

Sermon Devotionals for 2Corinthians 5

2Corinthians: Written by Paul, approx. 55AD. The atmosphere of this letter differs from the others in that it is intensely personal. Paul is defending himself and we see the cost of his labors as he endures hardships, conflicts, and fears within. Throughout the letter, we see what motivates Paul, what fuels his perseverance and we can learn that the same things that held him steadfast will do the same for all who believe. In Ch.5, the topics discussed include what happens to our earthly bodies when we die, the judgment seat of Christ, and our ministry of reconciliation.

Monday: To establish some context for 2Cor.5:16-21, please read v.1-15. Note that 'earthly tent', 'this house', refer to our physical bodies. Keep in mind that Paul is writing to believers. In this passage, every member of the Trinity is mentioned. List what you learn about each. Mark the word '*therefore*' and note what it refers back to.

Tuesday: Read 2 Cor. 5:10-15. Mark every reference to 'we', 'us', 'all'. List what you learn. What is Paul's ambition? What is it that controls him? Mark the phrase. What if the phrase was written **the love of Christ for me, controls us**. Would it make a difference in meaning?

Wednesday: Read 2 Cor. 5:16-21. Mark the following: *according to the flesh, in Christ(in Him), God, Christ, reconcile/reconciled/reconciliation*.

1. According to the flesh = *by what he is in the flesh*. 1Samuel 16:7-What is our natural tendency as we look and evaluate others? How had Paul/Saul looked at Christ before his conversion? What had he determined about Jesus? Acts 9:1-5.
2. As a believer, how do you view other people? Yourself? How much of your attention and focus is on the physical? Does a person's political stance, religion, socio-economic status determine how you will relate to them? Is that biblical? What do you need to do to bring your attitude/actions into line with what this passage is saying?

Thursday: Look up the following: John 3:16 Hebrews 12:2(joy=you &me!) Jeremiah 3:22,24:7, Joel 2:12,13; Malachi 3:7, Isaiah 44:22, Ezekiel 18:21,23

1. What do you learn about God from these verses? What is His heart toward sinners? What is His desire?
2. How does knowing the desire and heart of God affect you?

Friday: Read 2 Cor.5:18-21. List all that God did/does. Look up the word *reconcile/reconciliation*.

1. According to this passage, all believers are ministers. What is our ministry? Who gave it to us?
2. V.20 says 'we are ambassadors for Christ'. Look up what an ambassador is/does. Is an ambassador an independent agent that acts according to his own will and desires?
3. Based on this passage, how would you describe the relationship between the love of Christ, the believers' ambition to be pleasing to God, knowing people NOT according to the flesh, the ministry of reconciliation, being ambassadors for Christ. It's a lot to consider, but so crucial.