

More Beyond!
2 Corinthians 5:1-5
Part 2

We all know what an engagement ring is, but what is its purpose? The purpose of the engagement ring is to prominently display the fact for everyone to see, especially the woman who is wearing the ring, that a man has asked her to marry him, and that she by putting the ring on her finger has accepted his proposal and his promise that when everything that needs to be done is done that he will in fact do that very thing that he has promised to do or in other words he will marry her.

So let me ask you a question. When a woman receives an engagement ring, or in other words a promise ring from a man that she loves and wants to spend the rest of her life with, will the giving of that ring and display of that ring upon her finger remind her of the promise that he has made? And the answer, I believe, would have to be yes! And as she is reminded of this promise, will there be a level of excitement and longing associated with it? And I have to think that the answer again would have to be yes if she in fact loves him and wants to spend her life with him.”

So, what does this have to do with the passage that we are now studying in **2 Corinthians 5:1-10**?

If you were here last week I would hope that you might be able to answer this question, but just in case you were not here last week or perhaps you have forgotten what we considered last week let me now review it for you.

Paul, in **2 Corinthians 5:1-10**, explained to his readers and to us what was awaiting him beyond the grave and how this belief expressed itself.

And what is the question that we are presently seeking to answer based on these verses? How did Paul's confidence in the glorious future that awaited him beyond the grave express itself in the here and now? His confidence expressed itself in several different ways.

First of all, Paul's confidence in the glorious future that awaited him beyond the grave expressed itself initially through an intense longing (2 Corinthians 5:1-5). We saw this intense longing in **2 Corinthians 5:1-5**.

So let me once again read these verses for you. **“For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, (3) inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. (4) For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. (5) Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.”**

This is the passage that we examined last week. And though this passage is somewhat difficult to interpret, it is an extremely important passage, for if we understand it correctly, we will discover that God in a very real sense has given us something very much like an engagement ring, something very substantial, to remind us of a future event that will take place, not on this side of the grave but on the other side of the grave. And as we take the opportunities that has been afforded us by God to gaze at this engagement ring, we will not only find ourselves being reminded of our glorious future but also increasingly longing for it.

So let us once again quickly go through this passage, not exhaustively but sufficiently enough to remind us of the importance of the engagement ring that God has given us and how it can and should produce in us a deep life transforming longing for that glorious future that awaits us beyond the grave.

So let us begin with **verse 1**. **“For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”** So why did Paul introduce this thought at this point in his epistle?

Paul, in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**, had explained to the Corinthians how he could continue to speak the gospel so boldly even though in speaking the gospel so boldly he found himself suffering so greatly. And what was the

reason he gave them? He said that he could speak the gospel boldly, even though in speaking the gospel boldly he found himself suffering so greatly, because he was not focusing on the things that were seen, such as his afflictions, but at the things that were not seen, such as the eternal weight of glory that his afflictions were producing.

And it is this thought that leads Paul to say what he says in **2 Corinthians 5:1**. Or in other words, Paul, in **2 Corinthians 5:1**, is now supporting what he had just said in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18** as he points his readers to something that is presently unseen but very real. And what might that be? The resurrection body, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, that is presently awaiting every true believer in Christ Jesus. This is the unseen thing he points to in **2 Corinthians 5:1**.

And how certain was Paul of this? Very certain! What did he say in **2 Corinthians 5:1**? **“For we know that if the earthly tent [or in other words our physical body] which is our house is torn down [or in other words dies], we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”** So how could he be so certain of this?

Paul’s confidence that he had a resurrection body awaiting him after death was the by-product of a deep longing that he described as groaning (2 Corinthians 5:2-4). Let me now read these verses for you and see if this is not so. **“For indeed in this house [or in other words in the house of our physical body] we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven (or in other words our resurrection body), (3) inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. (4) For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed [or in other words to put on our resurrection body].”**

Just as **2 Corinthians 5:1** supported what Paul had said in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**, Paul is now in **2 Corinthians 5:2-4** supporting what he had just said in **2 Corinthians 5:1**. Or in other words, the groaning that he is describing in **verses 2-4** is supporting his confidence that he stated in **verse 1** that he, in fact, after his earthly tent is torn down, will have a dwelling from heaven or in other words a resurrection body awaiting him. So why did this deep longing or groaning that he was experiencing to be clothed with

this resurrection body produce in him such confidence that he, in fact, would be clothed?

