

The Book of 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 5:1-5

Session 42: Our New Body

Previously, in session 40, we covered 2 Corinthians 5:1-4. Let's read those verses just to refresh our understanding.

2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: ³ If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. ⁴ For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Remember that these verses are the remedy for 2 Corinthians 4:11 where Paul admits that this ministry is going to be the death of him. So, what will comfort Paul, and what will encourage Paul so much that even though he knows it will cost him his life, he won't back off and he won't quit?

1. Paul knows he will get a new body.

2 Corinthians 5:1 **For we know** that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, **we have a building of God**, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

If this body dies (is "dissolved") we will receive another one; one especially designed and built by God. And this new body will not grow old or wear out, for it will be "eternal in the heavens."

2. Paul "groans" in anticipation of this new body.

Paul wants his new body, but that in and of itself is not the reason. The new body is the "door" (so to speak) to something so glorious that Paul greatly desires. Paul's new body is the signal for something that means everything to him, something he groans for, and looks forward to, but the key is the new body.

We read about this body in Romans 8, where Paul first introduced us to the idea of this body being redeemed. We also studied about it in 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul talked about this “corruptible must put on incorruption.”

Here in 2 Corinthians 5, Paul has been expressing his sincere desire to have this body. But why? And how does getting this body at the Blessed Hope help him deal with the fact that this ministry he is involved in will lead to his death?

a. Relief from the pains of various sufferings

Firstly, let’s answer the “why” question. Yes, there will be a relief from the physical pains and infirmities when Paul gets his new body. For many believers, that is a day they are looking forward to, but that is not what is primarily in Paul’s mind because he has learned to “take pleasure” in the various sufferings, as we will see when we get to chapter 12, where Paul talks about God’s “abundant grace” (back in 4:15) being sufficient to strengthen him to the enduring of his sufferings so much so that he glories in them, and takes pleasure in them.

2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. **Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities**, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

¹⁰ Therefore **I take pleasure in infirmities**, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

While Paul doesn’t want to hurt physically, relief from the infirmities and pains of his physical body is not the main focus, as Paul has learned to “look not on those things which are seen” which would include “though our outward man perish.”

Paul wants the power of God’s abundant grace to rest upon him so that, by the patient endurance of all the different kinds of sufferings he lists in verse 10, his thanksgiving, along with all those who have also been strengthened to endure their sufferings by his example, will redound to the glory of God. Remember, this is the cause that Paul both lives and dies for.

And while Paul is not asking for more pain and suffering, he isn’t wanting to die just to escape them either. Paul knows that at the Blessed Hope, he will get a new

and eternal body, which will not diminish, does not feel pain and is not subject to infirmities. Like Paul, every member of the body of Christ will receive a new body, which will function perfectly in every way that it should. And, our new body's function will exceed our mortal bodies in every way by an incomparable margin. Do you get that? No matter what a person has been able to achieve in their mortal body by discipline, training and nutrition, every new body will be able to surpass that by an incomparable measure, automatically.

That is not to say that each glorified body will bear the same glory, they will not, as the glory of our new body will be a reflection of the degree to which we have been conformed to the image of God's Son. And since much of that conformity will come in the midst of sufferings, then the "glory which shall be revealed in us" will surpass our sufferings by an incomparable measure.

Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared with the glory* which shall be revealed in us.

This is a verse which will produce 1) godly thinking about our sufferings, 2) the godly living of patient endurance, and 3) the godly labor of Christ being formed in us, which is the thing Paul "takes pleasure in."

As you meditate on this verse, think about the "glory" as being the visible display of the measure of Christ in you, by a brightness of light, in your new body.

Since our new body will be like unto Christ's glorious body, we have a "picture" of what the glory will be like, when He was transfigured.

Matthew 17:2 And was transfigured before them: and **his face did shine as the sun**, and his raiment was white as the light.

While Jesus' face shined as the sun, ours will not shine with the same intensity of glory, but with a glory that is commensurate with our conformity to Him in our inner man. Take a look at how Mark describes it.

Mark 9:2 And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and

he was transfigured before them.³ And **his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow**; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

When we get our new body, we also will be covered with white raiment, but that will not hide the “glory” which shall be ours for eternity.

We covered this issue of “glory” being represented by “light” back in 2 Corinthians 3.

2 Corinthians 3:7 But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold **the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance**; which *glory* was to be done away:

Unlike the glory of Moses’ face, the glory which will be ours in our new body will not be done away. And while we will progress in our knowledge throughout eternity, I do not think we can change the “glory” we are assigned at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Getting back to the questions, why does Paul talk about getting this new body and why is he “groaning” as he looks forward to it, and how does that help him in the “here and now” when he is facing death? I believe Paul is looking forward to something he has already alluded to back in 2 Corinthians 4:14. Let’s start with verse 12 and get the context.

