

'This world is not our home'

Text- 2 **Corinthians 5: 1-10**

"For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. ² Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, ³ because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.

⁴ For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

⁵ Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

⁶ Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷ For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

⁹ So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad".

I was thinking about the funeral service last week of May. We believe she was going **home** to be with the Lord (the same for all Christian's who are in Christ) But I was particular taken by the words of the song of Edwin's we sang. 'This world is not our home' we shall sing it later but here are some of the words:

'This world is not my home my home is in heaven were just strangers passing through - our destination is secure' It started me thinking of our home here on earth and our final home in heaven.

I think we all could say we are all blessed to have a place we can call home, a place where we can rest our heads tonight in relative warmth and security. We know there are many who are not in this position, who simply do not have this basic necessity in life, a place to call home. We should remember the homeless in our prayers and thank God everyday for what He has blessed us with.

The **word home** is one of the sweetest and tenderest in the English language. If I was to say to you what does this word **home** mean to you? I would expect to hear only positive statements. Statements like 'I feel secure there', 'I'm safe there'. 'I can relax and be myself there'.

Your home is often the place to take shelter amidst the difficulties of life. The feeling of the definite assurance of a roof over your head is priceless.

Yet Gods word tells us for those who are Christians; **this is not our home.**

Heb 13:14 “For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our everlasting home in heaven”

Philippians 3:20 “For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ”

In **I Peter 2:10** Peter says that Christians are "*pilgrims and strangers*" in this world. It couldn't be clearer.

I was thinking about the various homes we owned or lived in over our lifetime, do you ever think, like me, who lives in that place now? And who lived there before you? If the house is old enough it may have housed 10 – 20 different families since it was built.

The home we are in now, I could say with some certainty (Unless the Lord returns) that it will certainly outlive me, and 30 years from now, somebody else will be living in it - they say that 3 generations living in the same house is unheard of today.

The truth is; we may think we own our house, but we don't really, we are just 'sitting tenants' and we just take temporary possession of it.

And that's the first thing I want to say on our subject this morning: this world we live in and everything in it **are just TEMPORARY** - Everything in our world is temporary.

Definition of temporary is; 'lasting for only a limited period of time; not permanent'

I was thinking about the slogans you get today, have you seen them? There on T shirts, wrist bands, and they boldly say statements like; 'forever friends' 'forever 21' 'our love will last forever' the truth is; **nothing in this world lasts forever.**

If you think of the cycle of life and death in nature, the seasons come and go, leaves and buds come to life in the spring and then fall and die off in the autumn.

James says; "*what is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes*" (James 4:14)

I remember when I started my last Job. I was the only one of the new starters who had a permanent contract, everybody else was temporary. But it meant nothing! I was made redundant within 3 years.

The truth is for us as Christians however; we can take great comfort in the **temporary nature** of our existence here on earth.

Whether your pain is chronic or occasional - **it is temporary**

Whether your trouble is self induced or you're a victim - **it's temporary**

Whether your hardships and circumstances are emotional, mental or physical - they **are temporary**. It will all pass away.

2 Corinthians 4:17

*“This light and **temporary** nature of our suffering is producing for us an everlasting weight of glory, far beyond any comparison”*

So this morning I would like to pick up on 3 **danger signs** where we may be tied up too much in this world.

Firstly where is your heart? The old adage say's 'home is where your heart is' I would say that is true in our walk of faith.

They say the heart is the most important organ in the body, because the heart carries and pumps blood and other necessities to various parts of the body. Without the workings of the heart, multiple other organs would fail.

But there is far more to the heart than that! **Spiritually it is of key importance**. The heart is at the seat of your affections your emotions. It reveals your wants and desires and what is most important to you.

Is your heart more attracted to the things of this world or the next? Well it becomes immediately apparent every time you open your mouth!

Luke 4:45 says; *“Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.”*

You can tell a great deal about the heart, a person's inner thoughts and motivations from what comes out of the mouth - our conversations.

