

# How We View Ourselves

*Life in a Tent, Pt 1*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-5

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# I. PRAYER

- i. God would you help us to see ourselves as you see us. Would you help us to live with the hope that this life is not all there is but the best is actually yet to come.

# II. INTRODUCTION

## a. What is on your bucket list?

- i. You know...a list of things you want to do before you die?
- ii. Before you kick the bucket...
  - You know where that phrase comes from, right?
  - It's pretty terrible.
- iii. But you know, normally when we talk about a bucket list, we talk about all of the fun things we want to do before we die.
  - But, that conversation takes on a different tone when you're still processing something like the evil of the Las Vegas shooting last week.
  - We have questions like how could someone be that disturbed to do this?
    1. But we also have question about our own safety.
    2. We have to confront our own fears and our own mortality.

## b. But you know, all of us have this worldview in us that has a bucket list mentality.



- i. It's a worldview that says that my life is short...about 85 years give or take if nothing happens to us...and I need to make the best of it.
    - I need to do something significant with my life.
      1. I need to make enough money to properly retire.
      2. I need to have significant experiences.
      3. I need to get married, have kids, climb the corporate ladder, and fill in the blank.
    - This can be most stressful when you're in college...where you have to choose a course of study and you feel like you're choosing the trajectory of the rest of your life.
    - Or maybe this is the mid-life crisis. Where you question everything you're doing in life and make radical changes out of fear that you're missing out.
  - ii. **We all share this worldview that says that these few decades are all you have, so be sure to make the best of it.**
    - And we live in constant fear that death will meet us when we're not ready.
    - Because this life, this body, is all we have. It's our only shot at joy.
- c. But what if I told you that a Christian worldview is the complete opposite.**
- i. Instead of these few years are all you have so make the best of it.
  - ii. A Christian worldview said:
    - These few years are not all you have, the best is yet to come, but for now you have been sent on temporary assignment.



- That as followers of Jesus we have been set free from the fear of the end, that God promises us that when this body shuts down we will be resurrected into a new body that is eternal, and he actually has an assignment for us while we are here in this life.

#### **d. Everyone lives their life according to a worldview.**

- i. It impacts how you spend your time, your money, how you view yourself, how you view others.
- ii. And I believe that it is crucial that those who claim to be followers of Jesus Christ evaluate their worldview.
  - Are we living our lives according to what we claim to be true...or is our belief in Jesus an extracurricular activity in our life that really does not impact our worldview.
  - What does it actually look like to live the Christian life?

### **III. SERIES PLUG**

#### **a. This is why this morning we are going to begin a five-part sermon series called “Life in a Tent: A Study of 2 Corinthians 5.”**

- i. It will become obvious very quickly why we have titled this “Life in a Tent.”
- ii. But in this series, we are going to study verse by verse 2 Corinthians 5.
  - This is one chapter in a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to the church that was in the city of Corinth,



- And in this chapter, we get a beautiful picture of Paul's worldview.
  1. We get a clear picture of how he views himself, how he viewed God, how he was motivated to do the things that he did, how he viewed other people, and how he viewed his purpose and his assignment during this life.
- So, by studying 2 Corinthians 5, we will be able to understand what it means to live the Christian life and we will be challenged to evaluate our own worldview.

## **IV. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-5**

### **a. Let me give you a little context to 2 Corinthians 5 and then we'll read our passage for the morning.**

- i. Paul planted the church that was located in the city of Corinth in Greece.
  - But as the years went on, certain people led that church astray, and that church began to question Paul and his ministry.
- ii. So, in 2 Corinthians, we have a very emotional letter from the Apostle Paul to this church in Corinth defending his ministry and his apostleship.
  - Many in this church in Corinth accused Paul of not being a true apostle because Paul endured great suffering during his ministry.
    1. This church must have had the idea that if you were a true apostle, you wouldn't experience hardship in this life but rather great material blessing.
    2. Isn't that the prosperity gospel?



3. You know these preachers who say that if you have enough faith in God he will hook you up with money and health.
  4. See, all of that comes from a worldview that says that this life is all you have so you need to make it the best you can.
  5. But, Paul in defending his ministry, doesn't have that worldview.
- So, in 2 Corinthians 5, Paul is essentially explaining his worldview and how that impacts his ministry.

## **b. Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-5**

- i. **So, in these first five verses of 2 Corinthians 5, we are going to learn how Paul views himself.**
  - We're going to discuss how we should view ourselves in light of a Christian worldview.
    1. And as we get deeper into 2 Corinthians 5 over the next several weeks, we will begin to see how this worldview impacts every aspect of our life.
  - And Paul says here that while in this life he views himself and his body as a tent.
    1. And in the next life, when he gets to enjoy eternal life in God's Kingdom, he won't be in a tent anymore, but God has a building waiting for him.
    2. His perishable body will be resurrected into an imperishable body.
  - What is the difference between a tent and a building?
    1. Well a tent is temporary while a building is definitely permanent.
    2. A tent is fragile (a piece of cloth draped over some poles) while a building is more stable and strong.



