

# From a Tent Dweller to a Mansion

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Welcome to you all to our service this morning. We seek God's blessing on our time together as we hear this word.
- We shall begin by singing from Psalm 84. Psalm 84 and at the beginning of the psalm. Singing 1 through to 6.
- How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me. The tabernacles of thy grace, how pleasant, Lord, they be.
- My thirsty soul longs vehemently, yea, fainth thy courts to see. My very heart and flesh cry out, O living God, for thee.
- Behold, the sparrow findeth out an house for interest. The swallow also for herself hath purchased a nest. Even thine own altars where she save her young ones forth may bring.
- [ 1 : 0 5 ] O thou almighty Lord of hosts, who art my God and King. Blessed are they in thy house that dwell. They ever give thee praise. Blessed is the man whose strength of art.
- In whose heart are thy ways. Who passing thorough bake us well. Therein do dig up wells. Also the rain that falleth down.
- The pools with water fills. These verses 1 to 6 of Psalm 84. How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me.
- How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me.
- The tabernacle's on thy place, O Lord of hosts, to me.
- [ 2 : 0 8 ] How blessed are they thee. My thirsty soul longs vehemently, yea, fainth thy courts to see.
- My very heart and flesh cry out, O living God for thee.
- Behold the saddle findeth out, O living God for thee. Behold the saddle findeth out, O living God for thee.
- A horizontal up, o of th fellow willing unto wickedness.
- By the sand upon. Meaningly, Jesus, O read the throne of■■■. The throne of fire with his men, O Lord of hosts, to me.
- [ 3 : 1 9 ] Almighty Lord of hosts Who art my God and King Blessed are the in and person well The ever-gifted grace Blessed is the man who strengthens my heart In this heart of thy ways Who passing the battle make us live Let him to take the wells Of solar rain that falleth day
- That holds with heart a rail Let us join together in prayer Oh Lord our God as we come before you With this hour of worship We give thanks That we can understand something Of the longing of yourself and the psalmist Who considered the house of God to be a place most blessed A place where he enjoyed the privilege of fellowship With his God and the people of God And he took special delight in these things

That many in this world despise and belittle We give thanks that it is this place that Has a special place in the heart of your people Even when they are not able to be present In this place That their thoughts gravitate towards it And to the people who gather here And to the God of that people It is there that they often take comfort And find solace And they think of the privilege that they have To take shelter In the provision that God the Lord has made for them In time of trial and difficulty

The picture created in our minds By the swallow Finding a cleft in the rock Or in the stones of the building Where she nests And is considered safe So it is for your people As they find a safe haven In the grace of God As it is in Christ Jesus May we magnify And praise your name today As we meet together In your name May we appreciate The privilege that we have In this world A world that we are appointed To dwell in For a limited time When we measure our days Against the time

That this world has been in existence However However However great our measurement is Of The existence of this world Our Our time A loft it is But a brief Span And as we are creatures of the dust So to the dust we will return As your servants Have often proclaimed We are reminded of that Even afresh in these days As you have Spoken to us As communities Taken from our midst Those that Foreign part of that community For so long And yet now Their place is Empty And They have taken Their place In eternity Beyond The realms of this world Whatever that may Encapsulate for them

[ 8 : 33 ] And there are many Even within this Island Community of ours That Have Heard the voice of God Speak to them In these days And Remind Each of us That we are The tent dwellers And pilgrims In the world We pray for Your blessing On those who are New grief Newly grieving That you would Bind up their wounds And heal their hurt We pray for all Who have Sorrows In the world Thankful for those Who In the world Recognise these sorrows To be But Passing experiences However lasting And however Deeply felt They may be The day will come For you people Where The tears Will be Wiped away

Where there will be No more sorrow Where there will be Everlasting joy Where there will be No more night And the day Will be A day that will Go on Without end And we give thanks For the God Who is light Whose light Will never be Extinguished We pray that you Would magnify The truth To our hearts And to our minds That we may Take delight In these truths And make them To be the truth Upon which we build For our lives In the world And for eternity We remember In your presence The needs of this world In which we live That are many Think of our nation We remember our

Queen We pray for her In her Old age And the frailties Of old age That are Now more often Seen Than previously And we pray That you would Sustain her For the duration Of her reign And that Not only Would she be Wise in delivering That Role which she Has to fulfil But that she would Be enabled And empowered To declare Her Dependence upon One who is The King of Kings And Lord Over all We live in a World where there Are many Who are in power And who Declare an interest In the plurality Of Deities

