

Farewell Exhortation from 2 Corinthians

2 CORINTHIANS 5: 6-10; 13: 11-14

It's all a matter of perspective

- what we can see ↔ what we have not yet seen
- right now ↔ things to come

So we do not look at what we can see right now, the troubles all around us, but we look forward to the joys in heaven which we have not yet seen. The troubles will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever. (2 Cor. 4: 18; TLB)

FIGURE B

Second Coming of Christ
General Resurrection of the Dead

Age to Come

The Already and Not Yet

This Age

First Coming of Christ
Outpouring of the Spirit
Resurrection of Christ

Things that are seen don't last forever, but things that are not seen are eternal. That's why we keep our minds on the things that cannot be seen. (2 Cor. 4: 18; CEV)

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. ² Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. (Colossians 3: 1-2; NLT)

“Fix our eyes” on the unseen, the eternal

- “look forward to the joys in heaven which we have not yet seen” (TLB)
- “keep our minds on the things that cannot be seen” (CEV)
- “think about the things of heaven” (NLT)

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Second Coming of Christ
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1st exhortation

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ **For we live by faith, not by sight.** (2 Cor. 5: 6-7)

For we live by believing and not by seeing. (v. 7; NLT)

We know these things are true by believing, not by seeing. (v. 7; TLB)

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11: 1)

What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead. (Heb. 11: 1; TLB)

Faith is ...

- ❑ trusting God even when we can't see Him
- ❑ trusting God even when we can't feel Him
- ❑ trusting God even when we don't understand His plan

Faith is ...

- ❑ trusting God even when we can't see Him
- ❑ “Daddy, I’m afraid. I can’t see you!”
- ❑ *“I know. But I can see you.”*

Faith is ...

- ❑ trusting God even when we can't feel Him
- ❑ *"My child, don't rely only on your emotions"*
- ❑ Emotions help us make sense of our world
- ❑ Emotions help us assess our world - things that matter deeply to us & things we cannot fully control
- ❑ To help us make sense of our world, God also gave us ... His Word (Bible), culture/tradition, family/friends, experience, reasoning, ...

Faith is ...

- ❑ trusting God even when we don't understand His plan
- ❑ *“My child, my thoughts are nothing like your thoughts, and my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.” (Isaiah 55: 8-9; NLT)*

Important principle of seeing the “unseen”

- ❑ *“Don’t be afraid, just trust me.”*
- ❑ Our heavenly Father sees everything, knows us the most, and loves us the best

Another principle of seeing the “unseen”

- ❑ Learn to ignore (block out) what others say
- ❑ Instead, learn to hear God speaking to you

- ❑ “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.” (1 Cor. 2: 9)

2nd exhortation

So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, **our goal is to please him**. For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body. (2 Cor. 5: 9-10)

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Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647)

Question 1. What is the chief end of man?

Answer 1. Man's chief end is to glorify God,
and to enjoy him for ever.

2nd exhortation

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But your heavenly Father already knows perfectly well that you need them [having enough food and clothing], and he will give them to you if you give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to. (Matthew 6: 32-33; TLB)

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Context of “Judgment” in 2 Corinthians 5

- ❑ different from Judgment described in Revelation 20: 11-15 (*Great White Throne*)
- ❑ *Judgment Seat of Christ*; believers only – 2 Corinthians 5

2 Different Judgments

- ❑ Great White Throne – will assess lives of unbelievers
- ❑ Judgment Seat of Christ – will evaluate actions of believers for purpose of rewards

Judgment Seat of Christ

So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Cor. 4: 9-10)

Judgment Seat of Christ

So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. (v. 9)

□ the time to please the Lord is while we are “living in the body”

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, ...

□ all believers will give an account of their lives to the Lord
so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (v. 10)

□ a judgment of our “works” for the purpose of reward

Judgment Seat of Christ – motives will be revealed

¹⁰ Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. ... ¹² Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. ¹³ But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. ¹⁴ If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

(1 Cor. 3: 10-15; NLT)

Possible to be saved and lived “wasted” life

If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God's secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn't love others, I would be nothing. ³ If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing. (1 Cor. 13: 1-3; NLT)

Rewards ~ capacity to enjoy eternity

“... rewards will determine our capacity to enjoy eternity. They will determine what you do in the next zillion years. While I know that just being in heaven will be glory beyond words, I also know that when Paul came back from being caught up into heaven, his purpose in life was to win the prize (Philippians 3: 13-14). Having seen the reality of heaven, he knew nothing else mattered (2 Cor. 12: 2-5). ... *‘Take my word for it,’ Paul would say to you and me today: ‘Your house, your car, your hobbies, trinkets and toys will all burn. They will not matter ultimately. What does matter is the bema seat, the judgment seat—where you will stand before Jesus and be rewarded.’*”

“Here’s the added bonus, folks: If you live for this life, you’ll always be miserable because nothing will ever be quite right. It will always be *‘one more piece of furniture to buy,’ ‘one more flower to plant,’ ‘one more promotion to get,’ ‘one more person to date’*—but it will never be quite enough.

If you live for heaven, on the other hand, this world is just a bonus.

Therefore, you can relax, knowing you will find joy unspeakable in heaven.”

(Jon Courson’s Application Commentary, NT (vol. 3); Thomas Nelson, 2004)

Exhortation from 2 Corinthians

- ❑ **Live by faith, not by sight.** (2 Cor. 5: 7)
- ❑ **Our goal is to please him** (2 Cor. 5: 9)
- ❑ Dear brothers and sisters, I close my letter with these last words: **Be joyful.**
Grow to maturity.
Encourage each other.
Live in harmony and peace.
Then the God of love and peace will be with you.
(2 Cor. 13: 11; NLT)