

I. Read II Corinthians 5:1-9

- A. In verses 1-4, the Apostle Paul speaks of the tension believers feel as they struggle with the trials and tribulations of this world, looking ahead to life eternal. The very fact that he describes the believer's circumstance in such a manner leads us to the conclusion that we ought to feel somewhat *conflicted* by our life in this world as we look forward to eternity with Christ. If we never feel any such tension, what might our problem be? (read James 4:4-8)

We may have become too infatuated with the world, too comfortable with this life to consider the life hereafter. Such is the temptation common to all men.

- B. In verse 2, Paul says "we groan" (NKJV) in our present state. What does he mean?
The *New Geneva Study Bible* explains that "we are sighing with frustration at the limitations of this present life, with its sin, weakness, and corruption."

- C. Regarding the *effect* or *influence* of sin, what do we look forward to eternally?
Just as we have been saved from the consequences of sin, and are being saved from the power of sin as we live out our faith, one day we will be saved from the very presence of sin.

- D. What assurance do we have that one day we will be glorified at the General Resurrection on the last day? (see verse 5)
The Holy Spirit has been given to believers as a guarantee or, if you will, down payment, on our future state of glory.

- E. Do all Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them? (read Romans 8:9-11)
Yes. Those who don't have God the Holy Spirit indwelling them do not belong to Christ.

There are those who say you must have a subsequent experience to conversion in order to be indwelt with the Holy Spirit. They usually erroneously refer to this as the *Baptism of The Holy Spirit*. They claim that you may have the Spirit *with* you but not *in* you; thus, you may be a Christian yet not be a Spirit-indwelt Christian. What did Paul say about this in Romans 8:9-11?
He said that the Holy Spirit indwells all believers.

Does Scripture speak of being Spirit-filled in a *normative* fashion? (*Normative* means it is meant for all Christians.) (see Ephesians 5:18)
Yes. All Christians can and should be filled with God's Spirit.

In the context of Ephesians 5:18, what does *being filled with the Holy Spirit* mean? (read Eph. 5:8-17)

In the context of the preceding verses, it is clear that being filled with the Holy Spirit is a matter of being obedient to Christ and His Word, or of submitting to the Lordship of Christ in all areas of our life. This is a continual process which must be repeated daily, perhaps many times each day, as we continue to repent of our sin and submit to Christ.

Note: Please read the article relating Mrs. Johnson's experience (the founder of BSF) with someone insisting that she had not yet been *baptized by the Holy Spirit*.

- F. In verse 6, Paul says to be "at home in the body"...is to be "absent from the Lord." What did he mean by this?
While we are yet living in this life we are not residing with Christ in heaven. This conveys the idea of longing for that future state when all Christians will be with their Lord eternally.

- G. In verse 7, Paul says that “we walk by faith, not by sight.” What did he mean?
The Christian knows that the material world is not all there is to God’s universe. There is a realm of existence which is unseen to us which is every bit as real as the physical or material world in which we live. Because it cannot be discerned with our physical senses (sight, touch, taste, hearing) does not mean that it does not exist. We know it exists because God has told us of it in His Word. To believe the Bible when our senses and experiences may tell us otherwise is *biblical faith*. Understand that Paul is not advocating an *intuitive faith* which is entirely subjective. He is speaking of a faith in (a belief of) the Holy Scripture above and beyond experience. This is a far cry from many evangelicals’ notion of faith being some sort of feeling or blind leap into the dark.
- H. When do the Words of Scripture regarding our future state with Christ become especially important to us?
When we face death or when we have lost a loved one, we are comforted by the assurances of Scripture that this life is not all there is. When we struggle with some besetting sin we look forward to a perfect deliverance from the very *presence* of sin. When we face trials, tribulation, and persecution, we are comforted and encouraged that one day we will be delivered and vindicated.
- I. Share a point in life (an experience or trial) at which *the hope of glory* of our future state with Christ meant a great deal to you.
*** requires a personal response.**
- Consider the difficulty you may have experienced in trying to be productive and responsible in this life while yet resisting becoming too *worldly* minded. Share briefly about this sort of struggle.
*** requires a personal response**
- Share about someone that you have known personally, or perhaps just *known of*, whose understanding of life and death, trials and tribulations—even persecution—has meant a great deal to you. (for example, Corrie Ten Boom’s description of her family’s persecution and suffering at the hands of the Nazis)
*** requires a personal response**