

9-17-23 New Creation

2 Corinthians 5:1–9

This four-week series unpacks the meaning of being a new creation in Christ, an ambassador for Christ to a broken world, and an agent of reconciliation to the world.

Since we born-again believers are new creations, what will we do with the rest of our lives? Will we make **1 Corinthians 10:31** our aim?

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” NKJV

Or **Colossians 3:23**, **“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,”**

Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-7.

The first thing Paul says is, **“For we know...”** This has the idea of certainty. It means, “to see with perception.” We don’t have to guess or wish or hope. We can know.

How do we know? Because we trust the Word of God. No Christian has to consult a fortune-teller, a Ouija board, a spiritist, or a deck of cards to find out what the future holds or what lies on the other side of death.

We know “to see with perception” because of the payment for our sins on the cross by Jesus and His resurrection, we can have eternity with God in heaven.

This passage teaches two primary truths we can know with certainty.

1. Earthly life is finite. (Our earthly life will come to an end.)
2. Eternal life is forever. (Eternal life will be never-ending...whether it’s in heaven or hell)

One of the metaphors the Bible uses to describe our life here is that we’re all living in tents. The Apostle Paul knew a lot about tents because he was a tentmaker. I’d like to suggest three ways that living in this world is like living in a tent.

1. Life here is temporary.

- A tent is not meant to be permanent. Tents are designed to be used for a short time. Unfortunately, many of us act as if there is no eternity; that this life is all that there is. This is but a dress rehearsal for the real event.
- Most of us will never know when our last day, moment in this tent will be. This tent has been judged and cannot make it to heaven and each day it displays the damage caused by sin.

James 4:14, yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

Proverbs 27:1, Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.

2. Life here is insecure.

- A tent is not very secure because it’s made from canvas and is not good at keeping out wild animals or the elements.

- We like to think we are secure, as a matter of fact we allow ourselves to be lulled to feel safer and more secure than we really are. Many of us prepare for the worst, carry firearms, and train for everything we think is possible. Yet, if we were honest, none of us are secure. I am not trying to fill anyone with fear or undue anxiety. But everyone wakes up with a calendar full of events, not fully knowing if they will make it to them.
- Friends, life is too unpredictable and too brief to live it without God at the center. We count our lives in years, but God tells us in **Psalm 90:12** to number our days. In **1 Samuel 20:3**, David said, **“Yet as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death.”** Our lives are here one minute and gone the next.

3. Life here is uncomfortable.

- Verse 2, **“For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,”** Verse 4, **“For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened...”**

“2 But now we are tired of this body. We want God to give us our heavenly home. 3 It will clothe us and we will not be naked. 4 While we live in this tent, we have burdens and so we complain. I don’t mean that we want to remove this tent, but we want to be clothed with our heavenly home. Then this body that dies will be covered with life.” ESV

- How many have slept in a tent after the age of 30? Now that I am way into my 40’s, sleeping in a hotel bed can do me in.
- How many woke up with a new uncomfortable feeling somewhere on their tent this morning?
- There are days that my tent feels like this meme shows. **(Picture of dashboard lights)**
- Many of us try our best to get the most milage/usage out of these tents, but at the end of our days, these babies are going to feel uncomfortable.
- Often life here is uncomfortable. That is not how God designed it to be.
- Our tents are taken down at the time of our death. Our bodies are disposable because they run down and wear out.

Eternal life is forever. Life is temporary, insecure, and uncomfortable, but Paul says born again believers have a **“building from God, a house not made with hands.”** We move from a tattered temporary tent here to a house in heaven, which is permanent.

2 Timothy 4:6-7, For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Paul says that the time had come for his **“departure.”** The word departure literally means, “An unloosing” and was used when throwing off a ship’s cables, pulling up anchor and setting sail.

When we die, this earthly tent is taken down and we move into **“an eternal house in heaven, made for us by God Himself, not built by human hands.”** When those that have gone ahead of us have arrived in heaven, they were released from the shackles of sin and disease, never to be imprisoned by them again.

We’re all searching for a home. Part of our problem is that most of us are too tied to these tents. We think this is the land of the living, and that when we die, we go to the land of the dead. We have it

backwards. This is the land of the dying. When our life here is over, we are transferred to the place of the living. Our earthly life will end but eternal life will be never-ending.

The Bible says we will live forever in one of two destinations – either in a place of terrible torment called Hell, or in a place of eternal joy called Heaven. **(Picture of two doors)**

For the believer in Jesus, death is everlasting gain. (Groan zone for the glory zone) For the unbeliever, it is an eternal loss.

C.S. Lewis once said; “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”

Here are some facts we know about heaven.

- 1. Heaven is forever!**
- 2. Heaven is secure!**

Matthew 6:20, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

- There will be no more sickness, sorrow, suffering or sin. **(Rev. 21:4)**
- 3. Heaven is not only comfortable, it is perfect!**
 - We will be given new bodies and minds. **1 Corinthians 15:50**
 - We will be reunited with other believers who have died before us. (What a reunion!)
 - We will be with Jesus forever. **2 Corinthians 5:8**
 - Heaven is a real place which will feel like home because it is filled with wholeness and happiness where we will gather around the throne of our holy God.

Conclusion

If you are a born-again believer when you fold up your tent here, you will arrive in heaven, and it will feel like home because you will instinctively connect it to all you have been longing for and occasionally caught glimpses of here.

Life is short.

Death is sure.

Sin is the curse.

Heaven is the cure.

One day we will be in our new heavenly bodies with our loved ones that went on before us and Jesus. What a day that will be!

And until we get to heaven what if we lived out Paul’s challenge, found in **2 Cor. 5:9, “Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.”**

Paul’s great ambition was to be well-pleasing to Jesus Christ. While others aimed to please men, Paul ministered to please Jesus. It is well-pleasing to Jesus when we present out bodies to Hi as living

sacrifices (**Rom 12:1**), and when live to help others and avoid causing them to stumble (**Rom. 14:18**). God is well-pleased when His children separate themselves from evil around them. God is well-pleased when believers permit Jesus to work out His perfect will in their lives (**Heb. 13:20-21**).