The answer is found in **2 Corinthians 5:5**. Let me now read this verse for you. **“Now He who prepared us for this very purpose [or in other words to be clothed in a individual, personal resurrection body] is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.”** So why did Paul’s groaning to be clothed give him such great confidence that he would be clothed? The reason Paul’s groaning to be clothed produced in him such great confidence was because he saw his groaning as a by-product of the ministry of the Spirit that had been given to him as a pledge (2 Corinthians 5:5).

So, what is the significance of the word “pledge?” The word “pledge” (ARRHABON) in Modern Greek is used to refer to an engagement ring. When we by faith accept Christ as our Lord and Savior God gives us a promise ring, or in other words an engagement ring, thus assuring us that if our earthly tent is torn down, or in other words if we die, we have in Christ a building not made with hands eternal in the heavens, or in other words a resurrection body awaiting us. And this fact has serious implications.

In other words, this means that every time we see the Spirit of God working in and through us we will be reminded of our future glory since we know that the Spirit of God has been given to us by God as a pledge, and this reminder will stir up within us an ever increasing longing for the glory that awaits us beyond the grave.

In fact, as I shared with you last week it is very much like eating potato chips. Once we start eating, or in other words experiencing the manifestation of the Spirit in and through our lives, which is simply a foretaste of future glory, we will find ourselves craving more. In fact, we will not find our appetite satisfied until we eat the whole bag or perhaps better said until we in fact receive our resurrection bodies.

So in light of this fact, as I asked you last week, are you presently, deeply longing to be clothed with your resurrection body? If you are then praise God! For this, very likely, is a testimony that the Holy Spirit is presently active in your life and manifesting Himself to you in such a way that He is wetting your appetite for more, thus creating within you a longing for that future day when you will finally and completely enter into that eternal

weight of glory that is far beyond all comparison that Paul described for us in **2 Corinthians 4:17**.

Unfortunately, I am fairly confident that not everyone here this morning that is professing to be a Christian, in fact, feels this way. So if you happen to be one of these individuals that, in fact, does not feel this way, what needs to be done in order to produce this intense longing for future glory? I will now give you the answer.

If we as true believers are going to experience the deep longing that can and should be manifested in our lives, we will need the Spirit of God to be continually filling us (Ephesians 5:18). So, what is the filling of the Spirit?

Let me read for you **Ephesians 5:18**. **“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.”**

Just like a drunk person is under the control of alcohol, a Spirit-filled person is the under the control of the Spirit. That is what it means to be Spirit filled.

And just so there might not be any confusion let me ask you this question. Can we, at a specific point in time, be partially filled with the Spirit? And what is the answer? The answer has to be no! We cannot be partially filled with the Spirit just like a man who is drunk cannot be partially drunk. He is either drunk or he is not drunk.

And the same thing is true for us in respect to being filled with the Spirit. We are either filled with the Spirit or we are not filled with the Spirit, but we cannot be partially filled with the Spirit. It is one or the other.

Therefore in light of this thought let me now ask you this question. Do you presently believe, based on what I have said, that you are Spirit filled, or in other words under His control? If your answer is yes then what are you saying?

If we say that we are Spirit filled, we are saying to the best of our knowledge that we are presently submitting ourselves without exception to the will of God as expressed in the Word of God by the grace of God. This is what we are saying.

Therefore, this morning if we are not by the grace of God striving to build into our lives the things that God, through His Word, has called us to build into our lives, then we are not Spirit filled, and if we are not by the grace of God striving to remove from our lives the things that God, through His word, has called us to remove from our lives, then we are not Spirit filled.

And what a tragedy it would be for us. For apart from the filling of the Spirit and His various manifestations in and through us we will not be reminded of the eternal weight of glory surpassing all comparison waiting for us in Christ beyond the grave.

In other words, if we by our own sinful choice do not to submit ourselves to Him, living a life inconsistent with the teachings of the Word of God, it is as if we have put our engagement ring in a box and hidden it away in our sock drawer.

And what will be the result of this? What will be the result of us putting our engagement ring in sock drawer? If we do this, if we through our disobedience put our engagement ring in a sock drawer, we will forget about the infinite weight of glory far beyond all comparison that Christ has promised us.

And what will be the result of this? Our lives will become all about this world. Our lives will become all about the things that are destined to perish. And what a tragedy that would be.

May God give us the grace to be filled with His Spirit so that we might find ourselves deeply longing for the glory that is awaiting us beyond the grave.