

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
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2 Corinthians 5:1-10
June 20, 2021

Christian, live seeing the invisible Big Picture of reality.

- Reflecting on this text, I looked over and saw this (*Big Picture envelope*)
- Perfect. That's this text. Paul encouraging us to see the Big Picture of reality.

Christian, live seeing the invisible Big Picture of reality.

- ❖ **The reality:** This life is *tenting* - passing through - not permanent (transitory)
 - *Tent* - not our bodies, but the character of this life. Like nomads - not permanent
 - A reality that should be obvious to all, even though it looks kind of permanent.
 - *The visible things* invite people to build on them like this all lasts forever.
 - The real reality: we all are passing through this life. A date of birth. A date of death.

Now we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal home in heaven, which is not made by human hands.
- ❖ **The reality:** *We have* (possess right now) a permanent home with the Lord
 - **Not will have! We already have.** It is our possession ready for us.
 - Jesus promised us: ²*In my Father's house are many [permanent dwellings]. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you.* ³*And [since] I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that you may also be where I am.* John 14
 - This is **not** a pie in the sky fantasy! It's yours - waiting for you. Yours forever.
 - ◆ First in glory. Then, after the resurrection, in the new heaven and earth. Rev. 21
- ❖ **The reality:** These 2 realities are the source of our groaning
 - Groans dealing with this reality, knowing what is ours in Christ. Not heaven now.
 - ◆ *the reason we groan is that we long to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven.*
 - A reality: We groan because the transition is not easy.
 - ◆ *...while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.*
 - ◆ Living now with challenges, the unpredictable, threats, loss, indignities, pain, aging, and dying - naked - exposed, pain of facing sin (contrition) = groans of tenting
 - ◆ Groans, but not grumbling. Critical discipline to help us focus on the Big Picture.
- ❖ **The reality:** God's confirming down payment - God the Holy Spirit.

⁵*Now the one who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a down payment.*

 - Your dwelling is yours. How do you know? God has given you a down payment!
 - The Spirit given you at your Baptism. He works on you through the gospel.
 - Like Cleopas and companion: *Were not our hearts burning within us while he was speaking to us along the road and while he was explaining the Scriptures to us?* Lk 24:18
 - The Spirit is evident in our ability to get Jesus' parables, seeing what unbelievers can't
- ❖ **The reality:** *we walk by faith, not by sight.*
 - Too often people think this means Christians *walk by blind faith*. **Not the case at all!**
 - Believers *walk - view and live life* seeing beyond the visible reality - the Big Picture

- How do we see reality that others cannot see? The new self (faith) born of the Spirit
 - ◆ He has healed our spiritual blindness, giving us eyes to see his revealed realities
 - ◆ Those in darkness bump into reality, but cannot see it - don't get it.
 - ◆ God's word sheds light so we can see the realities invisible to those in darkness.
 - ◆ It's not because we are wiser/smarter. It's because God's word makes us wise.
- Here Paul calls **not** to live chiefly by the reality of our 5 senses or even 6th sense.
 - ◆ But to let God's Word be the lenses through which we view life all day long.
 - ◆ Why? Because it reveals the **ultimate permanent reality**. No illusion/delusions!
- ❖ **The reality:** Those who long to be with the Lord, long to walk with him now too.
 - St. Augustine noted how Christians mature in their faith.
 - ◆ At first you delight to go to heaven to avoid the eternal pain of hell. (focus: me)
 - ◆ As you grow, you look forward to the *goodies* of heaven - (focus: me)
 - ◆ The mature look forward to an eternity with the Lord Jesus. God is the focus.
 - ⁸ But we are confident and would much prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. ⁹ And for this reason we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home or away.*
 - Faith knows and sees that life is:
 - ◆ connected to - in fellowship with God. *In him we live and move and have our being.*
 - Death is being separated from and at odds with our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier
 - ◆ never found in sin. Life - true and real life - is only found in righteousness.
 - Believers that look forward to living with God forever will want to live that way now.
 - ⁹ And for this reason we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home or away. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he did while in the body, whether good or bad.*
 - Without faith's eyes enlightened by Scripture, Judgment Day looks like a disaster!
 - ◆ Even if the standard were *more good deeds than bad*, who can be saved?
 - ◆ Jesus said, *So then, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Matthew 5:48
 - ◆ If Christ demands perfection - how will we get to the home he promised?
 - The key is knowing Jesus' standard of judgment - what he means by *good*.
 - ◆ *²⁸ Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and will come out. Those who have **done good** will rise to live, but those who have **practiced evil** will rise to be condemned.* John 5
 - ◆ Key: *Doing good* - fruits of faith; *Practice evil* - lived only with an old self (unbelief)
 - ◆ Jesus teaches us in Matthew 25: *⁴⁰ ... 'Amen I tell you: Just as you did it for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.'*
 - ◆ *...without faith it is impossible to please God.* Hebrews 11:6
 - ◆ Jesus points to the fruits of faith, washed in his blood, as proof you belong with him.
 - Seeing the Big Picture, believers long to live to please Jesus now because:
 - ◆ it gives glory to our Savior - while sin soils our dear Lord's reputation
 - ◆ believers know that righteousness is life.
 - ◆ believer have discovered that sin is **always bad**. Life is enriched *doing God's good*.
 - The invisible realities of life in Christ, revealed by faith, provide the Big Picture to life.

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