

# A Building

by Robert B. Thompson

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*The great hope of the Christian life is resurrection, and we are being made into a new creation, a life-giving spirit, through a process of transformation that requires our participation.*

**Duration:** 1:18:00

**Scripture:** Isaiah 12:3, Ezekiel 47:3-9, John 7:38

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Resurrection Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being a minister of the word of God. He describes the process of becoming a life-giving spirit through death to self and entering the rest of God. The preacher explains that this transformation allows believers to serve others, not to show off their spiritual muscles, but to genuinely serve. He also highlights the idea that God gives believers a trial body to see how they will handle it, similar to a father giving his son progressively more powerful weapons. Ultimately, this trial body serves as a prototype for the resurrection, which represents the finished product.

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## Transcript

So that's a good attitude for us to take, because the mistake we make in life is to lay too much emphasis on our present existence, and our present existence is temporary, and the body that we have is not read up, not the best that God can do by any means. So it does us good to consider the fact that this body that we have in scripture regards as a jar of clay, you know, it's not very fancy at all, it's just a make-do for the time being, but it's nothing to clutch. When you get older it becomes more real, because your heart is full of vitality and adventure as you are when your body is younger.

So it's good to contemplate that this is only temporary, this is not what it's all about. When you get into nursing homes, it must be very hard to work as a nurse in a nursing home, because the average person really crumbles, it's a dissolving of life, and it becomes kind of messy. It must be hard, I've talked about it, hard it must be to work in a nursing home where people cry out incoherently, you know, help, help, and the nurses hear it so much they just walk by, they know the person is disoriented, and you know, it's just not the greatest, and that's what happens to our body, it just dissolves, it's only temporary, it's a jar of clay.

And so the great hope of the Christian life is what? Resurrection, not heaven, resurrection, resurrection, we want another body, we want a better body, and so I think what God has done is, what could we compare it to in life? He's given us, Mark you come up with something, he's given us a trial body to see what we're going to do with it. Huh? Prototype, right, and I'm thinking of a prototype, and more than that,

I'm thinking of something that is given to us like a man, you know, lived in the Midwest, might give his son a pop gun until he saw what he's going to, before he gave him a BB gun, a BB gun before he gave him a .22, and a .22 before he gave him a .30-30 or a .30-06, it's kind of that thing, it's not only a prototype, it's to see what we're going to do. It's to see what we're going to do.

Now that tells us something, doesn't it? That tells us something about the resurrection, and what is it? You have to speak loud, because my head is still stuffed up. What does it tell us about the resurrection? Well, it's very important. Yes, and in logical, and it'd be like if he gives you the pop gun and you spend all day popping the chickens, you're not going to get a BB gun.

You're not ready for it, and so that has real meaning as to how we behave ourselves, because we're going to get what we're suited for, and it is, as Peggy says, it is a reward, and it is also a consequence, and it is also a fitting, a fitting, you know, if we're brutal, and disobedient, and careless, and lazy, and whatever, God isn't going to give us a tremendous body of glory like Christ. I mean, this is ridiculous. This would be like, I mean, all the kid has ever done is messed up, and then you find out he's ready now for a .30-06. Hey, whoa, that's stupid, that's stupid.

When you gave him something when he couldn't really hurt much, you know, just scare the chickens, and he abused it, kept on abusing it, you're not going to trust him with anything else. He's not ready for it. It isn't that you don't love him, it's just that he's not suitable, not suitable to give him a BB gun.

You're going to hurt somebody. You're going to kill the chickens. So, that's what it's all about, people.

That's what it's all about. And we're, God is looking at us every day to see what we're going to do. And see, we don't want a body like this.

I mean, who would want a body like this, when so much is available? You know, it's like wanting a bike when luxury cars are available, you know, it's stupid. There's much more. When you look at, in Revelation 1.13, if you want to turn to that, now evidently Jesus was nothing, there's no comment in the New Testament, in the Gospels, that there was anything significant about Jesus' looks.

There's not one mention that he was tall, short, fat, thin, muscular, emaciated, anything. I don't know what color hair he had. Big ears, small ears, there was nothing to distinguish him.

He's just an ordinary dude. When they looked at him, those that didn't like him, they weren't impressed. You know, I've got anything from out of Galilee.

This is a carpenter's son. He's imposing. But when you get to Revelation 1.13, look at that.

And among the lampstands was someone like a son of man. He looked something human, dressed in a robe, reaching down to his feet with a golden sash around his chest. His head and hair were white like wool as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire, his feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters.

In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun, shining in all its brilliance. So he must have been huge, huge.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Now, that was nothing like that when Jesus walked around in Galilee. He had a body that was commensurate with his inward nature, with what he was, the

high priest of God.

