

**Notes on the Greek New Testament**  
**Day 243 – August 31<sup>st</sup> – 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10**

**Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Corinthians**

Carson, Donald A	<i>From Triumphalism to Maturity: A new exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13</i> , Leicester, IVP, 1986
Kruse, Colin	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, IVP, 1987
Martin, Ralph P	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Word Biblical Commentary), Waco Texas, Word Books, 1986
Tasker, RVG	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, Tyndale Press, 1958

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

Hering comments that if these verses were read without attention to context they could be thought to express sentiments which could happily have been expressed by Philo (or any other Platonist). The invisible world, regarded as perfect and permanent, is distinguished from the visible. Furthermore, the opposition between an outward and inner man is reminiscent of Hermetic terminology. Nevertheless, if we take into account the whole of the Apostle's teaching, we are compelled to regard the passage from an eschatological angle, a viewpoint unacceptable to Platonists and Hermeticists.

**Verse 16**

Διὸ οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα.

διο see v.13

ἐγκακεω become discouraged, tire of

Picks up the reference in v.1.

ἔξω outside

διαφθειρω destroy; pass decay

ἔσω inside

ἀνακαινοω renew, remake

ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα A Hebrewism, cf. Esth 3:4; Ps 68:20.

Paul returns to the thoughts of v.7. On the inner (renewed) man and outer man cf. Rom 7:22; 2 Cor 4:16. The contrast is between the man of this age (fallen humanity), and the man of the age to come. The old is decaying and the new is being renewed. "His 'inmost self' ... is undergoing renewal – not by absorption as in Hellenistic and gnostic thought, but by the hope of resurrection which entails a future for the outward person in his bodily existence." Martin

**Verse 17**

τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης καταργάζεται ἡμῖν,

Note the piling up of contrasts.

παραυτίκα (adv used as adj) momentary  
ἐλαφρος, α, ον light, easy to bear, slight,  
insignificant

θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering

ὑπερβολη, ης f surpassing, beyond  
measure

βαρος, ους n burden, weight

κατεργάζομαι do, accomplish, bring about,  
make ready

"His present suffering will reap a reward from God far out of proportion to its bitter experiences." Martin

**Verse 18**

μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα, τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.

σκοπεω pay attention to

Martin, following Hering, says μὴ σκοποῦντων is conditional, 'provided we do not fix our attention on what is visible ...'

βλεπω see, look, be able to see, beware of

"For the present his eyes are trained 'on the mark; it is the goal of the glory of Christ (Denney), or at least the glorious world where Christ reigns in splendour (4:4-6), and where his service exerts its renewing power in human lives." Martin

There is a polemical point here as Paul's opponents seem to be boasting in show – in outward and visible things.

πρόσκαιρος, ον temporary, not lasting

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

The argument of Paul in these verses is the subject of considerable debate. A number of commentators suggest that Paul's views concerning the resurrection body have changed from those expressed in 1 Cor 15 – he now believes that believers gain a new body immediately at death.

However, it is probably better to understand that Paul's arguments are shaped by:

- i) His comments concerning his own weakness which show him to be very aware of the prospect of his own death;
- ii) The polemical context. There was a triumphalist element in Paul's opponents which Paul counters with an insistence that the present is marked by groaning not glory. There would seem also to have been gnostic elements – looking to the shedding of the body. Paul counters this thinking by speaking of a desire not to be 'naked' but to be 'clothed upon' with the glory of the new body.

Note also the instructive parallels between these verses and Romans 8:19-23.

For further study, see A T Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet: Studies in the Role of the Heavenly Dimension In Paul's Thought with Special Reference to his Eschatology*, CUP 1981.

### Verse 1

Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἢ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶν καταλυθῆ, οἰκοδομηθῆν ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

οἶδα know, understand

Cf. Mk 14:58.

