

2 Corinthians 5:1-10, The Goal of the Christian Life

(NIV) ¹ 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. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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. ⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 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.

Questions

1. This passage begins with “For...” connecting it with the previous passage. Why is 4:14, and 4:16-18 important for understanding what Paul is talking about in 5:1-10?
2. Paul sets up a contrast, between the earthly dwelling and the heavenly dwelling. What are these terms referring to? What does it mean to be “clothed with our heaven dwelling”?
3. This is an important passage for Christian teaching on what happens between death and resurrection, something the Bible hardly speaks on. What do we know from this passage and what comfort does it give us?
4. The Spirit is a deposit, but what is it a guarantee of? How does the Spirit become a source of confidence in the midst of the trials of ministry and life in general?
5. What motivates you and what demotivates you? How does seeking to please God affect your motivation, what your goals are, and how you go about achieving them?
6. What does it mean to “live by faith and not by sight”? Think of a workplace example, how can “faith” become a hinderance in what you do and a help?
7. Do you live with fear about standing before the judgment seat of Christ? Why or why not? What purpose does the judgment seat of Christ have in the Christian life?