And so who'd want a body that's weary and, you know, trudging along the heat of Jerusalem, sweat pouring off you, dog tired, cold during the night, hot during the day, when you could have something like this. See, this is the reward. It isn't just to be in another place.

It's what you're clothed in. This is what we're in. See, this is what we're going for.

And you can't, you can't con it. You can't con it, because you get what you're suited for. Like the kid that's popping at the chickens, he could go into his dad and say, you know, I really want a BB gun.

I'll be real nice to my dad, and I'll, you know, sweep up around the house, and I'll be nice to my mother, nice to my sister, and I'll do real good, and God will, and Dad will give me a BB gun. Well, it's nothing to do with how nice you are. It's, it's if you're popping the chickens.

That's what God is. How are you going to handle a gun? That's what God wants to know. How are you going to handle yourself? And so it isn't a case of love or mercy or conning the situation or earning points.

It's a case of what you're going to do if I entrust you with something that's supremely powerful. And so that's really the issue, isn't it? I mean, you can get sidetracked on Kosovo and any number of things, but the issue is what kind of a body you're building, because you've got 80 years in this one. Perhaps you've got a long time in the new one.

You've got a long time in the new one. So even if you suffer, even if you went through life blind, deaf, dumb, and paraplegic, you're still only talking about maybe 60 years. A person not disabled probably wouldn't have lasted that long.

But what you're coming up on the other side is eternal. I mean, there's no end to it. And it's what you are.

Because people judge us by our appearance, don't they? And of course we know that's wrong and you don't judge a book by its cover, but we do now. When we say that's Henry, we're not talking about his inward nature. We're talking about his body.

And so what we're going to be, unlike now when the outward doesn't show the inward, the outward will show the inward, and that'll be what we are. And when we see Henry, boy, that will be all Henry, for better or for worse. So it's a real significant issue.

It should determine every decision we make every day. And as I say, you cannot con it. It's not a case of grace or mercy.

It's a case of sowing and reaping. Absolute fairness and righteousness of God, because to give someone a body that is not appropriate for their inward nature would be just, it would just be destruction in the kingdom. It would just be nuts.

Absolutely. Like turning a kid loose with a .30-06 when he's ill-tempered and given the fits of anger and is disobedient and wayward. It would just be crazy.

Okay. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God. So that's what Audre was bringing up.

So that no matter how God uses us, people will recognize it's not us, but God. So it's a body of humbling that we have. It's a body to humble us and keep us in our place.

And then he goes on and he explains the consequence of this. We are hard-pressed on every side. Now how many were hard-pressed today? Did you wonder what was going on? What is going on is that God is making you.

The way we are now, we haven't been made. We haven't been made. We come into this world like a little beep wherever she is.

It's just a body. There's nothing there. There's no experience.

It's the tabula rasa, so to speak. It's a blank slate. There's nothing there to work with.

And so a beep will be, I call her that because her name is so long. It's Breanne Elizabeth Alice Tan Tarrigan. To save time, I say beep.

Much shorter. You see, she's not made yet. She's not made yet.

So God has put her in a frail body, a jar of clay, so that he can make her what he wants her to be. Now this is very important because when you're hard-pressed, how you react will determine what is taking place, whether you're being made right or not. If people are pressing you, your boss for example, or your husband or wife, or your children, or whatever, a snotty clerk in a store or something, and you're being pressed.

Now if you react against the tool that God is using, whether it's circumstances or people, then you're being made wrong. Things aren't working right in your life. You are adding to your personality bitterness.

You're not being made. It's not working right. It's got messed up.

The gears aren't meshing correctly. The growth isn't going on. And so all these that you were pressed today are opportunities to be made.

Don't waste them. Don't waste one. Every one of those should be driving you to prayer.

Don't waste your time looking at the tools God uses. You may think people are hurting you deliberately, but they're not. They're not setting out, now let's see, now how can I mess up this person? That's not where it is.

They're being what they are and reacting to the whole history of their life, and there's no use cursing them. That's bad for you and bad for them. You go to God and you begin to pray, Lord I got fiery darts in me, I got a bonfire, and Lord you've got to put it out, you've got to extinguish it.

Because if you try to, you're going to get burned. So it's always driving you to prayer. So it's working for good.

It's working for good. All the time. All things work together for good to those who love God.

But every aspect of salvation, including the making of a new creation, and see this is in context with the verse about the new creation. The new creation is the next chapter, the 17th and 18th verses. This is in context with 2 Corinthians 3.18 about we're being transformed into his image, and it's in context with the

following chapter being made a new creation.