And some No interest In any God At all It is To our shame That we see Even those Who are Governing Ourselves The pale Observance To God In public But in private They have No interest In the things Of God This is so Obvious By the lives That they lead We bring Them before You And pray For them And ask That you Would open The eyes Of the blind And that you Would Break down Hearts That are Hardening With the Consequence Of such Hardening Too Terrible To Contemplate What is It for Any one Of us If we Harden The face Of eternity The day Will come When we Will answer

To the God Who is God Over all We remember Our parliaments We pray For them We pray For Westminster Parliament We pray For Holyrood We pray For Your own Local Government Here as It is Newly Set up We Remember The various Democracies Of the World Whether They are Fully Fledged Or In their Infancy We pray For those Who are Under the Heel Of the Dictatorships That so Many Find Themselves To be In the Thrall Of We pray For the Kingdoms Of the Earth That are In the Grip Of war And especially At this Time We remember Yet again The Ukraine And the Devastation That is Wrought In that Country We cannot Comprehend What it Is like To Live Our Lives In the

[ 13 : 37 ] Shadow Of The bomb And the Bullet And the Devastation That is Wrought By a Wicked Enemy That has Devastating Power At their Disposer We ask Lord for Mercy And that Peace would Come By whatever Means And you are The God Of peace You are Speaking to Us even In the midst Of the Turmoils Of this World Where There are Kingdoms That have The Privileged Position Of being Able To supply Nourishment To A Starving World And yet They are So Intent On Fulfilling Their own Selfish Remit Even to The Extinction Of others Not only The blood Of those That they

Consider their Enemies On their Hands But also The blood Of the Starving Many Who are In the World We pray For Grace To Continue In prayer And to Remember That there Is a Throne Of grace Upon Which We can Rely And The one Awaiting Us There Can Answer Prayer Far More Than We Could Ever In Visage Asking We Ask Lord For Your Blessing On The Gospel To All Who Preach It And Proclaim It The World Over Especially Those Who Put Themselves In Jeopardy By Standing Out In The Face Of Those Who Are Opposed To Christ And His Gospel Remember Our own Congregations Within Our Communities And We Pray That You Would Pour Out Your Blessing Upon Us Not Because We Deserve It But Because Without You We Can

Do Nothing We Pray For Our Denomination As we Meet in General Assembly In the Future Days And we Ask That You Would Maintain Peace And Order And That You Would Sanctify All The Deliberations Of Those Engaged In Such An Activity Here Are Petitions On Behalf Of The Congregation Upon Young And Old Upon All The Activities Of The Congregation Limited As They May Be At The Present We Pray For A Widening Interest And Meaningful Application Of The Gospel Mandate In Hermits So The Word Of The Living God Would Touch More Lives And Encourage Those Who Are Yet To Be Numbered Amongst You People

To Cast Their Lot In With Them And Those Who Are Of That Numbered To Be Encouraged In Their Faith So That They May Live Out In A Practical Way In A Day That Is Dark And A Day That Is Indifferent To The Claims Of The Gospel Grant Your Blessing Upon Our Time Together Bless Your Word As It Is Read Cleanse From Sin In Jesus Name Amen You're Going To Hear God's Word As We Have It In The Second Epistle Of Paul To The Corinthians And We're Going To Read From Chapter 5 Chapter 5 Second Corinthians Chapter 5 For We Know That If Our Earthly House Of This Tabernacle Were Dissolved We

Have A Building Of God And House Not Made With Hands Eternal In The Heavens For In This We Grown Earnestly Deciding To Be Clothed Upon With Our House Which Is From Heaven If So Be That Being Clothed We Shall Not Be Found Naked For We That Are In This Tabernacle To Grown Being Burdled Not For That We Would Be Unclothed But Clothed Upon That Mortality Might Be Swallowed Up Of Life Now He That Hath Wrought Us God Who Also Hath Given Unto Us The Earnest Of The Spirit Therefore We Are Always Confident Knowing That Whilst We Are At Home In The Body We Are Absent From The Lord For We Walk By Faith Not By Sight We Are Confident I Say And Willing Rather To Be Absent From The Body And To Be Present With The Lord Wherefore

