

# “A New House”

- Corinthians 5:1-11 -

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**2 Corinthians 5:1-11** *For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the*

*heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,*

*3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we*

*want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very*

*thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the*

*body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent*

*from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.*

*10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to*

*what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to*

*God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences..*

## Chapter 5

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" (1 Corinthians 15:35).

In the days which followed the crucifixion of Christ and His subsequent resurrection, according to John chapter 20, the gang was holed up in the upper room together. The text tells us the doors were shut and locked and suddenly...*inexplicably*, Jesus appeared in their midst. Having made a point in most translations to state clearly what was implied in the language of the text, we cannot miss a subtle but powerful caveat ...*the doors were shut and locked*. And yet suddenly Jesus was in the room. It seems Jesus walked through the wall or at least manifested himself physically in that room without using a door.

The scriptures tells us that God will give us new bodies in heaven -- bodies that will be **similar to Christ's body after His resurrection**. Philippians 3:21 tells us that "*by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body*" (Philippians 3:21) This does mean that we will be disembodied spirits, for in Luke 24:39-43, Jesus appears to the disciples and said " 'Look at my hands. Look at my feet. You can see that it's really me. Touch me and make sure that I am not a ghost, because ghosts don't have bodies, as you see that I do.' As he spoke, he showed them his hands and his feet. Still they stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder. Then he asked them, 'Do you have anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he ate it as they watched." Jesus took a piece of broiled fish from them and ate it in their presence. Only a physical body could eat food and be handled. At the end of Luke, we are told that Jesus in some rather mysterious manner departed from their presence and was taken to the right hand of the Father. Clearly His body had both visible and invisible realities. It was real, visible, capable of being handled, and recognizable. Yet at the same time it was able to pass through solid objects and disappear.

Paul spoke of this back in his first letter to the church in Corinth saying, "*Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be **changed**, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet*" (1 Cor 15:51–52). Indeed we cannot die anymore, because we will be like angels (not angels but with similar

attributes) and are children of God, being children of the resurrection (Luke 20:36). 1 Corinthians 15 says we will be “imperishable.”

One result of our new body will be the ability to see God: We “will see his face” (Rev 22:4). Before this, no one could see God and live (Exod 33:20). Only the Son of God could (John 1:18). But by being *in Christ*, bearing his image through the resurrection, *we can*.

The resurrected body of the believer will, in some ways, be like the resurrected body of Christ. John said “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is (1 John 3:2).

Paul had been speaking concerning the persecutions and trials that often befall us as believers. He clearly stated that such difficulties would indeed come...as a normal and absolute aspect of walking as a child of God. Such is a very real part of our sharing in the death of Christ, our dying with Him, which is a mandatory aspect of rebirth and salvation. We must die to this world and all of our plans and aspirations in lieu of *His* plans and calling for us with the belief and understanding that such a road is better than any we could ever acquire outside of Him. If we do not die in such a manner, we are not His and not a true Christian.

We often speak in Christian colloquiums and buzz words like “salvation” and “saved” and “reborn” without any real manifest of action or change in our lives from that of the unbeliever. Most often we want heaven without giving up the world, blessing without discomfort, standing with God without adopting the position of bondsman. Through it all we so often fail to appreciate the great price that was paid for us by Christ and so many others that have followed, all so we can open the scriptures and worship our Creator and stand in His presence.

We have fallen so far in this matter that the greater religious world today has in fact embraced a theology of comfort and earthly gain. Paul seems at times to be the lone dissenting voice of humility and sacrifice in order to further the kingdom of God in our own personal lifetime. Paul had suggested, albeit perhaps within a somewhat gentle approach, that he was ready to not just *live* for Christ, but to even die for Him. I wonder if we are personally ready to even entertain such a thought?

## 5:1

Using spiritual metaphor here, Paul speaks of our “earthly house.” This is our body, the abode of the genuine life in each of us. Paul refers to this temporary home of the human soul as a “tent.” The language vividly denotes the makeshift and transitional nature of this body which holds the eternal life so created by Jehovah God. It’s a crazy thing to watch the world embellishing and adorning what is still just a tent. The money we spend on clothes, makeup, hair styles and plastic surgery is crazy. Because no matter how you slice it, this tent is clearly temporary. Someone should tell some Hollywood starlets that.

The tent will come to an end, but we will always have the building. While we are living in the tent we are personally investing in to such a degree...investing so much in that tent...while right outside our door is a mansion that God is building for us. The permanent and eternal body that is waiting on the other side of the curtain of death.

In some ways, it is all so fitting really. For a tent is the home of a traveler. It’s for a person who is not planning to stay, but rather is on a journey and is fully planning to move on. Hebrews 9:11 says our new house is not part of this earthly creation. There is no such eternal house in this life, no matter how much bran you eat!

Our new house is one specially designed for the heavenly eternal realm. What form that will take, I do not know. I do know that the tent I have right now is pretty remarkable in its workings, and He whipped this one up pretty fast. And it is herein described as merely a temporary tent!

So if this one is just a tent, the “house” must really be something to behold! There’s no doubt that one will no longer be susceptible to disease, (even Covid) decay, and death. This body is okay to camp out in for a while, but it is not my home. Oh, but again how serious we can be about its adornment and its care! Often we will sacrifice even Christ and His kingdom in order to protect our “tent.”

## 5:2

It is easy to “groan” over the limitations we endure while living in these temporary tents. The aches, the pains, the fears, and the inevitable breakdowns. Even in our understanding of the passing nature of our bodies, we can be frustrated by the need to feed them, sleep once in a while, and by their consumption of our time and resources.