This is the making of the new creation. So as you're praying, every aspect of being made a new creation, and that's what salvation is. Salvation is moving you from Satan to God.

That's what it is. You start off born in sin, born in lawlessness. That's Satan.

And salvation is to save you from that into which you were born, and to bring you from Satan to God. So this is the process, the program of salvation. And every aspect, even though you are predestined to this, you are predestined through God's foreknowledge to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Even though you are predestined, and all things are working together for good, every aspect of it depends on your response. That's why you see such verses as add to yourself virtue, virtue and so on, to make your calling and election sure, and let no one take your crown. And what that's telling you is that it's your response to your calling that will determine what happens to you when the Lord comes.

It's always dependent on your response. That's the balance between predestination and human will. That's the balance between them.

We're predestined to be conformed to the image. Every member of the royal priesthood is predestined. But whether you end up glorified depends on your response.

You can blow the program. Otherwise you'd be a puppet, you see. God would just be doing it and you wouldn't be involved in it.

It's your response that creates the thing that God intends to clothe with eternal life. Does that make sense? Okay, notice what he says, we are hard-pressed, but we're not crushed. Now everybody in the world is hard-pressed.

The people being driven out of Kosovo are hard-pressed, but they're Muslims and they can be crushed. But we're not crushed. And why is that? Why are we not crushed? It's because we have in us the eternal life of God.

And that is not crushable. That's resurrection. It cannot be crushed.

And so the pressing presses us so that this life can increase. See, if we go to prayer when we're crushed, this life, this body and blood of Christ, this eternal life that is within us, increases. And so it is that pressing that is part of the process of making you a new creation.

Sure it's a thorn. Sure it comes from Satan, absolutely. Sure it's Satan that casts us into prison.

He always ends up doing us good, provided we respond by cleaving to the Lord. And when we do, our resurrection life is increased. Line upon line, command upon command, rule upon rule, here a little, there a little, that we might go forward and then fall backward and be broken and snared and taken.

We are in the program of being changed from one kind of humanity to another. The first humanity is Adam. The second humanity is a life-giving spirit.

That's in 1 Corinthians 15, probably 45. The first man, Adam, has made a living soul. It's the living soul that is the first prototype, temporary, testable kind of humanity.

It is not a permanent humanity. The second, what we're being made, oh I was 45, alright, bingo. The humanity that we're being made is not just a living spirit, but a life-giving spirit.

The royal priesthood comprises life-giving spirits. So can you see how the process of changing you must continue throughout your lifetime, because what you are in essence is being changed. You're being changed from one kind of humanity to another.

You can't jump from a living soul to a life-giving spirit by faith or grace or some sovereign act of God. It comes line upon line. It comes by dying and living and dying and living and dying and living.

Adam dies, Christ lives. Adam dies, Christ lives. Adam dies, Christ lives.

Now Christ is the tree of life. He is a life-giving spirit. And we are being made his brothers.

We are being made trees of life. When you see in Revelation that there are trees of life along the river of life, these are saints. Now you can see what a tremendous challenge this is to us as an individual to do our homework.

This is not for people that are in part-time. You've got to be, from the moment you get up in the morning to the time you go to bed at night, you're in a curriculum. You're in a curriculum.

And you'll flock it if you don't give it the time that God is requiring. And so God is there when you wake up in the morning. God is there with the lessons for the day.

Now whether you participate in those lessons depends on your willingness to pay attention to God and what he is saying. And that means you've got to be living in a state of receptivity to the Lord, looking to him. And I think probably you'll agree that today the Lord gave you a lot of opportunities to look to him.

Maybe a lot of little provokings to look to him. See, these are opportunities. It's the Lord yanking on you saying, come on, look up, come on, look up, come on, look up.

And this is going to go on every day. There's no vacation from this. There may be a vacation from the stress of ministry or whatever, but even when you're on vacation, it isn't that you're under stress and fretful about it, it's just that the dance goes on.

And the Lord is saying, abide in me here, abide in me here. There's these constant opportunities to die and to live, to die and to live, to die and to live. You say, oh it's excessively painful.

It's not excessively painful. Like I say, the people in Kosovo are not going through this program, but what they're going through is excessively painful. So what we're going through is just about, to a certain extent, not altogether, but to a certain extent, as painful as we may get.

If we try to preserve our living soul humanity, then it becomes very abrasive, and we see it's a lot of, it seems like it's a nuisance, and why don't people do what they should, and you know, why are they always doing things the Navy way instead of the right way, and all these constant harassments that we perceive as nuisances, when in fact they're the Lord. Saying, well sure, you may be down here doing your job as Chief Petty Officer or something, or you may be working here or there or whatever, in the hospital or in the

court or in the Hewlett Packard or whatever, but that's only a vehicle. That's only something that's going on to hold your life together and keep you making sense in the world.

