

Awaiting A Greater Reality

Living in Light of Eternity Pt. 2

2 Corinthians 5:1-7 *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.” (ESV)*

KEEPING A PROPER PERSPECTIVE

This passage is helpful in establishing a proper Christian perspective for living in this world.

- *Despite the past advantages Christians in America have enjoyed, we ought not think it strange that we are now living in a day of increasing persecution.*
 - *Jesus warned us that, since we are not of this world, we will be hated and face tribulation.*
 - *While our best life is yet to come, Jesus promised His people peace and joy in this life.*
 - *Such peace and joy flow from an eternal hope that transcends the pain of this life.*
- *While the truths in this passage provide us comfort when a Christian dies, it also speaks to how Christians are called to live in this world – with a view to eternity.*
- *Since our destiny lies in the age to come, we should be living in preparation for that day.*
 - *We should lay up treasure, not on earth but in heaven .*
 - *Our lives should be lived toward God, not with a view to impressing the world.*
 - *As those who belong to the age to come, we’re called to seek first God’s kingdom and His righteousness, not this world’s kingdom and its iniquity.*

THE SUBSTANTIAL AGE TO COME

A common misconception is that the age to come will be somehow ethereal and immaterial. Scripture presents a different picture of the new heavens and the new earth.

- *Matter is not evil from which we need to be freed.*
- *While our understanding of age to come is certainly limited, the Bible offers clear indications.*
- *Our glorified bodies will conform to the pattern of our firstfruits, the risen Lord who was:*
 - *Not a ghost, but flesh and bone.*
 - *Interacted with the material world.*
- *The age to come is not glorious because it is more substantial, not less.*
- *God’s work is marked by substance and order, not shallowness and chaos.*
- *This present age is not more substantial, but less substantial than the age to come.*
 - *This present age has been subjected to “futility.”*
 - *The fabric of creation wears thin because of sin, not because matter is an inferior design.*
 - *CS Lewis referred to this present world as the “shadowlands.”*

FROM A CORRUPTIBLE TENT TO AN INCORRUPTIBLE HOUSE

Paul contrasts the present age and the age to come with a comparison of a tent and a house.

- *A tent is a flimsy, insubstantial abode suitable for temporary and homeless shelter.*
- *A house is a permanent, substantial structure, suitable for settling down. This house is made, not with the corruptible material of a sin infected world but the perfect material of heaven.*