They occasionally go on the blink, spring a leak, grow tired and require enough attention so as not to lose a pole or a stake along the way. Ultimately they grow old and begin to sag. Until then, they seemingly have an insatiable appetite for décor and comfort. Many of us are apt to start adding “rooms” to our tents, a little flower garden out front with maybe a string of those little Asian lights over the top.

In time, the faithful believer starts looking forward to moving into something a little more permanent, a home fit for eternity. One that feels no pain, does not get sick, and is designed to last forever. Ah, one cannot begin to imagine the bodies that await us!

## 5:3-6

Such a home is guaranteed for each of us if we are indeed reborn in Christ. Having been adopted into His family, we are heirs of the greater kingdom and not of this earth, for it is “passing away.” (Luke 21:33)

The tent may be fading away, but Paul is calling upon us to remember that we are called to and thus destined for greater things than this. No matter how pretty, how strong, or how durable our tents are, they are meant to be but brief homes before we move into our real ones. This one is a canvas place to sleep while that one is an eternal home. This one is a pond, and that one is a sea.

If today we are without His parental hand upon us, then a tent is all we will ever know. That is why so many invest so much in something that will not and cannot endure. Paul is not trying to be morbid. It is not that we want to die, but we long in our spirit to move into something more permanent, a home that will not break down, leak, or blow away. We want to finish the journey! And some of us are determined to finish it well.

How do we know this truly awaits us? Paul says God has put down “earnest money” on the sale. He has given us His very Spirit to dwell with us in these tents. We do not live alone as believers! And if you are truly one, you know that as a fact.

Though the Spirit of Christ lives with us in these tents, we desire the day when we will dwell upon the same plane of existence as God Himself. There we will no longer be strangers in a strange land. We will be living next door to our Creator.

## 5:7

The world today stands in derision on the subject of the afterlife. As Christians we are called escapists and dreamers. Maybe you too are having trouble swallowing this message today. However, inside all of us is the innate knowledge that there is something more, something greater beyond this life. You know it, even if you can’t put your finger on it. Jackson Browne once sang in his song “For a Dancer” the words

*“I don't know what happens when people die  
Can't seem to grasp it as hard as I try  
It's like a song I can hear playing right in my ear  
That I can't sing, I can't help listening...”*

The curse of sin upon this world is like a curtain of darkness. So we, as believers, walk in the light of faith, not by the presumed reality of what we see with our physical eyes. We see these tents grow old and weak, and finally pass from life to death. We go to funerals and see bodies buried in the ground and a stone placed in perceived final memorial that we existed at all.

Yet we stand today in reach of the down payment for eternity, the very Spirit of God... made on behalf of our heavenly Father as His promise to us of eternal life. In this, we know the promise is true. He *will* come for us, and we will leave this place and open the door of our new home, a new heavenly body with “no more tears and no more crying.”

### **5:8-9**

It seems Paul was okay with the idea of “checking out” (dying). He knew that it was the end of nothing but a lot of Monday morning grief. He was simply “moving,” Moving home to be exact! Most importantly, he was moving into the physical presence of Jesus Christ.

I wonder if we all are looking as forward to that as Paul was? Consider what your first meeting with Christ is going to look like. Will you be ashamed? Or will you be proud as you stand before Him? What will your conversation consist of? Apologies and excuses? Or thanks and worship? Will it consist of eternal reminiscences of victorious battles, reborn lives and all that we did for Him in these temporal lives while living in our “tents?” Or were we self-absorbed...fragile and prideful...sad and self excusing because we felt we couldn't handle any discomfort and pressure? But if you are a born again believer, you are filled...literally possessed by the Spirit of a God who can and does do *anything*. How do you explain the dichotomy? Does the fact that we are really nothing like Christ at all trouble you?

### **5:10**

We know, according to Romans 8:1, that there is no condemnation for us as believers. We can often erroneously believe that because of such a position with God, there will never be an accounting of how we lived our lives. But Romans says that “freedom from condemnation” is for those that are “*in* Christ Jesus.” If the Spirit of the living God is in us, what might we expect? Well, what are the attributes of the living God? Strong, enduring, other-centered, loving, faithful, consistent, honest, holy, and imminently serving?

Throughout scripture, we are called to be filled with His spirit...fall under his absolute control and manifest these qualities in Him. Possessed by His Spirit, we “do things.” We move. We work. We serve. We act. The “judgment seat” or Bema seat of judgment is the place where each of us as believers will answer for the life we have lived and yes, in many cases, for the life we *didn't* live.

Note: 1 Cor 3:10-15... *10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.*

*11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

*12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,*

*13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.*

*14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.*

*15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

What will be the verdict for each of us?

### **5:11**

If we are really aware of both the inevitability as well as the seriousness of such an ultimate meeting, we will work to persuade others. Often I am criticized for an undying focus upon serving the Lord. It is because I love

Him, and I love you, and I want so badly to make your day before Him to be one of joy and a sense of proud completion for each of you.

The “terror of the Lord” sounds very foreboding. But in reality the original language speaks more of a fatherly fear and correction than scary “doom and gloom.” Just the same, though, there is nothing worse than having your dad look at you with that look of disappointment!

God knows when our hearts are sincere. It is always my hope and prayer that you know my sincerity and desire for all of you too.

Many people bristle at the suggestion that being a Christian innately embraces and possesses not only a heart of passion for our Savior, but a life lived in surrender, action and service unto our Redeemer. However, this fact remains, not merely from the lips of your pastor, but from Paul the apostle, as well as Christ Himself. Note: **Rev 22:12** “*And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.*”