discussion seems to address a future physical body, the daily presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, a greater future manifestation of the Holy Spirit (glory) and a world that is yet unseen that will someday be realized and experienced by us.

5:1 – “For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (ESV)

- Paul was a tent maker who worked with leather, so this is a natural illustration for him.
- Paul clearly believed we are in a temporary state now, as if dwelling in a tent. We are moving toward a permanent house, city, land, etc.
- As did Abraham in Hebrews 11:8-10 and 12:22-23 and 13:14 and 21:2-4

5:2 – “For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,”

- Jesus words about the destruction of his body and his resurrection into a physical body in John 2:19-22
- Romans 8:23
- NOTE: Pau does not look forward to the Greek philosophies disembodiment of the soul, but instead a clothing of the permanent body.
- In fact, to contradict the Greek philosophy Paul says his present state is naked compared to his future full clothing of his soul. Thus, Greek philosophy merely promised an eternal state of nakedness or eternal disembodiment.
- Paul's words in 1 Cor. 15:53-54 may have been understood to support the Greek philosophy.

5:3 – “if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked.”

5:4 – “For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.”

5:5 – “He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.”

- This is what man was “prepared” for by being given the Holy Spirit now.
- “Guarantee” is **arrhabon** which means:
 - A pledge or guarantee, differing in kind from the final payment but rendering it obligatory
 - A partial payment (a first installment, down payment, a deposit) that required further payments but gave the payee a legal claim to the goods in question (From BAG)
 - In the Modern Greek language the same word **arrhabona** has evolved over the centuries to mean today “engagement ring.”

5:6 – “So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord,”

5:7 – “for we walk by faith, not by sight.”

5:8 – “Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”

5:9 – “So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.”

- The eternal reward is based on things done while “in the body” (5:10)

5:10 – “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.”

- “appear” is the Greek word “φανερωθηναι” or “phanerotheranai”. The meaning of this word is “to make clear, to manifest.” The meaning of this word is not “they will need to show up”, or “you will need to be there”. This word means your life and character will be crystal clear. Everything you did and the motives will be made obvious. Maybe for the first time we will see the motives we had while we were serving the Lord.
- The motive will be clear as it says in 1 Corinthians 4:5: “Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.”
- “All a man’s ways (or, his actions) seem right to him, but the Lord weighs the heart (or, motive).” - Proverbs 21:2
- “If you say, ‘But we knew nothing about this,’ does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done?” - Proverbs 24:12
- Also notice what is judged. It says “we” not our works.
 - Our service is an extension of ourselves. What is in our hearts manifest itself in our works. (Though the works are said to be judged in 1 Cor. 3:13, it indicates the “quality” of the works will be judged.)
 - Of course, two people may do the same good service for two different reasons. Consider those who were preaching Christ in an attempt to out preach Paul and do it for envy and competition:

"It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached." - Philippians 1:15,16

Notice above that both were doing the same work: Preaching Christ. The difference was in there motives:

- 1) Out of envy and rivalry, out of selfish ambition.
- 2) Out of good will, in love, in knowledge, sincerely.

Jesus warned of wasting our lives in service to honor ourselves:

“Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven . . . “I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.” Matthew 6:1, 5

- “Judgment seat” the word is “bema” and is the place of judgment and reward. Called here the “judgment seat of Christ” and in Romans 14:10 the “judgment seat of God.”
- “Due” is from the word “κομιζω” or “komizo” and it means “to bring”. It is in the middle voice here giving it the meaning of “to carry off, to get for oneself, to receive, to receive as recompense.” It is referring to receiving what belongs to you.
- “Things done” pictures the whole life of the believer as a single unit.
- “In the body” this is the position for the basis of your operation. Notice, your body is not judged. You, the one living in the body, will be judged.
- “Bad” means “worthless, bad, of no account, good-for nothing. The word indicates the impossibility of any true gain ever coming forth; worthlessness is the central notion.” It is not sin or evil. This is the wood, hay and straw of 1 Corinthians 3. The things that may have earthly value but are worthless in the light of eternity.

More notes online at:

http://www.generationword.com/notes/folder_b/reward-booklet-notes.htm#rewards_exist