ἐὰν if, even if, though

ἐπίγειος, ον earthly, of the earth

οἰκία, ας f house, home

σκηνος, ους n tent

"The earthly tent we live in' – a picture of what is temporary. "Possibly reflecting the close proximity of the Feast of Tabernacles ... to the time of the writing of 2 Corinthians." Martin

καταλυθῆ Verb, aor pass subj καταλυω  
destroy

οικοδομη, ης f upbuilding, building

ἀχειροποίητος, ον not made by human hands

The reference is to the resurrection body which the believer will receive. Martin says, "To say that this new house was made without hands is not to negate that God created man (Gen 2:7). It is to say that the tent is of the earth and that there is both a need (1 Cor 15:22) and a desire (5:8) for something else, wholly from God." However, Martin also suggests that the present tense ἔχομεν may have as its subject a house or home already prepared for the believer in glory, cf. Jn 14:2. It may be better to see the present tense as reference to the resurrection body of Jesus: he is the model for our resurrection body (cf. Phil 3:20-21).

For αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς cf. Job 16:19; Heb 11:16; Phil 2:10; 1 Cor 15:49; Jn 3:12.

### Verse 2

καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν, τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες,

ἐν τούτῳ – either 'in this tent' or 'for this reason.' The former is the more likely.

στενάζω sigh, groan, grumble

Compare Rom 8:23. A groaning not of despair but of longing.

οἰκητήριον, ον n dwelling, home

ἐπενδύσασθαι Verb, aor midd dep infin

ἐπενδυομαι put on, be fully clothed

"The point is that Paul groans, longs for the outer garment to be placed over his earthly garment, namely, his physical body. If this were to happen, and it would happen for certain (he held) at the Parousia (1 Cor 15:51ff.), then Paul would avoid the interim period, in which he would be naked (γυμνος)." Martin

ἐπιποθεω long for, desire

### Verse 3

εἴ γε καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ

εὐρεθησόμεθα.

γε enclitic particle adding emphasis to the word with which it is associated

A few significant MSS (p<sup>46</sup> B D G) read εἰτερ 'since indeed' rather than εἰ γε. This reading is preferred by Martin.

ἐνδύω dress, clothe; midd put on, wear

Note that some MSS read ἐκδυσσάμενοι rather than ἐνδυσσάμενοι. ἐνδυσσάμενοι is read p<sup>46</sup> & B D<sup>2</sup> and appears to be the older reading. This is the reading preferred by the UBS text but is given an uncertain rating. Metzger comments, "In view of its superior support the reading ἐνδυσσάμενοι should be adopted, the reading ἐκδυσσάμενοι being an early alteration to avoid apparent tautology."

γυμνος, η, ον naked, poorly dressed  
εὐρεθησόμεθα Verb, fut pass indic, 1 pl  
εὕρισκω

The 'nakedness' envisaged is the disembodied state between death and general resurrection at the Parousia. Barrett comments that such nakedness was for Paul undesirable but not unthinkable. "Paul writes out of a longing to finish with this age of sin and death and enter upon the age to come." And Martin comments, "For Paul the interim period is a bodiless one (1 Cor 15:35-38). It is, to be sure, a period that is temporary (1 Cor 15:42-44). But there *is* an interval (1 Cor 15:37)... But why does he seek to avoid the interim period unless this time of nakedness offered something less than the ultimate realisation of hope (5:4)?... What need was there for God to redeem creation (Rom 8:23-27) if the salvation of the Christian was consummated at death? If death were the answer to all hope, we would think that Paul would desire death, but this is not what we find. Rather he considers it still an enemy (1 Cor 15:26)."

#### Verse 4

καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκίηνει στενάζομεν  
βαρούμενοι ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι  
ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν  
ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς.

βαρεω burden, weigh down  
θελω wish, will

The word order means that the sense is not 'not because we wish...' but 'because we do not wish...'

ἐκδύω strip, take off; midd strip oneself,  
be naked

Paul is perhaps opposing some gnostic influences in Corinth (as in 1 Cor 15) which saw the disembodied state rather than the resurrected body as the ultimate hope. Cullmann suggests, on the contrary, that those who enter a bodiless state, though better off (5:8; cf. Phil 1:23), still experience the tension of 'already but not yet.'

καταποθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s καταπινω  
swallow, swallow up, devour  
θνητος, η, ον mortal  
ζωη, ης f life

Cf. 1 Cor 15:54.

#### Verse 5

ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο  
θεός, ὁ δοὺς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ  
πνεύματος.

κατεργασάμενος Verb, aor midd dep ptc, m  
nom s κατεργάζομαι see 4:17

The aorist participle looks back to a decisive action on God's part – election? calling? justification? – perhaps the whole of God's redemptive activity viewed as a single decisive act (cf. Rom 8:29,30).