But what's actually going on is this transformation. It has to, it takes time. And so your life becomes, Brother Dow used to say it's like a carburetor.

It's something like a carburetor. It's just something there within which the explosive mixture can be mixed to drive the engine. What you did today, you know, you could have sold 3,000 cars and said, wow, you know, I'm off and running.

I don't have to buy a car. I can buy the dealership. But that still is not what was significant.

It's significant, of course, in your life, but it's not what's really significant. What's really significant is the change that occurred in you that day as you're moving toward the new humanity, the life-giving spirit. Any questions about that? It's very easy to confuse significance, isn't it? And you go, oh, this is significant, that's significant, this is really where it is.

I've got to clutch this and that. No, these are all carburetors. They're only devices to keep the program rolling while the actual significance is taking place, which is the new creation, making a new creation in the rest of God.

And think, if you're being made life-giving spirits, what does that imply? Exactly, it means there's a whole lot of dead people. It means there's a whole lot of dead people, otherwise there'd be no need for life-giving spirits. Living spirits, yes, but not life-giving spirits.

And you can see that described in Ezekiel 47.9. I missed it a little. Let's try verse 7. Then he led me back to the bank of the river. When I arrived there I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river.

Do you know where they came from? Do you know where they came from? If you'll back up to verse 3, you'll see where they came from. The man went eastward, that is, toward the coming of the Lord. That's the significance of east.

With a measuring line in his hand, that's judgment. He measured off a thousand cubits and led me through water that was ankle deep. That's talking about salvation.

That's the beginning of the forming of a life-giving spirit. Then he measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee deep. That's Pentecost.

Further movement toward a life-giving spirit. He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river of women. Then the third one was up to the waist.

That's where we're going now. That's death to self, where we're willing to enter the rest of God to see some of our own works. And then we come, after that, we come to the fourth.

And it's the fourth that makes us a life-giving spirit. Now we've been saved, we've been filled with the spirit, and then we've gone through the Feast of Tabernacles, and now we abandon ourselves to God, and we live holy in his rest. A river that could not be crossed over, to where we're completely living in the river of God.

See? That's where we're moving. And when you're pressed, then if you take it right, you get raised up more into the river. You're becoming a tree of life.

Then when you do all this, he leads you back to the bank of the river, because he's done this, so you can serve. Not to make you some big hot shot, so you can show off your spiritual muscles, but so you can serve. That make sense? So, he brings us back.

Now, we've gone through the whole program, he brings us back to the bank of the river. When we arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. These are the trees of life.

He said to me, this water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the sea. Now, the sea is what? Mankind. Mankind.

The sea is mankind. And the water there becomes fresh, swarms of living creatures will live, wherever the river flows. Now, this is speaking of the manifestation of the sons of God.

It's talking about what we will do when we return with the Lord Jesus to bring life to the dead sea of mankind. Yes, Larry? Absolutely. And you know when he said that? No, he said that when they were celebrating the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and Jesus was there during that high ceremony, and the priest was pouring water that he got from the Siloam, and he was pouring it on the altar of burnt offering, and when he was doing that, the people were chanting Isaiah 12, about, therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

And Jesus, when that ceremony was going on, stood and cried, that's in the seventh chapter of John, he that believeth in me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Yes, that's exactly what he was talking about. And Tabernacles has seven days, it has seven days, but there's an eighth day, which is the beginning of the week of eternity, and is the highest day of the Jewish year.

It's Simchat Torah, it's called rejoicing over the law, because you see, remember we said that the tablets of stone were the only thing remaining in the ark, meaning that after it's all over, and the new heaven and earth reign comes, all that's left in us is, we had the eternal moral law of God has become flesh in us. And then out, and that's God's throne, and then out from the throne comes the living water to nourish the peoples of the earth. We are being made all of this, in accordance with the promise of God to Abraham, in thy seed, which we are, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

And you'll read Galatians 3, and you'll see it's talking about the spirit, the promise of the Holy Spirit. Well, the world is dead because it doesn't have the Holy Spirit. We have the first fruits of the Holy Spirit, but through us the Holy Spirit will come to mankind, and then mankind will live.

That's called the liberty of the glory of the children of God in Romans 8, 14. The liberty of the glory, no, 17. The liberty of the glory of the children of God will come through the sons of God, but only as they have gone through the process and have become trees of life.

See, the tree of life in Eden was Jesus Christ, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the law. If they had eaten of the tree of life first, see, then they would have had the strength to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So God gives us to eat of the tree of life first, and then he begins to teach us about the knowledge of good and evil, and we can handle it.

