

Parson to Person

2 Corinthians 5 – Part 2

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

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. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 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. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 4:16–5:8).

Palm Sunday

Last Sunday (on Palm Sunday) we considered the implications of Jesus’ formation of our physical bodies at creation (see Genesis 1:26–26; 2:7 and John 1:1–3). We also recognized that a physical body was prepared for Him (see Hebrews 10:5)—similar to the “*earthly house, this tent*” (vs. 1) we presently reside within. Therefore, Jesus endured (for an estimated 33 years) a physical earthy body and suffered the “groaning” (vs. 2) from which we each seek relief. Specifically, pain, hunger, thirst, and limitation.

We also noted that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that specified (Palm) Sunday marking the final four days of “groaning” prior to His prophesied three days and three nights in the grave. However, His physical resurrection would inaugurate His “eternal habitation” (vs. 2)—a heavenly, physical, resurrected body *“not made with hands”* (vs. 1).

Resurrection Sunday—Feast of Firstfruits—Also Known by Many as Easter

In Jesus’ resurrection we recognize a beautiful foreshadowing of the promised body every believer will enjoy after our “guaranteed” (vs. 5) resurrection. *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself”* (Philippians 3:20–21).

Based upon the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, we have been guaranteed not only forgiveness of sins—but eternal life, with the Lord, in a glorified condition, wherein we will never be subjected to the “groaning” we now endure.

To the Romans Paul wrote, *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within*

ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. Likewise, the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:18–32).

With these things in mind, we can read Paul's words to the Corinthians through a better lens.

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In Jesus’ Death

In Jesus’ death, believers are guaranteed

- 1) forgiveness of sins,
- 2) deliverance from the power of sin,
- 3) imputed righteousness, and
- 4) peace with God.

In Jesus’ Resurrection

In Jesus’ resurrection, believers are guaranteed

- 1) the firstfruits of the Spirit (regeneration and sealing);
- 2) redemption of our earthly bodies into the condition of His glorious body;
- 3) eternal perspective—knowing that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, and
- 4) hope that cannot fade away—knowing that we will be with Jesus, forever, as individuals who have been called, justified, *predestined to be like Jesus, and glorified together with Him.*

“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’” (Revelation 3:21–22).

Happy Feasts of Firstfruits my dear friends,
I love you all,
Pastor Paul