[ 18 : 40 ] We Labor That Whether Present Or Absent We May Be Accepted Often For We Must All Appear Before The Judgment Seat Of Christ That Everyone May Receive The Things Done In His Body According To That He Hath Done Whether It Be Good Or Bad Knowing Therefore The Terror Of The Lord We Persuade Men But We Are Made Manifest Unto God And I Trust Also Are Made Manifest In Your Consciences For We Commend Not To Ourselves Again Unto You But Give You Occasion To Glory On Our Behalf That You May Have Some More To Answer Them Which Glory In Appearance And Not In Heart For Whether We Be Beside Ourselves It Is To God Or Whether We Be Sober It Is For Your Cause For The Love Of Christ Constrain Us Because We Thus Judge That If One Died For All Then Were

All Dead 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 Wherefore Henceforth Know We Know Man After The Flesh Yea Though We Have Known Christ After The Flesh Yet Now Henceforth Know We Him No More Therefore If Any Man Be In Christ He Is A New Creature All Things Are Passed Away Behold All Things Are Become New And All Things Are Of God Who Hath Reconciled Us To Himself By Jesus Christ And Hath Given To Us The Ministry Of Reconciliation To To Whith That God Was In Christ Reconciling The World Unto Himself Not Imputing Their Trespases Unto Them And Hath Committed Unto Us The Word Of Reconciliation Now Then We Are

Ambassadors For Christ As Though God Did Beseech You Bounce We Pray You In Christ Dead Be He Reconciled To God For He Hath Made Him To Be Sin For Us Who You No Sin That We Might Be Made The Righteousness Of God In Him Amen And May The Lord At His Blessing Through Reading Of His Word And To His Name Be Praise Just a word To The Boys And Girls Before You Go Out To Sunday School I'm Sure That You Know That There's A Special Lady In The Congregation Here And She Would Be With

Me And Everybody Else In The Congregation Are Wishing Her Birthday A Very Blessed Birthday There are Many Things I Suppose This lady Could Speak About In Her Life But But One Thing I Was Was That The Biggest Thing That Was In Her Life Was Christ She Loves Her Family Very Much I Know That And Everybody Who Belongs To Her Family She Loves She Loves She Loves The Lord Jesus Christ And She Is Always Thankful For The Things That Christ Has Brought Into Her Life That Thankfulness Is Really Something That Is Very Precious Just Out Of Curiosity I Googled The Date I Think It's The 24th Of May 19 22

Which Was The Day She Was Born And You Know That The World Doesn't Change An Off Lot One Of The Headlines For That Day Was That There Are Troubles In Northern Ireland Or In Ireland There Is Civil War There Nothing Changes There Is Still Lockerheads And That's The Way The World Is There Are Wars And There Are Rumors Of Wars And We're Thankful That The God Who Is Over The World Even Though There Are Changes And There Are Things That Don't Change He Certainly Doesn't Change And The Thankfulness That Is In The Heart Of A Believer Is Something That Should Always Remain The Same And I Read A Story And It's A Very Simple Story And Maybe You're Somebody Who Knows A Christian And You Say Well What Kind Of Person Is A Christian

[ 23 : 57 ] And You Look At Them And You Want To Find Out Would I Be Wanting To Be A Christian Would I Want To Be A Christian Would I Want To Be Like Them And There Was This Christian Man And One Thing That Was True About Him Was That He Was Always Praising The Lord He Was Always Thankful To God For Everything That God Gave To Him And He Didn't He Wasn't Embarrassed About Telling People About That And This Day He Went To The Butcher Shop And He Bought Himself A Steak For His Tea And He Was Looking Forward To Having The Steak For His Tea But On The Way Home He Bent Down To Tie His Shoelaces And He Put The Steak Down Beside Him And What Happened Well A Rogue Dog Came Along And Picked Up The Steak

And Ran Off With It And Who Happened To Be Watching But One Of These People Who Always Wondered About This Person Was He Really As Honest As He Made Himself Out To Be Was He Really As As Thankful Always As He Appeared To Be So He Went Straight Up To As He Just Saw The Dog Running Down The road Are Are Are Are Are You Thankful That The dog Went Away With Your Steak He Said Well He Said No I'm Not But I Am Thankful I've Still Got An Appetite There's A Wisdom There That That Is Perhaps More Deep Than We Take Note Of But There Are Many In This World And They Are Hungry And They Have An Appetite And They Will Never Get Fed To Meet That Appetite There Are Many In This World And