If God told us how rotten we were before he touched us with the waters of Christ, it would just cut us off from God. It would do no good. So God's way for Adam and Eve was to eat of the tree of life, and then you can eat a little bit of the knowledge and find out that you're naked, and you can do something about it without getting cut off from God.

But they ate it in the wrong order, under Satan's wisdom, and did what God said, killed you, just cut you off. And I haven't made ready yet the Lamb of God. I haven't made ready yet the program that man is destined for.

We were never destined to be flesh and blood creatures. That's only a vehicle to make us what we are supposed to be. So, we're being made for other people.

The royal priesthood is made for other people. And we will not find our destiny as creatures until we are channels of life for God's love to flow to other people. And we will never be completely fulfilled until this happens.

Because that's the way we're made. We're made to be the dwelling place of God so that he can reach all of his creatures. Right now he has no way of reaching them.

He will reach them through his church. But only when the church has become life-giving spirits. So, you see, we're in a sifting process now, and God has this great mass of people, including Catholics and everybody that believes in Christ, whatever persuasion, Greek Orthodox, and all the rest.

And then, that's the great mass of people, including everybody that's saved. And up from that, there's a smaller group, like a pyramid, that are people that know God's spirit. And then coming out of that is a yet smaller pyramid, a smaller part of the pyramid, less people who are willing to trespass Pentecost in the fullness of God.

And out of that group, God will take the cream. And they will be the firstfruits unto God. And so, it's well worth it.

It's well worth it. Because you please God, and you find your fulfillment. Anything less than that means that you have withheld something from the Lord.

You have refused to go through total pruning. You have decided, you know, this is as far as I want to go. And God loses, and you lose, and the people of the world lose.

Everybody loses because you chose to retain a portion of your personality. It's got to all go. And what a delight it is when we get far enough into God that we no longer care to cling to our personality, but are tickled to death to have God, oh Lord, hasten the day, take it all, let's get on with the program.

But when you're starting, it seems like you're losing so much. Think what you're losing. Just think what you're losing.

And then you'll be glad to move with God. Notice that it was still in Ezekiel. It says, The water there becomes fresh.

Swarms of living creatures will live where the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there makes the salt water fresh. So where the river flows, everything will live.

Fishermen will stand along the shore from En-Gedi to En-Eglin. There will be places for spreading nets and so on. That's talking about the tremendous revival that will occur when the Lord appears with his saints to bring the glory of Christ.

We see that also. Let's take a look at Romans 8. 17 I think it is. Eddie might want to correct me on that.

I think it's about Romans 8. 17. Now if we are children, then we are heirs. Heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

If indeed we share in his sufferings. You see that? And the reason that's necessary is because it's that pressing that brings forth the life. Without the sufferings, we don't make the change necessary to rule with the Lord.

So we still remain what we are until we are battered around. And it's the battering that gives us the opportunity for change. And Christ obviously is not going to have soulish people ruling with him.

It isn't going to happen. Soulish people are always causing problems because they are emotional and they go up and down like yo-yos. One day they are way up there and the next day they are way down there and they are always seeking their own will and other things.

In order that we may share his glory. Now his glory is the peoples of the earth. Remember it says in Isaiah 53, he shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

And again it says in Isaiah 53, it will divide the spoil with the strong. And the spoil are the peoples of the earth. That's where the glory is.

That's where the treasure is as they come bringing their children and their families. And you serve them by being a vehicle through which God through Christ can bless them and set them free. Hallelujah.

I know from Revelation what it means to inherit people. I know that from Revelation. And once I saw that, I saw, oh Lord, we are way off the course here.

The only thing worth inheriting is people. I'll trade my mansion for your people any day. Any day.

You can sit up there on your gold. I want the people to inherit one person that is worth more than 10,000 heavens in Christ's name. In Christ's name.

Well alright. So much so we are saying that I consider that our present sufferings are not worthy, they're worth comparing with the glory that shall be revealed in us. See that's the fullness of the glory of Christ, the creation, waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

You know, we think of that so seldom. But the world is waiting for that. And here we are fiddling around with church games.

And the whole creation is waiting for crying in the soup when you get on with the program. So we can get out of this dungeon we're in. That's one way of looking at the world instead of cursing the liberals.

Different approach. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God. They don't know it, but they are.

Well the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it. That was who? Who did that? Who subjected the creation to frustration? I can't hear you so my hearing is gone. God! In hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay, liberated, and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Now that is the Holy Spirit, because if you rehear Him we have it. We know that the whole creation has been groaning, as in the pains of childbirth, right up to the present time. And that's what the creation is groaning about, it's in pain.