2 Corinthians 4:12 So then **death worketh in us**, but life in you.¹³ We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; **we also believe, and therefore speak**;¹⁴ **Knowing** that he which raised up the Lord Jesus **shall raise up us** also by Jesus, and shall **present us with you**.¹⁵ For all things *are* for your sakes, that **the abundant grace might** through the thanksgiving of many **redound to the glory of God**.

b. Paul is looking forward to what happens to him once he gets his new body

Notice in verse 14, Paul talks about when we are presented to the Father. And how will we be presented? Perfect, complete, and blameless. Do you realize what this means? Can you guess, or have you figured it out? Let me just give it to

you now. The completion of the process of being conformed to the image of God's Son.

Our awareness of this condition is what prompts the "thanksgiving of many" to "redound to the glory of God."

Upon the completion of our conformity to Christ, we are made to be:

1. Blameless

1 Corinthians 1:8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, *that **ye may be blameless*** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and / *pray God **your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless*** unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Perfect

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man**, unto **the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:**

This has to do with our perfection when we are conformed to the image of God's Son.

Colossians 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may **present every man perfect** in Christ Jesus:

3. Complete

Colossians 4:12 Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that **ye may stand perfect and complete** in all the will of God.

What we are looking at is the completion of Romans 8:28-30, the promise that we will be conformed to the image of God's Son.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. ²⁹ For

whom he did foreknow, **he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

³⁰ Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

The “all things” of verse 28, which would include the sufferings of Christ (SoC), are working for us in that they are opportunities to be conformed to the image of Christ. We are “predestinated” to be conformed to the image of Christ, which means that this conformity will become a reality for every member of the Body of Christ (BoC). The “glorified” of verse 30 is the completion of that process which was started on Earth.

Putting together what we have so far:

1. We are in the process of being conformed to Christ’s image
2. This is done by the working of Paul’s doctrine in us
3. The verses produce an abundant grace which enables us to endure the SoC
4. If the policy of evil (PoE) kills Paul, he is counting on the resurrection
5. The resurrection will be in the form of a new and eternal body which is made by God, and is fit for our heavenly vocation
6. After we have received our new body, the process of being conformed to the image of God’s Son will be completed. (This will follow the obtaining of our new body, and the Judgment Seat of Christ (JSoC) which Paul is about to describe in 2 Corinthians 5:10.)
7. It is by this completed conformity to Christ that we are made blameless, perfect and complete.
8. Only after we are completely conformed to the image of Christ, or to say it like Ephesians 4:13, only after we have come to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” can we be “presented” to the Father along with the rest of the Body of Christ.
9. Being, at that time, fully aware of what has been done to us and for us by our heavenly Father, and the faithful work of God’s Son, and the inner man working of His Spirit; the entire BoC will break out into a resounding shout of thanksgiving to God for His abundant grace which has made all this possible, with that praise redounding to the glory of God.

Now, there is the picture Paul has in mind. Are you getting the idea of what Paul is looking forward to? This is as real to Paul as anything is, and because he wants to be a part of that which redounds to God's glory, he will not quit. He knows death is not the end, but what awaits him (the completion of his conformity to Christ) is something more glorious than anyone could ever have on this earth.

Now, with that in mind, let's read verse 5.

2 Corinthians 5:5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

In the first four verses, Paul has been talking about his desire to put on his new body so that his mortal life might be swallowed up by his eternal life. Up to now, I have been talking about this as though Paul is "groaning" for the life to come, in his new body. But now, I am going to pull back the curtain a bit and show you something that I think is absolutely marvelous.

The verse is divided into two parts. Here is part one.

2 Corinthians 5:5 **Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God,** who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

Verse 5 starts out by saying that God has been working in (wrought) us for this very thing: our new life in our new body! By the working of God's abundant grace, we are being prepared for the life to come.

Oxford English Dictionary: wrought **I. Created, made. I.1. Old English—**

With modifying word or as the second element in compounds: **created, made, or formed in the specified way or to the specified standard.**

We can see this definition in the word "wrought" as it is used in Scripture.

Mark 6:2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are **wrought by his hands?**

Acts 21:19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had **wrought among the Gentiles** by his ministry.

In other words, God's work in us is preparing us for our eternal life with Him in the heavenlies. How? By renewing our minds; which is something the Spirit does, by working in our heart, by His work to produce a practical sanctification in us, by sustaining us by the power of His grace in the midst of trials and tribulations. By the life of Christ being lived in us, God is forming us, fashioning us, and preparing us for the life to come.

Ephesians 2:10 For **we are his workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

That workmanship is not just for now, it is also for later, as we will see. By putting 2 Corinthians 5:1-5 together with Ephesians 2:10, we know that His workmanship not only has this life on earth in view, but it also has our eternal life in the heavenly places (HP) in view. By His working in us, He is preparing us for that life which is to come.

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