Because They Are Unwell And Because They Can't Abide Food They Won't Be Hungry Again They Can't Abide Food And He Was One Of These People Who Said Well I'm Thankful To God That I've Still Got An Appetite Even Though I Don't Have My Steak I Hope That God Will Enable Every One Of Us To Be Thankful To Him For Whatever Mercies Whatever Good Things That He Brings For The Good Things We Enjoy Every Day Of Our Life However Long Or However Short It Will Be We're Going To Sing As You Go Out To Sunday School Again From Psalm 84 We're Going To Sing The Remaining Verses Of Psalm 84 Verse 7 So They From Strength And Hear It Go Still Forward Unto Strength Until In Sion They Appear Before The Lord At Length

Lord God Of Hosts My Prayer Hear O Jacob's God Give Ear See God Our Shield Look On The Face Of Thine Anointed Dear For In Thy Courts One Day Exels A Thousand Rather In My God's House Will I Keep Adored And Dwell In Tents Of Sin For God The Lord A Son And Shield He'll Grace And Glory Give And Will Withhold No Good From Them That Uprightly Do Live O Thou That Art The Lord Of Hosts That Man Is Truly Blessed Who By Assured Confidence On The Alone Doth Rest These Verses 7 To 12 Psalm 84 So They They From Strength And Where It Go Still Forward Unto Strength To They From Strength And Way They Go

Still Forward Unto Strength Till Until In Zion They Appeal Before The Lord The Blame Lord God O Host I Pray ■ Nay 21 O Can Help Push vender Matt in Hazel God of sanctuary ■■■ Rock Cho into Serm kap Err I not only did he ever, but in thy courts on cases a thirst and wrath that in my gods that swear I keep a God that dwell in gentle sin.

[ 29 : 40 ] For God the Lord has sun and shield in grace and glory be given and where the hope of good from them that have made me to live.

For there you that are the light of force that man is taking place to buy I share confidence on thee, O Lord, the grace.

Let me turn once again to 2 Corinthians and chapter 5.

You can read at the beginning of the chapter. For we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

These words of the apostles do not stand alone.

[ 31 : 40 ] They are a follow-on from what he has already been speaking about. It's a continuation of a conversation that he has had with others.

In this epistle, clearly he is writing to others. John Calvin calls these words an amplification of what Paul has been discussing.

And if you go back to the previous chapter, you find there Paul speaking about himself and his experiences. And we can read at verse 7.

Chapter 4, verse 7. We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed.

We are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken. Cast down, but not destroyed. 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.

[ 33 : 01 ] For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Now these are just a few words that Paul has to say that are of a personal nature. They're more personal, perhaps, than he would normally refer to.

But, you know, sometimes we think because Paul is an apostle, we give him a place that dehumanizes him.

We need to guard against that. When we think about the Lord Jesus Christ, he is the God-man, and even then we tend to make little of his humanity because of the fact that he is always God.

That doesn't change. And because he is always God, we think that in his humanity that he is so different to our humanity that we can't really reconcile the two, that we can't even speak of the two as being in any way alike.

[ 34 : 28 ] Now, while that is true about the Lord Jesus, and you can understand why people might think like that, there's no reason for us to think about the apostle Paul as if he was a superman who doesn't hurt the way we hurt, who is not someone who bleeds.

If he is cut, he is not someone who is not wounded in spirit if somebody says nasty things about him. And Paul, as a preacher of the gospel, clearly had to endure many attacks on his passion, physically and spiritually, because he was the enemy of the prince of this world.

Satan was his nemesis and Satan didn't want anything that would extend the kingdom of Christ to go on. So Paul clearly would have been a target and he had to suffer much.

So when he thinks of his life in this world, Paul is not somebody who is in a cocoon, as it were, unaware of the sufferings of those who are in the world with him.

He suffers with them and he suffers alongside them in the shared experiences that they have. But one thing that we need to say, and there's a whole list of other things we could alert you to, that came into Paul's life as a result of him preaching the gospel.

[ 36 : 20 ] You know, he was beaten, he was at the brink of death in many of the situations he found himself in.

But one thing that sustains him through these experiences is the knowledge that he has that all of these things, however many there are of them, however much he despairs as a result of them, however hurt he is by them, he has an eye that goes beyond the present to the future.

