

2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1 ESV

Eternal Realities Transform Our Temporal Lives!

Sunday, June 7 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, June 8 at 7 PM
2nd Sunday after Pentecost / 1st Sunday after Trinity – 2015

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today, as we get into the topic of *temporal* versus *eternal*, we find ourselves in 2 Corinthians. In regard to that letter, Dr. Martin Luther wrote: “In the first epistle, St. Paul rebuked the Corinthians severely for many things, pouring sharp wine into their wounds [Luke 10:34 – to clean them] and frightening them. But an apostle should be a preacher of comfort, to raise up terrified and fearful consciences, rather than to frighten them. Therefore in this epistle he praises them once more and pours oil into their wounds [Luke 10:34 – to heal them]. He shows himself wonderfully kind to them...” (TLSB, 1979).

Today’s text, which begins in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, comes from a section in the ESV Bible entitled “Treasure in Jars of Clay.” The treasure is the eternal good news of Jesus, which is contained in the temporary bodies of those who believe. We could despair over our declining physical condition, but, instead, we are called to take a proper view of *the temporal* in light of *the eternal*.

1. **Believing, Speaking, and Confident:** ¹³ **Since we have the same spirit of faith [as the Psalmist] according to what has been written [in Psalm 116:10], “I believed, and so I spoke,” we also believe, and so we also speak,** ¹⁴ **knowing that he [God the Father] who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.**

a. We also believe and speak: The Bible says: “...with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation”

(Rom. 10:10 NAS). So God has enabled us to believe we are sinners *deserving death* and trust in Jesus as our Savior *through whom we have eternal life*; such believing leads to speaking!

b. We also are confident: What we believe is hard to believe; nevertheless, *we believe it!* Since Jesus died *but was raised*, we are confident that *we will also be raised!*

2. **Thankful for God’s Gift of Eternal Life:** ¹⁵ **For it is all for your sake, so that as grace [God’s love and forgiveness in Christ] extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.** // We were hell-bound, but now *through*

Christ we are heaven-bound; therefore, we have a super-wonderful reason to give thanks to God!

3. **Focused on Things that Last Forever:**

- a. ¹⁶ **So we do not lose heart. Though our [temporal] outer self is wasting away, our [eternal] inner self is being renewed day by day.** // So as our bodies ebb closer and closer to the day they will die, our lives in Christ are renewed and strengthened each day by God's Spirit through God's Word; therefore, *we do not give up!*
- b. 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 [which are temporal] but to the things that are unseen [which are eternal]. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.** // So what do we value more – *temporal things* **or** *eternal things*? Or, to put it another way, is our focus on *this life* **or** *do we see this entire life as a preparation for the life to come?* When we value *eternal things* more than *temporal things*, then our difficulties in this life will seem *light* and *short*.

- i. Dr. Kretzmann wrote: “To be concerned about the...perishable things of this world and thereby to lose the true and lasting values of heaven argues for a false estimate of values” (NT II:188).
- ii. Jesus said: “For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?” (Mark 8:36 NAS).

4. **Knowing God Will Give Us an Eternal Body:**

^{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. // Yes, our current bodies are temporary, *like tents* – someday they will die; however, *let us not despair*, Jesus will ✦ raise us up (John 6:44), ✦ give us glorified bodies (Phil. 3:20-21), and ✦ bless all who know Him forevermore (Rev. 21:1-7)!

Conclusion: And all God’s people said: ***Amen!***

Making the Most of our Time – See today’s insert, follow the instructions, and focus on eternal things!