It doesn't know it, it's not the pain of destruction, but of birth. Not only so, but we ourselves also have to have the first fruits. See? The first fruits.

The implication there is what? There's more coming to whom? To the people, to the creation. We have it in advance, so that we will be able to give it to others. That's the role of the elder son, who has the firstborn, who has the responsibility of taking care of the rest of the household.

Even James says that, we're the first fruits of this creation. That's why we've been taught for two thousand years that we're saved to go to heaven, and everybody else goes to hell, that now when God comes and tells us that we're not saved to go to heaven and everybody goes to hell, we're saved to be transformed so that we can minister life to the peoples of the earth. People have an awful problem, they can't understand.

What do you mean, save nations? Where does that fit? Until you understand that the church is not the only group of people that are going to be saved, you can't understand the kingdom. Because the church is salt, and if all you had to eat was salt, you'd get sick of it after a few meals, right? Yeah, indeed. And the church is salt, and until it's sprinkled on the potatoes, it isn't going anywhere.

So, we are salt. See, we are salt. In terms of the world of people, we are salt.

But when you take and you sprinkle that out on mankind, then you've got salt on the potatoes, and you go, that's where God is going. We are our first fruits, we are a beginning, and the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. We are, in thy seed shall the nations be blessed.

But see, that's such a radical switch in our thinking, that people have an awful time with that. They say, what do you mean, save nations? I don't understand you. And yet, if you don't understand that, you can't understand the kingdom.

You can't understand it all. Just picture, the church is saved to go to heaven, to play harp, and walk on golden streets. And so, when you have that in your mind, you see no need for all this being pressed, and being raised, and suffering.

What is that? Get me out of here. Get this over with, this nuisance. No, that is what's making it.

Glad I helped. Not only saved, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, grown inwardly, as we wait eagerly for our adoption, as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Now, that comes when the inward spirit of God extends to our outer man, then our body has redeemed, then we're ready to appear with Christ, and be trees of life to the people of the earth.

Are there any questions? Who will be saved after Antichrist is destroyed? Everyone except the wicked. Everyone except the wicked will be destroyed. As in everybody in the world, by any means.

You get all these sheep nations, and the kingdom was prepared for them. Enter into the kingdom prepared for you, the sheep nations. And what we are, we're being made like the high priest of Israel, so that our inheritance is God, and then we bring God to people.

But they will inherit the earth. The meek will inherit the earth. But we will inherit God, and the people.

Just like Aaron did. Alright, now, no questions so far? Let's go on with where we were in 2 Corinthians. You can see why God started us off in jugs of clay, can't you? Man, if we were given all this before we were perfected, we'd really wreck the creation.

Alright, now, we're not crushed, and we're not crushed because of what? See, everyone in the world suffers, but our suffering has a purpose in it. It's to prepare us, so that one day other people won't have to suffer. Alright? We are perplexed, but not in despair.

Anybody in here perplexed? Did you have anything come up today? You know, it's kind of a dilemma, I'm not sure. What should that do? Drive you to the Lord. You know, there's no question NATO's got a tiger by the tail, and if Milosevic does not cave, and he may not, the Yugoslavians tend to be tough, and he may not cave, you know, and the winter comes, all the people in Yugoslavia will be froze, because they have no heat, all their power's been knocked out, and the refugees, we can't get out of Albania.

I mean, this is a royal mess coming up. And you know, if they would ask God, he would show them what to do. He would ask God.

I mean, this is a royal mess. And if he would ask God, if they would ask God, God would show them what to do, and the answer would be so simple. So simple.

You'll find that when you ask God, when you're in a dilemma, the answer's so simple, that you're apt not to thank God, because it seems like you always knew it. It's just that natural, and that, I mean, it's right there, but you're blind to it, and you call on the Lord, the Lord opens your eyes, and you say, of course, you know, I didn't need to pray about that. That's the way we do, and that's the way it would be.

There's some solution there, to that great forerunner of World War III, that, uh, it'd be just there. Everybody go home. It's all over.

But they're not calling on the Lord. So it gets worse all the time. Worse all the time.

Oh, Lord. All right. Now, it says, persecuted but not abandoned.

Was anybody persecuted today? Anybody persecute you for being a Christian? We don't get too much of that, do we? We may someday. We're not getting too much of that. But the Lord is with us.

Paul knew what it was. Struck down. Anybody struck down today? You were riding high, and somebody knocked you off your horse? Huh? It happens to a dozen of them.

We have a really great day, and bang! And we're flat on our face. Did that ever happen to you? But we're not destroyed, because every one of these is an opportunity for the life of God, and the means of bringing forth the life of God. And now notice what Paul says.

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that His life may

be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

Because when God raises us up, there's an overflow. And the people around us are raised up. See, that's the beginning of the tree of life.