And although he is aware of the frailty of the flesh that is his, and with the passage of time, he becomes frailer still.

Because inevitably, these things take their toll upon his body, upon his mind. The more he goes on, the more exposed he is to the enmity of the world and it affects him physically, it affects him mentally, it affects him spiritually.

And while there is an accumulative impact, he has a most positive outlook. Again, going back to chapter 4, he says, All things are for your sakes that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God, for which cause we faint not.

[ 38 : 06 ] But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

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.

Now these words are mysterious words to many people. It's as if he's making light of his sufferings, which is quite the contrary to what I've suggested.

That he's wearied by them, that he's exhausted by them, that he's pained by them, that he is suffering, genuine suffering. But Paul is saying they're light afflictions.

So how can the two things be reconciled? Well, as far as Paul is concerned, his light afflictions are just that, because he's looking beyond the world that he lives in.

[ 39 : 17 ] He's looking beyond the experiences of this world to better experiences, things that God has promised. And that gives him a very positive outlook.

So there are three things we can think of. I mean, these words, as I've said, they're placed in a situation where there are continuations of what he has said before.

And what he has to say about it will continue down into this chapter. But our focus will be on verse 1 in particular.

And three things that we can mention from this chapter. First of all, the faith that gives Paul that certainty.

For he says, we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved. That knowledge that Paul possesses allows him to view what is present in the light of what is future.

[ 40 : 28 ] And even though the knowledge of the present is what must have, the future reality that Paul has before him gives him the confidence to look at the present in the light of that.

And that light makes it all possible to speak of it positively. The second thing that we can look at is the description that he gives to, well, I suppose we have to call it the description that he gives to the body.

We know, he says, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved. So, he is speaking about the physical frame that is Paul the Apostle.

And he describes it as an earthly house, a tabernacle that is going to be dissolved. And then he has this future grasp, or the grasp of what is the future, the certainty which is the future state that will be fulfilled in his experience.

Now, the way we know of Paul is not wishful thinking. many people have a view of the future and the best thing you can say about it is that they have this hope that whatever it is that lies beyond this world, common sense tells them that their time in this world is hedged.

[ 42 : 30 ] They can go back to the birth that marks their time in the world. And there is this point in the future which everyone is going to.

And they know that point is there although they don't know where it is. but they want to think that beyond that point there is something else.

Now, some quite evidently don't want to think of anything beyond that point. And their attitude is let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.

In other words, everything we do has got to be done in this world. And nothing lies beyond it anyway. So we might as well enjoy ourselves. We might as well do the best we can.

And some people can think of that in ways where they want to do good in the world. And they say, well, my time here would be positive in that sense.

[ 43 : 37 ] I want to leave my mark. I want to do things that others will benefit from once I've gone. And they're to be applauded for that.

But they're wrong. They're wrong because the Bible says that they're wrong. And I would rather trust what the Bible says than their opinion of what may or may not happen.

The Bible explanation for our life is there for all to read. But it tells us that our time here will ultimately lead us to a point where we must give an account to God for what we have done in the flesh.

We read it. We read it in the chapter here that we read together. Chapter 5. We are told that the day will come where we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

That everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad. That's what the Bible says. That's what Paul says.

[ 45 : 01 ] That it's not all going to end abruptly when we draw our last breath. Beyond that there is something very deliberate something very obvious going to happen.

Every person will appear in the presence of God to answer to God. So that puts that idea of thinking that everything comes to an end or death.

Now it's a contradiction. You may hold it and nobody can take it from you. But what I would say to you, if that's what you think, if that's the view that you possess, that this is your hope, that the day that death takes you from here will be the day when the book is closed, your life is at an end, and that's the end of it.

Well, believe that if you will, you will be surprised to find yourself standing before Christ to answer to him on the day of judgment.

And Paul is not alone in stating this. Christ, Jesus, the Lord, tells us that the day will come when he will be involved and when he will separate the sheep from the goats, when he will be instrumental in determining what?

[ 46 : 35 ] Determining the future, what lies beyond death for all. And that's what the Bible brings to our attention. That's just one line of thinking, if you like.

There are others, and they're positive in the sense that, well, you know, this world, I believe, I'm only going to be in it for a while, but then I'm going to go to heaven, I'm going to a better place.

There's a God, and God has said that once this life is lived, then what lies beyond the grave is better for everyone.

