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2 Corinthians 5
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By Dan Maines

2 Corinthians 5

2 Corinthians 5:1

For we know that if our earthly tent, which is our house, is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens.

† Paul contrasts the temporary body with the eternal dwelling from God.

† The "tent" points to mortality, while the "building" points to the resurrection life in Christ.

† Philo (On the Migration of Abraham 18) described the body as a tent, aligning with Paul's imagery.

2 Corinthians 5:2-3

For indeed, in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, since in fact after putting it on, we will not be found naked.

† Believers long for transformation, not disembodiment.

† Nakedness represents shame, but being clothed with the heavenly dwelling shows completeness.

2 Corinthians 5:4

For indeed, we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.

† The goal is not the loss of the body but transformation into life.

† Mortality is absorbed into immortality.

† Isaiah 25:8 foretold, "He will swallow up death for all time," which Paul echoes here.

2 Corinthians 5:5

Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a pledge.

† The Spirit guarantees the transformation to come.

† Believers already have the down payment of glory within.

2 Corinthians 5:6-7

Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight.

† Life in the body is marked by faith, not sight.

† Full fellowship with the Lord belongs to the new creation.

† Clement of Rome (1 Clement 50) exhorted believers to live by faith until the final appearing of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:8

But we are of good courage and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

† Paul's desire is for full communion with the Lord, beyond mortal limitations.

† Death for the believer is not defeat but presence with Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for his deeds done through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.

† Pleasing Christ is the aim of life and death.

† Judgment is certain for all, based on deeds done in the body.

† Josephus (Antiquities 18.1.3) recorded Jewish belief in accountability after death, aligning with Paul's teaching.

2 Corinthians 5:11

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade people, but we are revealed to God, and I hope that we are revealed also in your consciences.

† Ministry is driven by reverence for the Lord.

† Paul's sincerity is known to God and should be evident to believers.

2 Corinthians 5:12-13

We are not commending ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to be proud of us, so that you will have an answer for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart. For if we have lost our minds, it is for God; if we are of sound

mind, it is for you.

† Paul defends his ministry against superficial judgments.

† His devotion, even when misunderstood, is for God and the church.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died, and He died for all, so that those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose on their behalf.

† The cross redefines life, all have died in Christ.

† Believers live for Him who died and rose again.

† Ignatius (Letter to the Smyrnaeans 4) affirmed living only for Christ who died and rose.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17

Therefore from now on we recognize no one by the flesh; even though we have known Christ by the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away, behold, new things have come.

† Paul insists on a spiritual view, not a fleshly one.

† In Christ, new creation has come, old things are gone.

† Justin Martyr (Dialogue with Trypho 116) declared believers as the new people of God, fulfilling this truth.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their wrongdoings against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

† Reconciliation is God's work through Christ.

† Believers are entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

† Believers serve as Christ's ambassadors, speaking His appeal to the world.

† The church carries the message of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

† The heart of the gospel: Christ bore sin for us, we receive His righteousness.

† Athanasius (On the Incarnation 20) explained Christ taking our sin so we might share His righteousness.

How it applies to us today

† 2 Corinthians 5 proclaims the hope of transformation, the certainty of judgment, and the ministry of reconciliation.

† In the fulfilled kingdom, believers are a new creation, clothed in Christ's righteousness.

† Our calling is to live as ambassadors, urging all to be reconciled to God.

† We live not for ourselves but for Christ who died and rose for us.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Philo, On the Migration of Abraham 18 - the body as a tent

† Isaiah 25:8 - death swallowed up in victory

- † Clement of Rome, 1 Clement 50 - living by faith
- † Josephus, Antiquities 18.1.3 - accountability after death
- † Ignatius, Letter to the Smyrnaeans 4 - living for Christ who rose
- † Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 116 - believers as the new people of God
- † Athanasius, On the Incarnation 20 - Christ bearing sin, giving righteousness

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