

A&P Home Church | Weekly Study

2 Corinthians 5

**BOOK SUMMARY:**

Second Corinthians returns to similar themes as those Paul mentioned in his first letter to this church. Paul is glad to hear that the church in Corinth has heeded his advice. At the same time, it is necessary for Paul to counter criticisms about his personality and legitimacy. Most of this text involves that subject. The fifth chapter, in contrast, contains comforting words which Christians have quoted often in times of hardship. Paul also details his expectations that the church in Corinth will make good on their promise to contribute to the needs of suffering believers in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY:

Second Corinthians 5 follows Paul's confident declarations in the previous chapter. His suffering, though severe, is only a light, momentary affliction preparing him for eternal glory beyond all comparison. He would rather occupy his eternal body, which gives him the courage to continue his mission to preach the gospel that God is reconciling people to Himself, forgiving their sin, through faith in Christ. Those in Christ become a new creation. He concludes by imploring all to be reconciled to God, which he continues to do in the following chapter.

Throughout the week continue to look through the scriptures, think through the questions, and apply the Word to your life. Email any questions during the week to Brandon & Travis at aphomechurch@gmail.com & ap.travisjohnson@gmail.com.

MONDAY

This renowned chapter continues without interruption from the end of chapter 4. Scripture was originally written without chapter or verse divisions, so Paul's thoughts flow without pause from the earlier text.

This passage begins with Paul's honest description of the experience of life on this side of eternity. He calls our temporary bodies "tents." They are not meant to last forever and while we live in them, we groan in longing for our permanent home with God and eternal, unburdened bodies. For believers in Jesus, Paul describes death as that which is mortal being swallowed up by life. God has prepared eternal bodies for all who are in Christ and has given to them the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of what we will receive when this life is done (2 Corinthians 5:1-5).

Paul acknowledges that he is ready to be at home with the Lord, right now, free of his earthly body. He is not suicidal. He simply recognizes how much more glorious that experience will be. In the meantime, this knowledge gives him the courage to fearlessly risk everything for the mission God has given him. He walks by faith in that reality and not according to the reality he sees with his physical eyes. That makes Paul's goal simple: to please God for as long as he lives. He is motivated, in part, by an awareness that all Christians will be judged by Christ. This is not to decide their eternal destiny, but to determine rewards for whatever earthly works they did, whether good or evil (2 Corinthians 5:6-10).

Are you eager to be reunited with the Lord? If you were with him- through death or rapture- tonight, tomorrow, or next week-- does that make you excited? Scared?

Are you busy holding onto the things of this world? If there's something on this earth that you look forward to more than being reunited with Christ, why is that?

Do you know and long for Heaven? Heaven and Heaven for Kids by Randy Alcorn is one of the BEST resources we can possibly recommend. Look him up on YouTube and learn more about what he has to share, from scripture, on Heaven and the future Earth to come.

TUESDAY

2 Corinthians 5:10, NIV: "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."

2 Corinthians 5:10, ESV: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

2 Corinthians 5:10, KJV: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."

2 Corinthians 5:10, NASB: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

2 Corinthians 5:10, NLT: "For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body."

2 Corinthians 5:10, CSB: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

Previous verses described Paul's longing to leave behind the suffering of earthly life and his failing, temporary body. His motivation is not suicide, but a desire to be with the Lord in eternity and receive his eternal, resurrected body. Knowing that day is guaranteed, someday, gives him courage to keep fulfilling the mission God has given to him. That security allows Paul to endure, and to carry the gospel to more and more people. His goal in whatever he does, Paul has written, is to please the Lord.

One motivation to please God is Paul's knowledge that he will be judged by Christ for his works in this life. Paul insists that *all believers* in Jesus will appear before the judgment seat of Christ when He returns to earth. Paul is clear in his letters that this judgment is not about salvation. Christ will not declare in that moment whether someone will go to heaven or hell. In no sense is this verse implying that that judgment, or the deeds it examines, are what decide someone's eternal fate. Salvation is a gift given to everyone who trusts in Christ. Paul's gospel is that the gift of salvation is "not by works" (Ephesians 2:8–9), or nobody could achieve it (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

The judgment seat of Christ is something exclusively for believers, as Christ's evaluation of our works on earth. This refers to an assessment of what each saved, heaven-bound

Christian has done "in the body" since coming to faith in Christ. How has he or she used this life in Christ? What have they done, for good or for evil? Paul wrote in Romans 14:12 that each believer will "give an account of himself to God."

How will Christ respond? Every good action will be rewarded. Christians will receive those efforts "back from the Lord" (Ephesians 6:8). The works of those who have lived only for themselves, however, will be "burned up" or shown to be worthless. "If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15).

Paul is motivated by the awareness of this coming judgment, and he wants his readers to be motivated by it, as well. God's grace to us in forgiving sin does not mean He's careless about how Christians live our earthly lives. We *will* stand before Him and be held to account for our choices. That accountability does not affect our eternal destiny. It declares our time as spent well or foolishly, courageously or cowardly, in faith or in spiritual blindness and selfishness. The consequences of reward or reprimand in that moment will be genuinely pleasurable and/or painful, based on the choices we have made in our bodies on this side of eternity.

Take some time today to study into the Bema Seat Judgement- this is a fascinating and important topic to know and understand. Pastors Brandon & Travis are always available to answer and help with questions as they might arise.

What is the purpose of the Judgment Seat of Christ?

The Bible talks about the Judgment Seat of Christ--also referred to as the *bema*--in three places: Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:10--4:5; and 2 Corinthians 5:1-10. Only church-age saints will appear at that judgment, as shown in 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

The purpose of the *bema* is an exhaustive evaluation of our lives. First Corinthians 4:5 says the Lord will come and "bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God."

