

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Are You Planning To Go To Heaven?

By Bob Dodson

Let us examine what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:1-11.

Verse 1: *“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”*

WE KNOW FOR SURE – We must not doubt or waiver from our belief in God or our conviction that heaven is a real place. James teaches that as we pray to God in heaven, we must have true faith in God and in his love and power. *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”* (Jas. 1:5-8, KJV).

Verse 2: *“For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven”*

ERNEST DESIRE AND GROANING – Because we have faith that heaven is such a pleasant and desirable place, we seriously, and sincerely, live each day of our lives carefully and faithfully as though it is our last day here on earth. This lesson is taught clearly in God’s word. Please read James 4:13-17, and follow the advice given in Matthew 6:33.

Verse 3: *“if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.”*

FULLY CLOTHED/NOT NAKED – In 2 Peter 3:10-15, we read a description of the daily clothing worn by those who are in Christ. These are garments of *“holy conduct and godliness...without spot and blameless.”* I MUST put off the old man (Eph. 4:22-24) and put on the new man and the garments of righteousness.

Verse 4: *“For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”*

MORTALITY SWALLOWED BY IMMORTALITY – Through the glorious and powerful Gospel of Christ (2 Tim. 1:10) we die to sin and live for GOD. If we are faithful to death (Rev. 2:10) our obedience will culminate in VICTORY. *“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Cor. 15:53-57, KJV). This energizes us to be steadfast, always abounding in the Lord’s work. *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord”* (verse 58).

Verse 5: *“Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.”*

INDWELLING SPIRIT IS OUR GUARANTEE – In Romans 8:9, Paul wrote that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ do not belong to Him. The Spirit dwells in us when we allow God’s word (given by the Holy Spirit) to abide in us richly. Read and compare Colossians 3:16-17; Ephesians 5:18-19 and John 15:5-7. This is the down payment on eternal life (Eph. 1:13-14).

Verses 6-7: ***“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight.”***

CONFIDENTLY WALK IN FAITH – When we walk by human insight and worldly wisdom, we walk in sin, but when we walk by following divine wisdom, we make good decisions and continue to obey God daily. ***“Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace”*** (Jas. 3:13-18, KJV). Do you live your life according to carnal thinking or heaven’s legislation?

Verses 8-9: ***“We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore, we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.”***

PLEASING THE LORD – One’s aim and purpose, every day that he/she lives, should be to please God. As did Paul, I should want to magnify Christ, ***“...with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death”*** (Phil. 1:20, KJV).

Verses 10-11: ***“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well-known to God, and I also trust are well-known in your consciences.”***

FUTURE JUDGMENT LOOMS – Everyone will be there, and no one will be too busy to attend. Every person who ever lived will be judged in righteousness by Christ, according to God’s word and the person’s deeds, whether good or evil. ***“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil”*** (Eccl. 12:13-14, KJV). Those who were obedient and faithful will inherit the blessings of eternal life, but the wicked will receive punishment so horrible it is beyond our comprehension. ***“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”*** (Rev. 21:8, KJV). Dear reader, are you prepared for Judgment Day? ■

“One Thing I Know”

By James Hahn

I have always appreciated the response of the man in John 9 when the Jews tried to pressure him into condemning Jesus as a sinner. ***“He therefore answered, Whether he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see”*** (Jn. 9:25). I wish some of my brethren would have the same attitude this man had. There is an attitude manifested by many that says, “if you don’t know everything you can’t be sure about anything.”

We should be humble and recognize we can be wrong. This is why we need to constantly study the word and examine the things we believe and practice in the light thereof. However, I do not believe this humility demands that we accept anything or everything that comes along and that we accept the position that we just can’t be sure or definite about anything.

I may not know everything but there are some things I know are true and I am not ready to leave or compromise these truths simply because there are other things I do not know. We must continue to ***“contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints”*** (Jude 3). Paul said, ***“I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day”*** (2 Tim. 1:12). — *Collegue church of Christ Articles*, February 3, 2019. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com - Email: lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com - Phone: 209-365-9250