And they have some crumb of theology which suggests to them that everyone is in the same boat, be they believer or unbeliever.

You know, over the last number of days, I've found myself cringing just thinking about, especially with regard to football, I love my football, I love watching it, but, you know, listening to people say that so and so is looking down from above, and, you know, he's celebrating with us, or he's sharing this moment with us, or he's rejoicing with us, or he's raising a glass on our behalf in celebration for our human achievements.

[ 48 : 23 ] of the world. But the problem is that's what a lot of people believe, and it's a mishmash of corrupt theology or no theology at all, which dismisses what God is saying in his word, dismisses entirely that our lives lived in this world mean something, and our relationship with Christ is central to how we live in our lives in this world, and if we don't have that relationship, then that will determine the life that we lead beyond the grave, and it will be a life, it will be a living, it will be an enjoyment, it will be a fulfilment, which we cannot have or enjoy in this world.

Jesus Christ has given to his believing people a hope that stretches beyond this world, and the believer's hope is grounded upon the promises that Christ has made, the promises that are contained within the word of God, and if your hopes are grounded on that, then you have every right to say, I know what lies beyond this world, I know what waits for me, I know what I'm going to enjoy in that world, in that eternity into which I am going to be ushered.

The apostle is one of that number, his hope is firmly grounded in the unshakable promises of God's word, and it is a word that helps him deal with all kinds of problems and difficulties, and enables him to help others as they deal with their own trials and difficulties.



I mentioned John Calvin, and I'll just quote you what Calvin says with regard to Paul's approach. knowledge, that Paul's approach and Paul's experience, can only be attributed to one thing.

He says, this is a knowledge that does not spring from the human intellect, but takes its rise from the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Some unbelievers may have some idea of the immortality of the soul, but there is not one of them that have an assurance of it.

[ 51 : 18 ] Believers alone can affirm this to whom it is testified by the word of God and the Spirit of God. God. And that's where Paul's I know comes from.

Now the second thing we have is this, that on one level that there is an inescapable fact that you, every one of you cannot dispute.

dispute. Don't care who you are or what kind of attitude you have to life or to living or even to death.

You know there is death in the world. You know that every one of us will die and that you are numbered amongst that number. Death is something that appears to await us all.

now I think that has to be understood in the sense in which Paul is talking about here because there is a caveat in what he says if you like.

[ 52 : 35 ] For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved it's as if Paul is saying oh we're not all going to die.

And that's indeed what he is saying we're not all going to die. But he understands that death is imminent for all.

And that Eve has to be understood in light of this understanding. The body he says will die and return to the dust.

Paul's view of this is not merely the voice of a pragmatist who knows this to be beyond avoidance.

We can all have a pragmatic view of this. He says well just take a walk down to Dalmore and the stones there will speak to me and they'll tell me and I can't deny what the stones are saying to me.

[ 53 : 43 ] The stones are saying to me here lies the body of my mother, my father, my sister, my brother, my grandfather. they tell you, they speak to you, mind you, this is where we are in a world that is a rail of tears.

But Paul's view is the view of a man who knows what man is. He is a resident of an earthly house, a tabernacle, a tent.

The body is the house, the soul is the resident. And as one of the older Christian preachers said, it is an earthly house, a mud wall house, patched up of earth.

Or even as Paul the tent maker sees it, a tent weaker still ready to be folded up. Maybe that's why Paul used this analogy.

this illustration. That was his trade. He was a maker of tents. So he knew what the tent was made of.

[ 55 : 03 ] He was a master at his trade, but still he knew that that tent that he spent so much time sewing together, it was flimsy, it was perishable, it would soon give way to another.

And its fragility belies the belief that many have in it, and yet because it is weak and insecure, it is open to be abrooted or supplanted at any moment.

Just as Job of old described his own day, he says, this vessel of clay, this thing that I see around me that I am part of, it is just dust.

It is clay sitting in the dust. I think that's an amazing description of the human body, clay sitting in the dust.

First evening we spoke about man created in the image of God from the dust of the ground and the curse that came upon him was that he would return to the dust from which God gave him, from which God took.

[ 56 : 26 ] The apostle Peter writes the following, yea, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance.

Peter sees himself as being in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me.

Peter's burden was to preach the gospel merely as a tent dweller himself, two tent dwellers who would put off this tent as he must.