A life-giving spirit. OK? And it comes, and it's so true. And the ministry is like that.

Believe me. A genuine minister ministers from the cross. From being knocked down and raised up, he ministers, and then the people share his life.

That's the only true ministry there is. To minister out of commentaries, out of your theological knowledge, out of systematic theology or something. You don't bring life to people.

The only way you can bring life to people is if the Lord knocks you down and then raises you up, and then the overflow is what brings life to people. So aren't you eager to be a minister? Sit in your walnut-line study, at your nice big desk surrounded by books, and you don't have to work like other people. You just sit there and pour over your commentaries, and you make up your three points and the conclusion in your outline.

In fact, you can buy one if you're too busy to make up one. And then you practice your pantomimes in front of the mirror, times that you're going to weep, times that you're going to laugh, and when you're going to be forceful. You do this in front of the mirror, you see.

And then you yell at your wife and get her all upset if she doesn't do just right. And then you get up and you're in front of the congregation and you've got it. You practice.

You're polished. Maybe you've given it already over a period of years and several times. You bring this one up again.

You can do that, you know. It's not bad living. It's better than some jobs I've had, I'll tell you that.

It's better than hoeing weeds. I've done that. It beats hoeing weeds by a yard, I'll tell you.

Especially in the summer when it's hot. Beats hoeing weeds. But there's another kind of ministry where you become a kind of a victim for other people.

Anyway, that's what Paul was. It is written, I believe, therefore I have spoken. With that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak.

Because you've got to believe that this is working for good. You've got to believe that this is what is going on. Because otherwise you figure all this is happening because I'm in pain and other people are causing it.

So you've got to have this faith that makes this thing operate. He says, I believe that with that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak. Because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.

So Paul's mind here is on death and resurrection. All this is for your benefit so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause Thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. So Paul was living for other people and he was suffering for other people.

He was well on his way to the fullness of the river and being brought back to the bank. Therefore, for this reason, because even though Paul said even though I have suffered and 2 Corinthians is about suffering he starts off in the first chapter saying we just spared a life. We had the sentence of death in ourselves.

We just gave up. Now I'm a goner. And God raised us up and comforted us and we're sharing the comfort with you.

And that's the theme of this book. Remember it gets over into chapters 11 and 12 where he has the thorn in the flesh and God is bringing him down to death. This keeps appearing.

But you see, he's got his mind on the resurrection so he's making it. He's not concentrating on what's happening to him. Therefore we do not lose heart.

Though outwardly we are wasting away, wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. So this body is on the skids but inside there's a pearl of great price being formed. So he said for our light now notice this carefully because this is kind of a high point in this argument.

For our light and momentary troubles. Now, tell me about your troubles. And I'll tell you they are light and momentary.

You say you don't know what I'm going through. Well, you don't know what I've been through either. But when you bring them all up and lay them out to dry they prove to be light and momentary.

Light and momentary. Though at the present time they may seem grievous indeed. But they are achieving something.

I mean, this is what we focus on. Not that we're hurting but the fact that it is achieving something. You don't mind going through it if it's achieving something.

It's the trouble that's achieving. It's the affliction that is achieving. Will that help? And what it's achieving is an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

It's the same thing he said in Romans 8. You can't compare the sufferings we have now with what we're facing. And of course if we reject these sufferings lose our integrity take the easy way out we're going to miss what's coming. And that we don't want to do.

That's not wise. So, given this, we fix our eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen. We don't look too hard at what's happening to us.

But we keep looking to the Lord. Not on what we see but on what cannot be seen that we have to see by faith. For what is seen is temporary.

Temporary. You say, well, I might live 80 years. That's a long time.

Not compared with eternity, it isn't. It goes fast enough. I'm 73.

In two months I'll be 74. Let me tell you, you wonder where the time went. I'm 73.

How did I ever plan on getting there? I mean, that's an old person. That's not me. You say, well, look at yourself in the mirror once dude and get with it.

But you see, it's what's inside. I feel like I did when I was 12. I don't feel any different than I did when I was 12.

I don't remember when I was 12. I had a work and I bought myself a rowboat and just pick it up on my back and carry it down the beach and put it in the water. I can remember that.

You don't feel any different inside. And so this 73 business it's like something out here. Yeah, it must be.

But it's not real. And life is like that. It kind of telescopes together in some way.

And it seems so short. You see, like yesterday I was 18. Yesterday I was 25.

Yesterday. It just doesn't seem that long. But boy, eternity.

Whoa, I know it. A million years now. No different.

Whoa. Things which are not seen are eternal. And remember, he didn't write in chapters.

