

“Don’t Lose Heart,” Part 2 - 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 – September 25th, 2016

- Today's teaching will be part two of a teaching I've titled, "Don't Lose Heart."
- Here at the beginning of this chapter, Paul continues from the previous chapter encouraging the Corinthians to not lose heart.
- What follows is a peak into Paul's heart, in that he reveals how he didn't lose heart in his own life in spite of all he went through.

1. We know we'll have an eternal dwelling (Verse 1)

- v1 Paul says we know if our earthly tent is destroyed we have a building from God, an eternal heavenly house not humanly built.
- The key word here in what the Apostle Paul says is "know." Notice that he doesn't say we "hope," or we "trust," or we "believe."
- This is why Paul could say that all he went through was light and momentary affliction because he "knew" the tent is temporary.

Charles Spurgeon of this said, "Many people are in a great fright about the future, yet here is Paul viewing the worst thing that could happen to him with such complacency that he likens it to nothing worse than the pulling down of the tent in which he was making shift to reside for a little season. ...The righteous are put into their graves all weary and worn; but as such they will not rise. They go there with the furrowed brow, the hollowed cheek, the wrinkled skin; they shall wake up in beauty and glory."

John 14:1-4 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know."

2. We will have eternal bodies (Verses 2-4)

- v2 Paul tells them in the mean time, as we wait for our heavenly bodies, we long to be clothed instead with our heavenly bodies.
- v3 He goes on to say that when we are clothed with our heavenly bodies, we will not be found naked as disembodied spirits.
- v4 He says while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened because we desire our death to be swallowed up in victory.

- Here, Paul is echoing what he said in his first epistle to the Corinthians concerning our new bodies at the rapture of the church.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58 (NIV) — 50 I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— 52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." 55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

3. We have the promise of eternity (Verses 5-8)

- v5 Paul says it's God who has fashioned us for this purpose and given us the Spirit as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come.
- v6 He says it's for this reason we're confident and know that as long as we're home in the body, we will be away from the Lord.
- v7-8 He says we live by faith, not by sight, and we're confident we prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

- What Paul says here is most interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is that he references our engagement.
- This because, the word guarantee carries with it the idea of a pledge and in the Greek language means "engagement ring."
- In other words, we have this future promise guaranteed to us, and as such, we are being prepared for that which awaits us.

- Now we actually have a problem here because the common denominator with all of this is that we won't realize it until eternity.
- So the question becomes one of how we're to be encouraged when we have to wait until we're in heaven in order to have this.
- The answer is in Paul saying we live by faith and not by sight, and also what he said prior about fixing our eyes on the eternal.

Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV) — 3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

Colossians 3:1-4 (NKJV) — 1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

I'll close with how one commentator illustrated this connection between the trials of this life as we await eternal life; "A man in the middle of many painful trials took a walk in his neighborhood and saw a construction crew at work on a big church. He stood and watched a stone craftsman work a long time on a block but could not see where the block would fit, because the church appeared to be finished. He watched the man work on the block carefully and methodically, slowly shaping it into a precise pattern. Finally, he asked, "Why are you spending so much time chipping and shaping that block?" The craftsman pointed up to the top of the nearly completed steeple and said, "I'm shaping it down here so it will fit in up there." The man in the middle of the trials instantly knew that was God's message to him: He was being prepared down here so that he would fit in up in heaven.