And that's the truth. Paul calls this putting off a dissolving, which is itself interesting.

I found this quite fascinating the way that theologians try to unravel what the apostles is wanting us to understand by this.

[ 57 : 38 ] If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, now, it's the house that's going to be dissolved, and not Paul.

because Paul, the same as you and I, we are made up of body and soul. The tabernacle is merely the residence of the soul.

It's a tent in which the soul dwells, and death comes, and the soul takes its leave of the residence, and returns to God who gave it.

The tent is dissolved, but the soul goes on into the presence of God. We indicated the caveat that Paul has, and Peter has, that Jesus, if he comes, will not allow the body to be dissolved, dissolved, because judgment will intervene.

The bodies that are in the grave will rise, but those who are alive at the coming of Jesus will meet him, and be met by him. Otherwise, this is how it will be, death will come.

[ 59 : 05 ] But first, the folding of the tent, the tearing down of the clay, and then for the believer, something far better. That's the second part of this, or the third part, I suppose, the future state of those who have faith in Christ.

Now, some have looked at this, and we have a building of God, and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, and they've understood these words to be speaking about the resurrection body of the believer, this house made with hands.

But that's not, I don't think that's what Paul has in mind here, because what Paul is describing is something that will be the experience of the believer before the resurrection.

resurrection. He goes on to speak about the resurrection, what the resurrection will bring, but the reformed teaching, anyway, and even those who are reformed believers, contradict that teaching and what they say about these words.

That Paul is referring to the glorified state of the believer, believer. But the glorified state of the believer can only become their experience after the resurrection.

[ 60 : 42 ] But meantime, the dwelling place will be torn down, the tent will be folded, the tabernacle will be dissolved, and the soul will be in the building of God, and house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Jesus didn't say to the thief on the cross, today you will be with me in paradise, and not mean it. He didn't say today, and by this I mean the today of the resurrection.

No, he said today you will be with me in paradise, and he wasn't putting a space of time between what the thief was going to enjoy.

Instantly, when death took away his life, the body would become the tabernacle that was being dissolved, but the soul would be with Christ.

The soul would be in the company of God. God. Now, just by saying this doesn't mean that Paul is explaining this to us, or describing to us what the experience is. But it is stating a fact.

[ 62 : 05 ] This is how it is going to be. We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Jesus taught his disciples, I go to prepare a place for you, he says, in my father's house there are many mansions, there are many rooms if you want a modern translation.

That place is prepared for you, and you will occupy it as soon as death takes you away from this world.

You are not going to have a soul sleep, you are not going to purgatory, you are not going to an experience that the Bible has yet to describe to you. the description is here for us, we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

That's where the believer goes, and that's what the believer will experience and enjoy. A house that will remain eternally, there's going to be a change, and I think this is where I really find it so wonderful, you know, something that you're trying to understand.

What is it going to be like for this disembodied soul? Because that's what it is. The souls, let me read to you the words of the shorted catechism, the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory, and their bodies being still united to Christ to rest in their graves until the resurrection.

[ 63 : 56 ] The graves will hold the body, the dust that is continually mingling with the dust. It will remain in the dust, but still united to Christ.

And in this day that Christ is speaking of, in this day that Paul is looking forward to, where the graves will open, the resurrection will take place, the soul that is in glory will join with the body, and the body will be in glory with the soul.

And that's a wonder for me, what that is going to be like, when that which is dust will be raised, and the soul that is now in glory will unite with the body, and the imperfections of life in this world will that have so affected the believer in the world, that have so benighted their experience of life in the world, that have so burdened their experience of being a Christian in the world, they will be at an end.

And Paul writes the following, Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned, likened to his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

A vile body, changed, changed so that it is now Christ-like in its fullness. Oh, we know, Paul says, we know, I believe this with all my heart, this is what the Bible I read daily tells me, this is what the word of God that is spread to my soul teaches me.

[ 66 : 06 ] This is how I'm able to live my life in this world without this world getting the better of me. You know, not everyone shares this conviction.

Even Christians, they struggle with this truth. You know, I remember meeting some people and they had a strong faith. They had a strong faith and their faith enabled them to live their life and they despised people who didn't have a strong faith.

Well, despise may be too strong a word, but they thought they were weak Christians because they didn't have their strong faith. faith. And yet, when it came to it, there came a point in their life where their faith wasn't as strong as it once was or as they believed it to be.

