

LONGING AND LIVING FOR ETERNITY

1. _____ toward eternity. (2 Cor 4:16-18)

2. _____ for our new life. (2 Cor 5:1-5)

3. _____ for what truly matters. (2 Cor 5:6-10)

TRANSFORMED

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

^[16] So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ^[17] For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ^[18] as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

^[1] For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ^[2] For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, ^[3] if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. ^[4] For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ^[5] He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

^[6] So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ^[7] for we walk by faith, not by sight. ^[8] Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ^[9] So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ^[10] 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. (ESV)

Longing and Living for Eternity

August 1, 2021

Open: What are some things we look forward to in life?

Read & Discuss: 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

1. What are some ways your outer self is “wasting away” (v. 16)? How do you tend to react to this reality? How would you say that your inner self is “being renewed day by day” (v. 16)? What enables you to be glad for this renewal, while at the same time dealing with all the effects that come with living in a fallen world?
2. In verse 18 Paul speaks of looking “to the things (*plural*) that are unseen.” What would you put in this category? Why is it helpful to keep our focus on such things? In what sense are our current afflictions “preparing us” for the “weight of glory” of what is to come (v. 17)?
3. 2 Corinthians 5:1 includes the promise that though our earthly bodies will be “destroyed,” we have something far better awaiting us. Looking at verses 1-5, what images come to mind regarding what awaits us? From what else you know of Scripture, what additional thoughts would you add regarding our eternal future that have not already been mentioned?
4. Paul said these truths caused him to be “always of good courage” (v. 6, 8). How have you found these truths to be an encouragement in your life? What should we do if we don’t feel what Paul is describing here?
5. Why do you think so many believers live as though they’d rather be “at home in the body” (v. 6), enjoying life to the maximum now instead of longing for the day when we will be “at home with the Lord” (v. 9)? How can we live with a proper perspective on life now verses the life that is to come?
6. Though believers will not be condemned for their sin, Paul says we will all stand “before the judgment seat of Christ” (v. 10)? How does the prospect of appearing before the judgment seat of Christ affect your daily choices?

Apply: How will the truths of this passage affect your attitude, perspective or behavior this week?

Pray: Pray that we would not become overly burdened by the trials and afflictions of this life, but that God would enable us to look to that which is eternal, to long for the future home that awaits us, and to live in a way that pleases God now.

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

^{4:16} So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

^{5:1} For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, ³ if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. ⁴ For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

⁶ So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰ 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. (ESV)