

## Working on a Building (Part 1)

### II Corinthians 5: 1-9

It seems of late that I have been increasingly aware of the brevity of life. In the past few weeks God has called several of His children home. Dying is as much a part of life as living is. If the Lord doesn't soon return for the church, each of us will face death. We are all pilgrims and strangers on a journey toward that glorious homeland of the soul.

I rejoice to know that this life is not all there is for the child of God. We have something far better to look forward to. In this passage Paul deals with the issue of living and dying. He knew what it was to deal with the issue on a continual basis. Many of his later years were spent in uncertainty concerning death, but he was not depressed or discouraged. In fact, Paul had difficulty discerning which he desired most. [Philip.1:23-24 – For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: \[24\] Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.](#)

Several times in these verses Paul speaks of knowing and being confident. He was certain of his future with the Lord. He was working on a building not made with hands. He knew that life did not end with the grave for the believer. I want to look at the wonderful truths recorded in this passage as we consider: [Working on a Building](#). I trust that it will encourage and challenge us as we live out our daily lives.

**I. The Believer's Gain** (1) – [For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.](#) Clearly Paul is following up on a thought presented in the previous verses. Notice [II Cor.4:15-18](#).

- Life was hard for the Corinthian believers, but they were not defeated. The Lord was working within their lives a greater work than outward circumstances could hinder. He encouraged them to look through eyes of faith to the things unseen, those things that were eternal.
- It may appear that our lives have suffered defeat, but I am reminded that God is working a far greater glory in our lives as well. So, let's take a moment to consider the believer's gain in this verse. Paul speaks of two distinct and separate aspects of life.

**A. A Mortal Body** – He reveals much about the present body in which we now live. We find that:

**1. Life is Brief** – Paul spoke of this body, this **earthly house** being a **tabernacle**. That is an interesting and very fitting illustration. It literally means “*a tent or a temporary dwelling*.” One day we will finish with this earthly tabernacle and it will be folded and placed within the ground.

- You would have to agree that life as we know it is brief. If we lived to be 100 years old, it is but a brief span in the eyes of eternity. Many of us are already asking where time has gone. **Jam.4:14 – Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Ps.89:48 – What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.** One life will soon be passed, only what’s done for Christ will last. I want to make the most of the time I have left!

**2. Life is Burdensome** – In this verse Paul speaks of this tabernacle being **dissolved**. That means “*to be loosened or destroyed*.” As we depart this life, our bodies return to the dust of the earth. But this word also has an interesting aspect. It has the idea of “*a traveler loosening the straps that held the load that his animals bore in the journey*.” We may have to endure burdens for a season, but one day we will lay them aside for evermore!

- Much of this life is filled with difficulty and burdens. Paul spoke of a **burden** in **V.4**. This has the idea of “*weighing down or depressing under a heavy load*.” It seems as if the load is heavier now than it has ever been. I fear that it will continue to worsen as time goes on. **Job 5:7 – Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward. Jer.8:15 – We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!**

- This life may be brief and burdensome, but it is not all there is! Notice:

**B. A Majestic Building** – Paul was looking beyond this frail, corruptible earthly tabernacle to a greater building. There are a couple of things worth pointing out concerning this majestic building.

**1. The Excellence** – We find that this building is of God. Granted, God created each of us in His own image. We are His workmanship, the creation of His mighty hand, but this new building will be as God intended us to be with the first of creation. We will one day lay aside this old body of flesh that is prone to sin and corruption and put on a body that is made of God, ready to inhabit His heaven. **1 Jn.3:2 – Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 1 Cor.15:51-52 –Behold, I shew 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 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**

**2. The Existence** – Paul declares that this new building, the one made of God will be **eternal in the heavens**. All that we know in this life is dictated by time. Our lives are measured by time. The headstones in cemeteries bear the dates of birth and death. The new body will not be bound or dictated by time. We will never grow old and feeble. Death will not be known over there. We won't have hospitals, nursing homes, rehab centers, or funeral services. We will just spend one glorious, endless day with our Lord.

- This new building will exist in heaven. I just wanted to remind you that the saved are going that way! We can't imagine the splendor of it all, but heaven will certainly be our eternal home. We will never have to leave!

### **I. The Believer's Gain (1)**

**II. The Believer's Garment (2-4)** – As Paul speaks of the gain of the believer, he knows that this involves a new garment that we shall wear. Let's consider the aspects of this new garment.

**A. It is Favorable (2, 4a)** – **For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 4a – For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened:** Paul understood their desire for the blessed life to come. He knew the heartaches and suffering that they endured. He too groaned for that house not made of hands. He was weary of the disappointments of life. He was weary of men rejecting the gospel message. He longed to be with the Lord rather than face the burdens of life.

- I know that we all want to live as long as we can; that is just human nature. Everybody wants to go to heaven, just not right now. I fear that we simply do not understand all that we need too concerning what is awaiting us. If we could ever grasp the beauty and wonder of the life to come, death would not be viewed as an enemy, but welcomed as a the doorway to life eternal. I can't tell you what is waiting on the other side, but I can assure you that it will be living like we've never known. There will be nothing to hinder or disappoint. All will be glorious and holy in the Lord's presence.

**B. It is Fitted (3)** – **If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.** Paul is referring to the garment that he has been afforded in the Lord Jesus Christ. He reminds the Corinthian believers that all who have come to Christ in salvation are clothed in His righteousness. They are no longer clothed in the garments of this world, appearing naked and undone before God, but clothed in purity and holiness through the cleansing of Christ!

- As I read this verse my mind went back to the Garden of Eden. Prior to sin entering humanity, God walked with Adam in the cool of the day. They enjoyed fellowship and harmony. After their fall, Adam and Eve hid themselves from God because they were naked. They realized they were undone before God.

- That is exactly how each of us was prior to salvation. We were naked and undone before God because sin caused separation. As Jesus died upon the cross, bearing our sin, He made provision for all. He fully atoned for my sin. I now stand clothed in a garment of righteousness that was tailor made for me. Jesus died for my sin; He did that for me! He met my need and offered me eternal life. All who come to Him find a garment that is tailor made.

**C. It is Flawless** (3-4) – V.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.

All that man knows in this life is affected by the corruption of sin. The bodies of flesh that we live in are cursed by the effects of sin. We face disease and pain. We grow old and our bodies wear out. These bodies eventually return to the dust of the earth from whence we were created.

- Paul knew the frailty of humanity. He knew that all must face death. He knew that no flesh lives forever. [Heb.9:27 – And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:](#)

- We too live in a body that is flawed by the devastation of sin. We face the same corruption that former generations faced. This is quite depressing if one has no hope of change. For the child of God there is hope. Granted we live in a corruptible, mortal body, but we are promised to be raised incorruptible. We are promised that this defiled body will be replaced with a new glorified body. [1 Cor.15:53-55 – For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. \[54\] So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. \[55\] O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?](#)

We will stop there this evening and pick up again next week. Aren't you glad that we have more to look forward to than what we currently have? I know that life is difficult at best, but lift up your head, we are not home yet!

I am also aware that for those who do not know Christ, this is all the heaven they will know. The difficulties and pains of this life will pale in comparison to the torment that waits. If you have never trusted Christ as your Savior, I urge you to consider your eternal destiny. Apart from Jesus there is no hope of heaven.