That passage reveals Paul's emphasis on the judgment seat of Christ. Notice that Paul says each man's *praise* will come to him from God. God gives rewards to the victors; He does not whip the losers. We know that He won't condemn us for our sins at that point, because

Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."

Thus, the purpose of the judgment seat of Christ is to examine a Christian's total life. We will be recompensed for the deeds we have done, whether good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10). The term used there refers to a summing up and estimation of the total pattern of a believer's life. This overall focus should keep us from worrying over every stupid thing we've ever done, or thoughtless sin we have committed. It's a time of reward, not punishment.

At the same time, while we won't be condemned for our sins, our present lives do affect what will happen at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Here's how:

1. Sin and indifference in this life rob us of our present desire for serving the Lord. That in turn means a loss of rewards, because we will not have used our time to His glory. That is why Paul exhorts us to "be careful how [we] walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of [our] time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16, NASB).
2. Sin and indifference result in a loss of power in our lives because sin grieves the Holy Spirit.
3. Sin and indifference cause us to pass up opportunities for service, which we would otherwise perform and be rewarded for.

The greatest consequence of unfaithfulness here on earth is that it disappoints Christ. First John 2:28 says, "And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." That is a sobering thought--we could be ashamed as we stand before the Lord. At the same time, it should encourage us with the prospect of receiving His lavish rewards if we serve Him faithfully during our time here on earth.

((From Grace to You,
<https://www.gty.org/library/Questions/QA97/What-is-the-purpose-of-the-Judgement-Seat-of-Christ>))

WEDNESDAY

Paul turns his attention back to the Corinthians. Because of all of this, he writes, he and his co-workers continue to be motivated to persuade others to believe the gospel. He insists that God knows they have no other agenda. He hopes the Corinthians who know him are convinced of this, as well. That knowledge will embolden them to answer Paul's critics: those who are judging him by the outward appearances of his circumstances. Some may have suggested that Paul's mental health was in question because he continued to preach the gospel despite continually suffering for it. Paul, though, emphasizes again that he can do nothing else. Christ's love compels him to keep telling everyone that Christ died for all so they, too, can live for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:11–15).

2 Corinthians 5:15, NIV: "And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."

2 Corinthians 5:15, ESV: "and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised."

2 Corinthians 5:15, KJV: "And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

2 Corinthians 5:15, NASB: "and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf."

2 Corinthians 5:15, NLT: "He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them."

2 Corinthians 5:15, CSB: "And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised."

Paul has described Christ's role as our death-substitute. Jesus died in the place of humanity, to pay for each person's sin. That death provides forgiveness of sins for those who come to faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:13–14). Jesus bled and died for the sake of sinners and was then raised back to life by God. Paul has said he is compelled—he is controlled and obligated—by Christ's love to keep delivering this message to more and more people.

Part of the message here is that eternal salvation is not the single, solitary purpose behind Jesus' death. He also died and was raised again so that those who trust in Him for salvation will stop living for themselves and begin to live for God. Christ intends that those who receive the gift of his death, for their sin, will respond by dying to selfishness in order to selflessly live for Him.

THURSDAY

Paul describes his changed perspective: He now views every person as an eternal being and not merely "according to the flesh." That began when he learned Christ was more than just a man. Anyone who is in Christ becomes like Christ. That person is a new creation. The old version of who they were is gone, replaced by the new Christlike version (2 Corinthians 5:16-18).

Once God reconciled Paul to Himself, Paul's life work became telling others about this message of reconciliation: In Christ, God is not counting people's sins against them. God made the sinless Jesus to be sin in order to declare all who trust in Him righteous people, rather than sinful people. In Paul's role as Christ's ambassador on earth, he implores everyone he can to be reconciled to God in this way.

2 Corinthians 5:16, NIV: "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer."

2 Corinthians 5:16, ESV: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer."

2 Corinthians 5:16, KJV: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more."

2 Corinthians 5:16, NASB: "Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer."

2 Corinthians 5:16, NLT: "So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now!"

2 Corinthians 5:16, CSB: "From now on, then, we do not know anyone from a worldly perspective. Even if we have known Christ from a worldly perspective, yet now we no longer know him in this way."

Christ's death, which paid for the sin of all who believe in Him, resulted in a drastic change. Paul insists we look at every single person from a different and often-difficult perspective. Instead of looking at the outer appearance, the important question that must be answered about each person is spiritual. While every person is valuable, and worthwhile, their value is

not found in physical things or worldly wealth. Nor can it be judged by shallow appearances. And, their greatest "need" is not for physical things, but for reconciliation with their Creator, through Christ.

Paul came to this understanding when he came to faith in Christ. He once thought of Christ only from a human perspective. Before his conversion, Paul viewed Christ as a mere man and His death as a just punishment for heresy. After his conversion, Paul came to know Christ as the Son of God and the substitute for human sin that he has described in the previous verses.

The understanding that everyone can be forgiven from sin and transformed through faith in Christ has changed how Paul regards every other person on earth. His primary concern, now, is whether another person is in Christ or still in their sin? Are they reconciled to God through faith in Jesus or not? As shown in the following verses, this is not about Paul deeming people "good" or "bad" on account of their faith. Rather, it reflects his deep desire to see people saved through faith.

FRIDAY

What focus would you say you have in your day to day life?

What have you learned this week?

What are some questions you still have after this week's study? Join us on YouTube Live Saturday at 12 EST to ask- or always feel free to email them any time!
aphomechurch@gmail.com

Thank you to BibleRef.com for the study resources!