

Tent life * 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

May 7, 2020 * Langford Community Church * Graham Gladstone

You may be wondering why I'm in a tent. Well, I'm in a tent because in 2 Corinthians 5 Paul uses the image of tents to talk about our bodies. He says "listen— our bodies now are like tents. They're pretty durable and they get the job done, but let's be honest. They're not permanent. They're temporary. They're imperfect. They're perishable. They get musty. Wild animals can get in and storms blow them over. Our earthly bodies are just like tents."

And Paul goes so far as to say that while we are in our earthly bodies, we groan, longing to live in something *more* than a tent. Paul says in 5:4 "While we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened..." We know all too well the limitations of our bodies, the aches and pains of living in tents, don't we?

But... tent life is not all there is.

Verse 5:1 – We have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. We live in earthly tents now, but moving day is coming and we'll move in to heavenly homes. Homes that are permanent and perfect and imperishable. Bodies that won't wear out or tire or get sick. Our heavenly bodies will be as much superior to our earthly bodies as brick and mortar houses are to tents.

And what's more, Paul says in verse 5 - 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. (2Co 5:5 ESV). The deed is signed, the mortgage payed for; even if these earthly tents are destroyed, we have a heavenly home guaranteed to us by the mercy of a gracious God.

Now, does that mean that what we do in these tents is unimportant? Like, if God's promised me a house, it doesn't matter what I do in this tent? Not at all! Verse 10 says that all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ to receive what is due for what we've done in the body! We are all accountable for what we've done while living in tents.

But remember, as followers of Jesus, if we are actively following Him, we are guaranteed heavenly homes. We have the Spirit as a deposit. We will show up at the judgment seat of Christ and say 'Nothing in my hands I bring, only to Thy cross I cling.' My deeds are worth nothing at the final judgment, unless they're done in response to the gift of grace that God has given. So what do we do while living in tents?

Verse 9 – we make it our aim to please him. We receive the grace of God, apply in every part of our lives, and let our lives overflow thanksgiving to Him.

Knowing we're promised a heavenly home, we live for God in these tents.

Our actions now don't *earn* our salvation at the judgment seat of Christ; they simply confirm that we've taken the grace of God seriously. And so while we wait for our heavenly homes, bodies that can run a marathon and not get winded, bodies that can't be touch by COVID our cancer, we make it our aim to please God in all we do. Verse 6, we are always of good courage, knowing that no matter what happens here, we have an eternal home guaranteed. And verse 7, we walk by faith and not by sight, looking beyond our present circumstances to see them in light of God's eternal plan.

Knowing we're promised a heavenly home, we live for Him in these tents.

If you're feeling weighed down by your earthly body, listen to what Paul says here – 'it's a tent. It'll get the job done, but it's nothing compared to the palace that God has prepared for you in Heaven. No more pain, no more tears, no more sickness. That day's coming.' Live in light of that now.

You are promised a heavenly home, so live for God in this tent.