

Living to Please . . . Whom?

2 Corinthians 5

Intro: Businesses in the Service Industries – Slogans

It is implied that their ultimate goal and purpose is to 'please' their customer.

"Have it Your Way"

"We Treat You Right"

"What can Brown do for You?"

"We'll Leave the Light On"

"You're in good hands with AllState"

"We keep you covered for less."

- My trip to Taco Bell - #6 – 2 Chalupas & Taco
 - *When businesses in the service industry no longer serve/please the public, their reason for existence ceases. They might as well close up shop.*
 - *Similarly, when we as believers cease to live with the intention of being pleasing to Christ, the reason for our existence likewise ceases.*

(Read 5:1-8)

In these verses, Paul discusses the reality of our present life.

The Reality of our present life can be summed up by the following statements: (1-8)

1. We Live in our Human, Earthly Body.

- This body is wasting away (4:16).
- This body faces pain and distress (4:17).
- This body is only temporary (4:18).
 - 'tent'
- This body keeps us away from the Lord (5:6).

2. We Long for our Heavenly, Eternal Body.

- This body will be a far more glorious one (4:17).
- This body will be eternal (4:18).
- This is the body our souls were created to inhabit (5:5)
- This body will exist in the presence of the Lord (5:8).

Note - Refer to chart on the back for further comparisons between these bodies.

-Why does God allow us to face hard times, disappointments and suffering? – These things keep us longing for heaven.

Hymn:

*This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through.
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.
The angels beckon me from heaven's blissful shore,
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore.*

The Reason for our present life can be summed up by the following statements:

1. We must adopt this Mindset – Pleasing Christ. (9)

- We aren't gone yet; let's live like we have purpose.

2. We must be driven by these Motivations – (10-17)

The Fear of Christ based upon his future judgment. (10-13)

- 1 Cor. 3:10-17 – How our lives affected our local church.

- What kind of building materials we built into our local church.

- Rom. 14:8-13 – How our lives affected our brothers and sisters – stumbling block

¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat . . . ¹² So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. ¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.

- Heb. 13:17 – How leaders' lives affected those under their care. (Jms. 3:1)

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."

- (vs. 11-13) – Each letter is 1st & foremost an *occasional* letter – It was written to address a specific problem/question which is the *occasion* of the letter.
- One side of a phone conversation – "mirror-reading"
- It isn't entirely clear what the specific situation is behind these verses.
- Other teachers were criticizing Paul, questioning his motives and claiming that he was out of his mind.
- Paul says that these men take pride in exterior things rather than what is in the heart.
- Paul clarifies that his motives are based on a commitment to the Corinthians and a commitment to God, not external rewards or

benefits. If Paul's motives/character are brought into question, then so does his message.

- 2 Cor. 2:17 - *Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.*
- It isn't clear what Paul was trying to persuade people of: 1) The reality of the coming judgment, 2) Paul's sincerity in ministry, 3) People's need for salvation.

The Love of Christ as demonstrated by his former sacrifice. (14-15)

- Christ chose to give up his life for all men.
- All men should choose to give up their lives for Christ.
- *There is no greater motivation for service than love.*

3. We must pursue this Ministry - Reconciling others to Christ. (16-21)

It requires us to adopt a new perspective of Others. (16-17)

- Since Christ died for all people, then all people have the potential to die to their sins and live for Christ.
- As such, all people who are reconciled to God through Christ will become new creatures.

- *poem*

I dreamed death came the other night:
And heaven's gates swung wide.

With kindly grace an angel
Ushered me inside.
And there, to my astonishment,
Stood folks I'd known on earth.
Some I'd judged and labeled
Unfit or of little worth.
Indignant words rose to my lips,
But never were set free;
For every face showed stunned surprise ...
No one expected me!

It requires us to adopt a new perspective of
Ourselves. (18-21)

1) We have been reconciled to God through
Christ. (18-19a)

2) We are to work to see others reconciled to God
through us. (19b-21)

- Short gospel presentation:

Conclusion: William Carey, who is called the father of modern missions, served the Lord in India for many years. He gradually became very concerned about the attitude of his son, Felix. The young man had promised to become a missionary, but he reneged on his vows when he was appointed ambassador to Burma by the Queen of England. Carey wrote to his friend, asking prayer for his son with these words: *Pray for Felix. He has degenerated into an ambassador of the British government when he should be serving the King of kings*

Our Human, Earthly Bodies	Our Heavenly, Eternal Bodies
It is temporary, perishable. It is daily wasting away. (1 Cor. 15:42, 53-54, 2 Cor. 4:16-18)	It is eternal, imperishable (1 Cor. 15:42, 53-54, 2 Cor. 4:17-18, 5:1)
It is weak. (1 Cor. 15:43)	It is powerful (1 Cor. 15:43)
It has an inferior glory. (1 Cor. 15:40, 43)	It will be a glory that outweighs them all. (1 Cor. 15:40, 2 Cor. 4:17)
It is a Natural body. (1 Cor. 15:44)	It is a Spiritual body, one 'not made with hands' (1 Cor. 15:44, 2 Cor. 5:1)
Inherited from our Human Father – 'Man of Dust' (1 Cor. 15:47-49)	Inherited from our Heavenly Father – 'Man of Heaven' (1 Cor. 15:47-49, 2 Cor. 5:1)
It is subject to light troubles. (Implied in 2 Cor. 4:17)	It is not subject to troubles. (Implied in 2 Cor. 4:17)
It is seen. (2 Cor. 4:18)	It is currently unseen. (2 Cor. 4:18)
It is the earthly house/tent of our spirit. (1 Cor. 15:40, 2 Cor. 5:1 & 4)	It is the heavenly house of our spirit. (1 Cor. 15:40, 2 Cor. 5:1)
With it we remain naked/unclothed. (1 Cor. 15:53-54, 2 Cor. 5:3, 4)	With it we are clothed. (1 Cor. 15:53-54, 2 Cor. 5:2-4)
While in this body we are absent from the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:6)	When in this body, we will be present with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5:8)