3. A tent is not comfortable. You're still sleeping on the hard ground and it's small while a building can have multiple rooms, running water, electricity, climate controlled...
- So, Paul is very honest that since we live in this tent during this life, we absolutely groan and long for the building that God has for us when we are with him.
    1. The tent is definitely not ideal.
    2. So, when Paul says things like when we put on our heavenly dwelling, we won't be found naked. And that we long not to be unclothed but further clothed...
    3. ...what Paul means is that the goal of the Christian life is not for our souls to be removed from our bodies and for us to just be with God in Spirit.
    4. But rather, God's plan for us is to be given new bodies that are immortal, not subject to pain and suffering, and will live in joy and pleasure for all of eternity.
- ii. **So, Paul's worldview is that this life is not all there is, the best is yet to come and we long for that, but for right now I have a temporary assignment in this life while living in this tent.**
- And that is what this series is about. Life in a tent.
  - How do we live the Christian life today with the hope of the good life that is to come in God's Kingdom?
  - What is our purpose and assignment in this life while in the tent while we look forward to and long for the building from God that is coming?



## V. LONGING FOR LIFE

a. **But for today, my goal is for us to just wrap our minds around the idea that we live in a tent and we long, we groan for the building.**

i. We long for and groan for our mortal bodies to be swallowed up in life.

- You need to know that as a human being, God has placed inside of you a desire for more than this life can give you.
  1. And this means we long and groan for more.
- We long to live with bodies that don't age and break down.
- We groan to live in a place where we can be connected to other people in life-giving relationship without abuse or conflict.
- We long to live in a world where someone doesn't decide to grab a gun and kill 59 people and injure hundreds more.
- We groan to live in a place where there is no more conflict, oppression, and corruption.
- We long to live in a place where we don't struggle with so much self-doubt and self-consciousness where we are constantly obsessing over what people think about us.
- We groan to live in unhindered relationship with our Creator.
- We long to be away from this tent that is so fragile and have the building that is permanent, stable, and glorious.



- ii. Every human being has this in common. We long for this mortal body of ours to be swallowed up in joyful life.

**b. Here's what you need to know: Your worldview will determine how you act upon this longing and groaning.**

- It's not a question if we long for a resurrected body...it's a question of how we act upon that longing and groaning.
- i. If your worldview is that this life is all there is and you better make the best of it...you'll spend the rest of your life trying to turn your tent into a building.
  - You'll spend the rest of your life believing that the answer to your longing and groaning is of this world.
- ii. But if your worldview is like Paul's, where we know this life is not all there is, the best is yet to come, and we temporarily live in this tent while on assignment...then we begin to realize that our joy is not found in the things of this world, but our joy is found in the one who created this world.
  - That although I can taste joy in this life, I don't have to be concerned about missing out because the best is yet to come in God's Kingdom.

**c. Let me give you some examples.**

- i. Every one of us longs for affection.
  - We desire for other people to care about us. To love us. To show affection. And we want to be able to reciprocate that.



1. This is a God given desire. It is a good desire.
- But we live in a tent in a broken world that has fallen into sin.
  1. What this means is that what God has made good has been distorted by sin.
  2. So, we may grow up in a family where love and affection are not given.
  3. We may have people in our life that use affection to manipulate us in order to abuse us rather than care about us.
  4. We may be guilty of doing those things.
  5. We may be lonely.
- So, in our longing and our groaning to be in healthy relationship with other people as God designed us to be...our worldview shapes how we pursue that.
- Example: Last week, Hugh Hefner passed away, the founder of Playboy Magazine.
  1. We do not need to go into his legacy and the wake of addiction, abuse, and decimated families behind him.
  2. But it's interesting, I was reading an article about his life. And the author noted how one time Hefner made the comment that growing up, there was no affection in his home. His parents never hugged or kissed him.
  3. And what an interesting insight because Hefner is no different from us. His longing for affection is no different and that longing is not a bad thing.
  4. But it's not hard to see how he went about pursuing that longing in this world in such a destructive and unsatisfying way.



5. When he boasts of the hundreds of different women that he was with, that doesn't give a compelling case that he found what he was longing for.