δοὺς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s δίδωμι  
ἀρραβων, ωνος m pledge, guarantee (of  
what is to come)

Cf 1:22 and Rom 8:23. "What the Christian has now is a present possession which promises more to come." Martin

#### Verse 6

Θαρροῦντες οὖν πάντοτε καὶ εἰδότες ὅτι  
ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ  
τοῦ κυρίου,

θαρρεω be full of courage, act boldly

The οὖν points back to verse 5. The Spirit and the hope of glory are the ground of Paul's confidence.

παντοτε always

In case any should think that Paul is saying death is a terrible thing, Paul now makes the point that "he sees it as a great improvement in relation to this life." Martin

εἰδότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl οἶδα  
(verb perf in form but with present  
meaning) know, understand

ἐνδημεω be at home, be present  
ἐκδημεω be away from home

"Paul is not suggesting that communion with the Lord is non-existent during the Christian's earthly pilgrimage... Rather, Paul is saying that the Christian is away from the Lord only in comparison with seeing him face to face (1 Cor 13:12...)." Martin

#### Verse 7

διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἶδους –

Paul here explains what he means by being away from the Lord. Martin says that this verse is parenthetical – v.8 picks up the thought left in v.6.

περιπατεω walk, walk about, live  
εἶδος, ουσ n appearance, sight

Cf. Rom 8:24; 1 Cor 13:12.

δια ειδους 'on the basis of what is seen'. Tasker thinks the sense is that *Christ* remains unseen. This may also be part of Paul's anti-gnostic polemic.

### Verse 8

θαρροῦμεν δὲ καὶ εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον·

θαρρεω see v.6

εὐδοκεω be pleased

μᾶλλον adv more; rather, instead

On this and the following verse, compare Phil 1:18-24. Even though Paul longs for the consummation of redemption in the resurrection body, he yet looks forward to being in the presence of the Lord at death.

### Verse 9

διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι.

διὸ therefore, for this reason

Introduces a logical conclusion.

φιλοτιμεομαι make it one's ambition, endeavour

εἴτε if, whether

It makes no difference what state believers are in when the Lord comes, hence it should make no difference to present motivation.

εὐάρεστος, ον acceptable, pleasing

Cf. Rom 12:1f.; 14:18; Phil 4:18; Col 3:20; Eph 5:10; Heb 13:21.

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

"While preferring to be present with the Lord, the Apostle submits to the divine will. He has no ambition but that of being acceptable to Christ." Hering

### Verse 10

τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον.

φανερωθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin φανεροω  
make known, make evident; pass  
appear

May either be middle 'show oneself' or pass 'appear', the latter is probably the sense here.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must  
ἔμπροσθεν before, in front of  
βημα, τος n judicial bench, place of judgement

In Acts 18:12-17 we read of Paul being brought before the βημα in Corinth by angry Corinthian Jews who made accusations against him before Gallio.

κομίσηται Verb, aor midd subj κομιζω midd  
receive, be paid back

ἕκαστος, η, ον each, every

πρασσω practice, do

ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful

φαυλος, η, ον evil, wrong, bad

Barrett considers whether this is consistent with Paul's doctrine of justification by faith and concludes that both doctrines occur too frequently in Paul for this to be dismissed as an overlooked inconsistency. Barrett writes, "[Paul] never ceased to think that obedience to the command of God was required of all men, not least of Christians; such obedience is not abrogated but made possible by justification. This is the foundation; on it men may build, and what they build is exposed to judgement (1 Cor 3:10-15). Worthless building is destroyed, but the builder is not destroyed with it."

And Martin says, "We know from 1 Cor 3:10-15 that salvation is not lost simply because one believer's life is not as pleasing as another one's. But the solemnity of this judgment should not be overlooked either ... The tribunal of Christ for the Christian is needed to complete God's justice, both in terms of holiness and impartiality... The life of faith does not free the Christian from the life of obedience." Martin

And Hering comments, "As in 1 Cor 3 the judgment of Christians only is in mind. Of course, the salvation they have obtained through faith is not put in any doubt.

According to 1 Cor 3:15, even someone who has worked less well will be saved, though he will lose a reward to which others have a right. Thus a certain grading will take place in the future world, a grading by which believers – let us not fear the expression – will be judged according to their works."