

LESSON 8: 2 CORINTHIANS 4:13-5:10

Treasure in Earthen Vessels (cont'd)

1. In verse 13, Paul writes “I believed, therefore I have spoken.” What point is he making in this and the following two verses? What is the end of all this work of God’s redemption (v. 15)?
2. “Therefore we do not lose heart,” Paul writes in verse 16. On what basis does he say this? On what basis can we ourselves affirm it?
3. In verses 17-18 Paul sets forth a powerful principle for Christian life. What is it? What are some other examples/passages from Scripture that speak to this principle? Do you understand your life in this way? How does that understanding impact your daily walk? Can you think of any examples?

Living by Faith

1. What “building” is contrasted with “the earthly tent” in which we now live (vv. 1-2)? (See also 1 Cor. 15:42-57; 1 Pet. 2:4-9; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; John 2:19-21; and 1 Cor. 12:12-14,17, and consider the implications of these passages taken altogether.)
2. What images does Paul use to compare the shabbiness, or the deficiency, of your life now with that which is to come (vv. 2-4)? What’s wrong, in Paul’s understanding, with the “nakedness” to which he refers in these verses.
3. In verse 4, Paul writes the stunning phrase, “so that what is mortal may be swallowed up in life.” What does this mean. Read the following passages and consider the rich implications of this phrase: Genesis 41:4-7,25-27; Exodus 7:8-12; Psalm 49:10-15; Isaiah 25:7-8; and 1 Cor. 15:54.

4. How is the Holy Spirit a “deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (v. 5; see also 2 Cor. 1:22 and Eph. 1:13-14.)

5. How does Paul’s destiny in Christ affect his view of life and death, 5:6-10? (See also Philippians 1:21-24.) How does it affect yours? What does Paul mean when he writes that as long as we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord” (v. 6)?

6. What does it mean to you that “we live by faith, not by sight” (v. 7)?

7. How is Paul motivated by the future judgement (vv. 9-10)? What do you understand Paul to be saying in verse 10? (Compare 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.)