- See, when our worldview is that this life is all there is and I have to make the best of it, we look to the world to satisfy our deepest longings...only to our disappointment.
  1. And the more disappointed we get, the more destructive our pursuit becomes.
- But when we have a worldview that says that this life is not all there is, the best is yet to come, but for now I live in a tent...it's okay to pursue healthy relationship with other people in this life, we just don't have to stray from God's way of that pursuit out of fear that we're going to miss out.

ii. **Every one of us longs to matter.**

- We long to be significant. To do something important. To be influential. For people to see our value.
- But if our worldview says that this life is all there is and we have to make the best of it, we look to the world to satisfy those deepest longings only to our disappointment.
  1. And the more disappointed we get, the more destructive our methods become.
  2. So, maybe we become a workaholic. Determined to make something out of our career or to get noticed.
  3. Convinced that one day, we'll finally make it and have what we're longing for.
  4. Just at the expense of our family at home, our kid's childhood, our marriage, our joy, and the opportunity we have to contribute to the body of Christ.



- But when he have a worldview that says that this life is not all there is, the best is yet to come, but for now I live in a tent...it's okay to want to do something significant in your life, you just don't have to stray away from God's way of doing that out of fear that you're going to miss out.
- iii. **Every one of us longs for freedom.**
- Freedom from a body that ages, gets sick, and can be injured.
    1. Freedom from the constant need of money and always worrying if you're going to make ends meet or live the life you want to live.
    2. Freedom from the prison of anxiety, or stress, or depression, self-consciousness.
  - But if our worldview says that this life is all there is and we have to make the best of it, we look to the world to satisfy those deepest longings only to our disappointment.
    1. And maybe we'll believe that once we find that right diet or workout routine, I'll have the freedom I long for.
    2. Once I lose those pounds or get rid of this back pain.
    3. Once I finally hit the big payday, then my worries will be left behind.
    4. Once I find a way to be more confident in myself, I won't be trapped in my mind.
  - And we enslave ourselves to promises the world can't keep.
- iv. **A counselor I used to see just published a book called "Sipping Saltwater."**
- In the book, he uses this analogy.



- Imagine you're in a raft in the middle of the ocean baking in the sun and you are dying of thirst.
  1. You are literally groaning for a drink of water.
  2. And yet, you are surrounded by billions of gallons of water in the ocean.
- So, as that longing gets worse and worse, the saltwater all of the sudden seems desirable.
  1. So, you drink. At first, maybe it seems it has done the trick. It has quenched your thirst for a second.
  2. But what does saltwater do to our bodies?
  3. It sucks water out of our system.
  4. In our desire to quench our thirst we go to that which will make us even more thirsty.
- And when we live with the worldview that this world is all we have and we look to this world to satisfy our deepest longings...
  1. We drink of what is only going to make us more thirsty.

## **VI. THE GOSPEL**

### **a. Don't we all do this? Don't we all look to the things of this world to satisfy our longings?**

- i. The bad news, is that it is this very thing that the Bible calls sin.
  - Romans 1 tells us that we think we are being wise by looking to the things of the world instead of God but we were really being fools.



- And in our foolishness, we rejected God and robbed him of his glory.
  - So, we stand condemned before God because we have not recognized God as our creator and the source of our joy.
- ii. **But the good news is that Jesus says in John 10:10: *“I have come that you may have life and have it abundantly.”***
- We needed to be redeemed from our sinful, destructive ways and we needed to be reconciled to God.
  - So, Jesus Christ came, and took up residence in a tent.
    1. He became a human being and lived in this broken world with us.
    2. And he lived the life that we could not live and died the death on the cross that we deserved to die so that our sins could be forgiven and we could be reconciled to God.
- iii. **And then the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead.**
- And Jesus is alive! He is our Lord and Savior!
  - And if we entrust our lives to him, believing that our sins were forgiven at the cross and live with him as our Lord...
    1. Then the Bible tells us that just as Jesus was resurrected so we will be resurrected into a new body that is imperishable and we will live forever with God in His Kingdom.
  - And this was Paul’s hope.
    1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:5.
    2. The Spirit! The one who raised Jesus from the dead.



3. That same Spirit is given to us as a guarantee, a deposit that this life is not all there is and the best is yet to come.
  4. And this Spirit leads us and guides us towards life. Towards a worldview that sees ourselves properly as a tent waiting the building that God has for us.
- And throughout the rest of our study of 2 Corinthians 5, we'll explore more what it looks like to have this worldview, what does it look like to pursue our longings in a godly way, what is God's purpose for us in this life.
    1. So, stick with us as we talk about how to do life in a tent.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

### **a. But, here is my question for you.**

- What worldview do you have and where do you see yourself trying to satisfy your longings with the world?
- Where are you drinking saltwater to satisfy your thirst?
- i. **Because, nothing will set you free to experience joy in this life more than discovering that this life is not all there is and the best is yet to come.**
  - And God has something for us as we live life in a tent.

## **VIII. PRAY**