The closer they got to the finality of death, they trembled and they were afraid and they were in turmoil. I think a story that's told about one such person is that, you know, he lived his life and he longed to die.

That was the story. He was longing for the day that he would die and he burdened his neighbours and he burdened his friends because they thought, I can't be anything of a Christian if I can't live my life like this person.

[ 67 : 52 ] This person wants to be out of this world. This person wants to die. And yet, when it came to his deathbed, he was the exact opposite and I neighbour of his who had no sense of God, no sense of faith or anything like that.

He just looked at this person and his words was, poor man, he would have given the world to die and in death he would have given the world to live, which appeared to him to be a contradiction.

because he was saying one thing but when it all came down to it, it wasn't what he was saying. Paul knows and his knowledge is based on the fact of God's word and the truth that he believes in.

He can explain to you what happens when you die, when I die. sometimes we are overtaken by sudden death.

Sometimes we are eyewitnesses to it. When we see somebody who is in apparent good health dropping down in our presence and we don't see the disintegration that takes place in the lives of others when the frailty of old age and the illness and disease that riddles the body from time to time takes place.

[ 69 : 40 ] Sometimes it's easier for us to reconcile what Paul is saying to that experience than it is to the one of sudden death. But what Paul is saying is this, however death comes, it will come.

And for the believer they can understand that God has provision for them because of what Christ has done.

That's what he believes and that's what the gospel encourages us to believe. That it's not improper for us to mourn the death of loved ones who are Christian.

It's not improper for us to do because we suffer loss. We are parted from them. Our hearts are heavy.

That's our experience. But their experience differs to ours. As we quoted the Catechism, the souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness.

[ 70 : 54 ] they do immediately pass into glory. That immediate experience of glory is the immediate experience of an unhindered access to the person of Jesus Christ.

An unhindered access to the glories of being in his company with others who share the same longings and desires that they had in this world now being fully realized.

your experience, their experience, is so different. Would you say to them, don't go, I want you to save me from my grief.

I want you to, I'd rather go first, so that I won't have this pain, I won't have this loss. but where you have faith, where you have belief in God's word, hopefully you understand that what Paul is saying here is true.

We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. That's what he longs for.

[ 72 : 15 ] But he is in God's hands, he is in the hands of Christ, to continue in this world, to continue in this body, to struggle on, as sometimes it must be, for whatever reason.

You know, this perplexes many people. I've said it to you before, just remember, it came before my mind somebody, a minister, who had terminal cancer, he had cancer of the spine, he had a retired man, and he was in constant pain, and yet he had to go on through that and he saw a younger minister cut down in his early 40s and he says, why?

Why did God do that? Why did God leave me and not him? to us it doesn't make sense, but it's the wisdom of God, it's the will of God, and it's the glory of God, and while it may be for one person that they are kept back from that glory temporarily, it is temporarily, it may be something they have to endure, but beyond that endurance is the fulfilment of God's word, and that's what the believer is entitled to believe, and that is what is God's way of encouraging us to live our lives for his glory in the world, knowing that what is beyond our time, now, is already explained to us by

God, and make us that understanding, let's pray, help us, oh God, to know that there are those in the world who are even now, seeing the dissolution of their tent, this frail tabernacle being folded before their very eyes, but at that moment where that is completed, they must continue, but then they know that God will bring them to be with himself, which is better by far.

Hear our prayers on their behalf, and on our own, in Jesus' name, Amen. We're singing from Psalm 45, the first version of the psalm, verse 13, and we'll sing to the end, Behold, the daughter of the king, all glorious is within, and with embroideries of gold, her garments wrought have been, she shall be brought unto the king, in robes, with needle wrought, her fellow virgins following, shall unto thee, be brought to the end of the psalm, Behold, the daughter of the king.

[ 75 : 36 ] Behold, the daughter of the king, your bloke, is within, and with them, the bride, the east of gold, her garments brought her pain, she shall be brought unto the king, in robes with needle rod, her fellow virgin following, shall enter thee, be brought, they

They shall be brought with blackness, great and birth on every side.

And the father of the king and the father of the king.

Instead of those thy father fear, thy children thy mistake.

And in the places of the earth, they know the fences make.

[ 78 : 05 ] Thy name remembered I will be.

To each of us ought to be. The people there forevermore shall praise us.

Give to thee. Amen.