

Series: 2 Peter
Title: Putting Off the Tabernacle
Text: 2 Peter 1: 13-15
Date: December 18, 2011
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Our text will be verses 13-15. We have seen that Peter is putting believers in remembrance: to give all diligence to grow in grace, to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. If we have been called it is because God elected us unto salvation in Christ—"whom he did predestinate, them he also called." (Rom 8: 29-30.)

2 Corinthians 13: 5: Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Is Christ my life, my all, my Lord? Are we living to further his name or our own (1 Cor. 1:30.) Is it our chief desire to grow in grace and knowledge of him? If we are truly in Christ, we shall never fall from the mercy and grace of God for so—"an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet 1: 10-11.)

2 Peter 1: 13: Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance; 14: Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. 15: Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

Why does Peter call his body a tabernacle? Why does he refer to his death not as death but as "putting off" his bodily tabernacle? Why does he call it his "decease" (departure) rather than death?

I. OUR BODIES ARE CALLED TABERNACLES TO REMIND US THEY ARE FRAIL AND TEMPORARY.

Illustration: A tabernacle is a tent.

Because sin entered in and death by sin, these bodies in which the soul dwells shall return to the earth and be dissolved.

Genesis 3: 19: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Every person consists of a soul as well as body. If our existence was only the temporary existence of our bodies in this life then we would live for only the supreme happiness of our bodies. But our soul lives on after we have put off these bodies. We will either spend eternity in the bliss of life in heaven with Christ or in the torments of death in hell separated from God.

Therefore, we would be wise to give all diligence not to live in this life for our mortal bodies. We ought never abuse or neglect our bodies. But we are reminded constantly throughout the scriptures to care for our bodies in the exceedingly greater interest of our immortal souls. We must soon put off these tents! And after this the judgment! Now, listen to the good hope the believer has, pay close attention.

II. THE BELIEVER BODY IS A TABERNACLE BECAUSE WE HAVE A HOUSE AWAITING US IN GLORY.

Washed by the Holy Spirit in the blood of Christ Jesus our Lord the believers body is a member of Christ's body and the temple of the Holy Spirit within us.

1 Corinthians 6: 15: Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? God forbid....19: What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Christ Jesus has purchased us with the price of his blood. Our body and our spirit belong to him--*therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

That is what Peter is stirring us up to remember. Peter is old. By God growing him in grace, he knows by painful trial, by foolish mistakes, the things which are really important in this life.

As God grows us in grace he works the same in us so that we are used to do what Peter is doing right here, to remind each other that this life is not about pampering our bodies and heaping honors and ease upon ourselves. It is about growing in our Redeemer and about furthering the truth of Christ. This is the purpose for which God has made us his workmanship.

Paul said the same thing. (Turn to 2 Cor 4.) I was blessed by this. I want to spend our time reading this and making a few comments on it.

2 Corinthians 4: 8: *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9: Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10: Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 11: For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*

Nothing but the Life of Christ within the mortal body of the believer makes a believer steadfast in faith and grace to stand with Christ through all adversity. And using earthen vessels, to speak his word, God creates life in his sheep.

2 Corinthians 4: 12: *So then death worketh in us, but life in you. 13: We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; 14: Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. 15: For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.*

Christ in you is the power and life which makes us persevere together, even as the saints of old. As God quickens his sheep "thanksgiving of many redounds to the glory of God."

2 Corinthians 4: 16: *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*

We do not quit believing and speaking the truth of Christ because though our outward flesh is progressively decaying and wasting away, by the grace of God, our inward man, created in Christ Jesus, grows stronger and stronger in the grace and faith of Christ every day.

2 Corinthians 4: 17: *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

As we suffer in these bodies for the sake of Christ whatever is for God's glory is but 'light affliction.' Especially in light of glory—Rom 8: 18) Paul reminds us as does Peter—we have something far better than this earthly tent and this world.

2 Corinthians 4: 18: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. 5: 1: For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

We must shortly put off this tabernacle, but we have 'in the heavens' an eternal house made by God, through the righteousness and death of Christ

2 Corinthians 5: 2: For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4: For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Brethren, our sin, the burdens, the opposition, makes us groan. (How I desire to be free from all sin, don't you? We patiently wait on God's appointed day.) But not merely that we should be free from suffering, but that we be perfectly conformed to Christ our Life to enjoy uninterrupted communion with our Beloved.

2 Corinthians 5: 5: Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God,...

Here is Paul, there was Peter—though facing persecution unto death for preaching the gospel of Christ Jesus, yet rejoicing and encouraging their brethren in the truth of Christ because God **wrought us for the selfsame thing.**"

God chose us, Christ redeemed us, the Spirit quickened us—made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light and he made us his workmanship to give us the privilege for a little while on this earth to bear witness of his glory and grace.

"Who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

The Holy Ghost is our earnest, the foretaste of that which is to come. (Eph 1:13,14 Ro 5:5 8:16) And he shall raise our *bodies in the resurrection.*

Romans 8: 11: But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

1 Corinthians 15: 42: So also *is* the resurrection of the dead...44: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.

2 Corinthians 5: 6: Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 8: We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Peter was ready to depart, but as long as he remained he used his time to minister to his brethren. Paul said: Philippians 1: 23: For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you. Having given us this privilege together brethren...

2 Corinthians 5: 9: Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

We labor to enter into his rest—to make our calling and election sure. We labor together—ministering the word of grace to one another, and to all who will hear us, because our chief concern—is that we may be found in Christ.

Philippians 3:8: Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, 9: And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11: If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

2 Corinthians 5: 10: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

*He that believeth and rests in Christ alone shall be saved--*we shall receive the reward of the crown of life because of Christ and his finished work on our behalf.

OR

He that believeth not shall be damned—Christ will judge him to have lived in this life for his own vain glory then cast him into outer darkness to experience separation from God forever.

2 Corinthians 5: 11: Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;

Salvation is in no other but Christ, believe on him, rest in Christ! Don't live for the flesh or look to your works. We persuade men that this is the sincerity of our mission, but whether they believe or not...

2 Corinthians 5: 11:...but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. 12: For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. 13: For whether we be beside ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause.

If there be some who glory in appearance and do not understand the heart of what we are saying, whether they accuse us of commending ourselves and being too insistent on this or whether they accuse of being too sober and single-minded, Paul says tell them it is for the glory of God and the good his people.

2 Corinthians 5: 14: For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Galatians 2: 20: I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Galatians 1: 10: For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Galatians 6: 14: But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

2 Corinthians 5: 16: Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more. 17: Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

When Christ was looked upon with carnal eyes, men despised and rejected him just like they do his disciples but now by the grace of God we know Christ in the heart, in spirit and truth. We no longer glory in the outward form like we did when we were in our self-righteous dead flesh.

2 Corinthians 5: 18: And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19: To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20: Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21: For he hath made *him to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 6: 1: We then, *as* workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Don't hear the gospel of God's grace in vain! Don't put it aside and go on glorying in a form of religion or living for these tents of flesh. This is the day of grace!

2 Corinthians 6: 2: (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

Peter reminds us throughout his epistle as Paul does: present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, it is altogether reasonable service. Back to 2 Peter 1: 13.

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AMEN!