

Sermon: A Fresh Start

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:1-6:2

Discussion Questions:

- Paul begins this chapter by comparing our earthly bodies to living in a tent.
 - Read Acts 18:1-3. Discuss the connection between what Paul did “for a living” with the comparison he makes regarding our bodies.
 - Is a tent a good metaphor for our earthly body? Why or why not?
 - Discuss the time, effort and attention that is paid in our culture to the care and upkeep of our bodies. What lengths do people go to in order to keep their bodies from aging or showing the signs of aging? Is this appropriate? Is there a line that can be crossed between what is appropriate and what is obsessive—and where is that line? Do people actually worship the human body...or make idols out of these things that Paul calls “a tent”? In what ways?
- What does it mean to “groan” in our earthly tent? (v. 4) What do you think Paul means when he describes the fact that, one day, we will be clothed with our heavenly dwelling?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in our salvation? (v. 5)
- Verse 7 is an often-quoted verse: “We live by faith, not by sight.” What does this mean? How do we do this? Discuss some very practical ways that we can live this truth out in our lives.
- Read aloud verse 10 and talk about the implications this truth ought to have in our choices. What do you think many people plan to say when they stand before God to be judged?
- In weeks past, we’ve been discussing the many criticisms that the people in Corinth have against Paul. How is verse 13 another example of this?
- What is Paul’s motive for doing what he does? (v. 14) What does Christ’s love compel you to do?
- What happens to a person when they trust Christ, and receive the Holy Spirit? (vv. 16-17)
- What does it mean that each of us as believers are “given the ministry of reconciliation”? (v. 18)? Do you really believe that this is true of you? Isn’t being a Christian really more about gathering with other Christians for a few hours a week and singing together and hearing a sermon and giving a tithe? How is verse 18 basically the complete opposite of this notion of what it means to be a Christian? How in the world can we be “a minister of reconciliation” to the many people around us who have no interest in God?
- Discuss what you understand the Gospel to be (If someone says “what is the Gospel?”—what would you say?). How do verses 19-21 compare with what you understand the Gospel to be? Do you feel comfortable sharing the Gospel with others? Have you ever? Why or why not?