Is what comes out of your mouth more about this world or the next? Spiritual things or earthly things? I'm not saying we should have our 'heads so far up in the clouds to be of no earthly good'

But what the bible says is clear about this - what comes out of your mouth should be an indicator where your heart is; - A heart that's committed to His ways.

Eph 4:29

“Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear”.

Colossians 4:6

“Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

Secondly another danger is: Are you 'too comfortable in your own skin'? People who are comfortable in their own skin often feel like they have 'got it all sussed' they have it all together - they have arrived. That can lead to complacency and even arrogance.

I think it is more accurate for the Christian to be 'uncomfortable in their own skin'. We haven't 'got it all sorted, we haven't arrived yet, were not cool and sophisticated.' In fact scripture says 'God takes the weak things of the world to shame the wise' (1 Corinthians 1:27)

And how can you really be comfortable in this world, with the world, the flesh and the devil against you?

The Apostle Paul says this: *Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.* (2 Corinthians 4:16)

He also says from our reading; 'meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling'.

Do you realise you're 'wasting away, but being renewed day by day'? - are you groaning for a new body? to be with the Lord? Do you feel out of place here? If you are, **it's a good sign you are a Christian.**

I've said it before this teaching, with the mantra 'you can have pie in the sky and cake on your plate while you wait' hasn't been my experience. They give the idea that you can 'float around on some happy cloud all day long'! Without any trouble at all.

Don't get me wrong, I believe you can experience blessings, joy, healing in the here and now. But what I am saying is; while on this earth 'we have a treasure in jars of clay' (2 Corinthians 4:7)

We should never be too comfortable this side of heaven. It's the 'narrow road' after all, it's the place where we 'take up the cross and deny ourselves'. The truth is; if you are too comfortable and if you're a true Christian, it won't last!! There will always some trial awaiting you around the corner.

I do believe God puts a 'thorn in our flesh' often in some form or other to keep our mind on heaven.

3. Thirdly and finally - are you holding the things of this world too tightly?

We are told to hold things loosely as disciples of Jesus, we cling to Jesus alone. We hold everything else loosely.

And I mean everything! It is hard for us who are married to realise our partners are only for this life. Jesus says there will be no marriage in heaven (Matt 22:30)

There is no doubt, we shall see our loved ones in glory, but like everything in this world our relationships are not permanent. We should 'still love with all our heart' but recognise the Lord has given them to us just for this life, as a blessing, but also as temporary thing.

Each of us have things we find hard to let go off, to surrender to Him, but the truth is, if we have something we are not willing to surrender, to give over to God, it could become an idol. Something that distracts us from our purpose for God.

I have found in my own life, many times, I have had to give up something that was beginning to control my heart, distract me from my first love. Things like the news, football.

The danger is; if we continue with these things we will drift further away from God, He may even teach us the error of this, the hard way! As He is a jealous God and won't share us with anyone or anything.

Just to conclude with a few things about our heavenly home. The Bible doesn't tell us too much about heaven but enough to thrill us!

1 Corinthians 2:9 Paul wrote, *"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."*

And in Revelation 21:10-11 John describes heaven as the holy city, Jerusalem: *"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal."*

And the invitation to make heaven your home is open to all - everyone is welcomed at Christ's home, nobody is turned away, Jesus said *'knock and the door will be opened to you' seek and you will find.* (Matt 7:7-8)

But don't leave it too late!

D. L. Moody told a story about a rich man who was dying:

"There was a man who had great wealth. He was dying. When the doctor told him he could not live, the lawyer was sent for to make out his will. The dying man had a little girl who was about four years old. She did not understand what death meant.

But when her mother told her that her father was going away, the little child went to the bedside and looked into her father's eyes and asked, "Papa, have you got a home in that land you are going to?"

The question sunk deep into the man's soul, for he had spent his time and energy accumulating great wealth. In this life he enjoyed a grand home, but now he had to leave it".

We will all have to leave our earthly home one day. Make sure you have a heavenly home to go to.

Amen

Tony Troy

20.06.2022