

## What to Live For

II Corinthians 5:6-15

1/ 22/ 06

### Intro

Paul now gives the church in Corinth encouragement when he writes that “we do not lose heart.” The world in which Paul lives was bleak and desperate, and the world we live in is bleak as well.

But Paul’s words are designed to give them hope, to give them the right direction for their lives. They need to understand what to live for.

The answer, Paul writes, is in putting in all in perspective. This world is not all there is, and the affliction that plagues our lives here is nothing compared to the life we have waiting for us in heaven.

Paul is giving us the right motive in how to live and what to live for.

### **These are principles of how to live in godly perspective.**

#### **I. Walk by Faith, Not By Sight**

##### A. Turn your heart toward home

- James Dobson had a very successful ministry series called this. He was encouraging people to have their hearts on home. He is absolutely right, but Paul gives a deeper insight about where our home is.
- In verse 8, Paul tells us that we should look forward to being at home with the Lord.

- When we turn our hearts toward home, we walk by faith, because we can’t see it. The things which are not seen are eternal.

**II Corinthians 4:17-18, “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”**

- Paul even writes about the increasing burden these bodies will become.

**II Corinthians 5:1-3, “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. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven.”**

##### B. Faith gives us hope

- The day in which Paul lived looked bleak and discouraging. Yet Paul found hope in walking by faith, rather than by sight.
- Many are rightly concerned about where we are headed in our modern era.

**Illus** – Malcolm Muggeridge, speaking at the Hoover Institution summed up the end of Western civilization in these words. *“The final conclusion would seem to be that whereas other civilizations have been brought down by attacks of barbarians from without, ours had the unique distinction of training its own destroyers at its own educational institutions and providing them with facilities for propagating their destructive ideology far and wide, all at*

*the public expense. Thus did Western man decide to abolish himself, creating his own boredom out of his own affluence, his own vulnerability out of his own strength, his own impotence out of his own erotomania, himself blowing the trumpet that brought the walls of his own city tumbling. And, having convinced himself that he was too numerous, labored with pill and scalpel and syringe to make himself fewer, until at last, having educated himself into imbecility and polluted and drugged himself into stupefaction, he keeled over, a weary, battered old brontosaurus, and became extinct”.*

- Jesus encouraged the disciples by telling them to believe in Him and to look forward to heaven.

**John 14:1-3, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.”**

**Matthew 28:20, “and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”**

C. Trust Him even when you don’t understand

- That’s the key to walking by faith, trusting that he knows what happening in my life and that He cares about what is happening.
- This is a constant theme of scripture. We can see it in so many places where great men of faith continued to believe in God when everything around them seemed opposite of what they wanted.

**I Peter 5:6-7, “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”**

**Philippians 4:6-7, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”**

**II. Have Godly Ambition**

A. To be pleasing to God

- We live in a society that practically worships ambition; especially of you’re ambitious for success.
- But Paul writes that because our hearts are pointed toward heaven, our ambition should be to please Jesus Christ.

**Illus – I can’t wait to see the Narnia movie that includes Reepicheep, the mouse with the greatest of courage. In one scene they are trying to sail to furthest possible land in the east. It’s picture of heaven. His determination outdoes them all...**

**Ephesians 5:8-10, “for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”**

- After Jesus had fed the 5,000 many followed after Him because He could provide food, so He corrected them ...

**John 6:27-29, “Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.” Therefore they said to Him, “What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”**

- “Without faith,” the writer of Hebrews in 11:6 says, “it is impossible to please God.”
- B. For we must all appear before Christ
- Yes God has accepted us and is well pleased because we are in Christ, but we must also know that how we live matters because there is a judgment in Christ for believers.
  - The judgment for believers is different than the judgment for nonbelievers. They will be judged at the great white throne judgment.

### **Revelation 20:11-15 The Great White Throne**

- But the judgment of believers is different. Paul describes it in I Corinthians 3.
- There we see that we are judged in order to reward believers for how they lived for the Lord. The rest is burned away.

**I Corinthians 3:13-15, “Each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be**

**revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”**

**Illus – The first thing we would seek in a fire would be a robe. Something similar happened to us in the great earthquake of 1993.**

- “Not counting our sins against us.” II Cor 5:19  
This is because He already counted it against Christ.
- “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”  
Rom 8:1

### **III. Let the Love of Christ Control You**

- A. Be renewed day by day
- Our outer man may be decaying (and most assuredly is), yet our inner man is being renewed day by day as we walk in relationship with the Lord.
  - What renews us is the knowledge that we are deeply loved of God, that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - We need to know that we are accepted by God and loved unconditionally.
  - **The word “control” is actually “constrain.”**

- The love of Christ is actually a constraining influence on us because as we stay near to the Lord, we do not want to do the things of the world.

**Jude 20-21, “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God,”**

**Psalm 119:11, “Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”**

B. Let the love of Christ be first

- The reality of what Christ has done for us so that we have eternal life should cause us to love Him with an eternal state of gratitude.
- What we need to keep a heavenly perspective. When we remember how much he has done for us, it causes us to be thankful.
- God desires that we have love for Him as our first love.

**Revelation 2:4-5, “But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first;”**

**Jeremiah 2:2, “Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown.”**

C. Live for Christ who died for you

- To live for ourselves, to live selfishly, would be an empty and unsatisfying life, but to live for the One who died and rose again for us, is how we were made to live.
- Paul says the death of Christ freed him from the need to live for himself.

**Illus – Many people live with their needs being the center of their lives. “That doesn’t meet my needs...” It’s the ‘my needs first’ syndrome.**

- There is a great joy in knowing that the One who meets my needs is the One who will sum up the universe...

**Ephesians 1:9-10, “And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment-to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.”**

Conclusion
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**It’s so important that this issue be settled. We need to decide who we will live for. Paul says that we should walk by faith with our hearts toward heaven and live for the One who made it possible.**