That was another guy's idea. Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in first he calls us a jar and now we're a tent. I think very highly of us.

We live in is destroyed and Paul was in imminent danger of this. We have a building from God. Now I want you to think about that for a minute.

Maybe people read that in a hurry and they think well that's my mansion in heaven but we know from the subsequent verses it's not talking about a mansion in heaven. But I want you to think about this. It is a building.

It's a building. Now concentrate on that for a minute and think about what it looks like. Think of where it is.

Where is it located? What is it doing? What does it look like? Is it alive? Is it like a row of mannequins that God has all these people with their buildings is it just a sea of mannequins of lifeless buildings? Where is it? What is it? What does it look like? Is it the same for all people? It's substantial. It's a building. It's not like the word in John 14 in my father's house and many mansions where it's actually it's not substantial father's house is a substantial word in the Greek but mansions is more compounded from the verb that means to abide abiding place it is rather than the emphasis being on a building but a father's house is in the right place that's a building but here we're not talking about we're talking about something substantial now where is this thing? and what does it look like?

It's there you have something there and it's your building this is your building that's up there it's you it's part of you and it's already in heaven have you ever thought much about that? it's a building have you ever thought much about that? that you have a building in heaven? now since this is connected with the previous verses this is all connected with the idea of suffering our affliction is achieving something what it's achieving of course is this building this building will have within itself the ability to perform the competence to perform the role that God has for us in his kingdom just like on the earth certain people can perform certain functions depending on their strength depending on their age depending on their talents depending on their intelligence and so on they're

fitted for certain jobs and not fitted for others we know that well, this building is going to determine your role as being fitted for what you're going to be doing so it's extremely important now, this building Paul

didn't change the subject here this building is the reward we'll see a few verses later we shall receive in 2 Corinthians 5.10 a few verses up it says that we will receive that which we have done in the body do you see that? that each one may receive what is due him I don't like that, what is due him the King James is better there the King James is better there it's not what is due him that gives the idea of an arbitrary reward removed from what we're doing the King James is much better there we receive what we have done in other words, we receive the direct consequences not

what we've done the NIV gives us the impression that if we've done good, we're going to be rewarded it isn't that, it's more of a cause and effect a sowing and a reaping relationship rather than I did good and now I got a prize yeah, there's the King James that's much better receive the things done in this body of course, the NIV their whole goal with that is to try to make the words comprehensible and see, this doesn't appear to the carnal person that 2 Corinthians 5.10 does not make sense he will interpret interpolate the idea of a reward but I think if you look at the actual Greek the thing is you receive the things done in his body well see, that follows the preceding verses but it doesn't follow our carnal concept of rewards it doesn't follow that and so the NIV is trying to help us

to make sense out of it and they usually do a good job but here, they kind of blew it not understanding that it's not something that you get out here you did good here so you got a hundred dollars out here it's not that it's the idea you get back what you have done so he's in context with the new creation which is a few verses further yet and he's in context with 2 Corinthians 3.18 we all with open face beholding as a glass of glory of the Lord are changed into the same glory and it's in context with the ones we read about being oppressed and suffering now, what all we're saying here is that the sufferings that you experience if you are privileged to suffer if you are called to a high calling and the higher your calling is the more you're going to suffer because that's the excavation that

is necessary to bring forth this kind of character that will be able to be a ruler obviously if you're going to build a two bedroom house you don't have to labor too much on the foundation you can pour a slab or put it on stilts or concrete blocks or whatever you want to do but if you're going to build a high rise you know, you got to spend some time on the foundation and God has two bedroom houses among his people and he has some high rises among his people and if you're called to be a high rise God is going to do some excavating on you pretty fancy to get him down there to make sure that when he builds on the thing it isn't going to sink like Mexico City okay it's sinking rapidly did you know that?

I mean, it is going down did you know that? well, my goodness they've got I was reading in the Smithsonian I think that there's some kind of a rod that they have in the ground it was a few feet up and now it's something like twenty-seven feet up that's how much the city has sunk in the last few years it's going down because it's not on a rock and if God is going to build something tall on you boy, he's going to put a foundation there and you're going to say what in the world? nothing's coming out of my life all I've got is trouble trouble, trouble I should be bearing fruit here I am forty years old I'm not ministering nothing's happening and it's all this God's pouring over every every little personality defect I have and driving me nuts and I'm not I'm not being a big wheel out here like

Billy Graham or something how come I'm not bearing fruit? you know well be patient with God he knows what he's doing how many believe God knows what he's doing? amen so you see it isn't the gifts and ministries that are achieving an eternal weight of glory in you it's your afflictions and this is the glory now how does this work out in practice? we know from 1 Corinthians 15 that this body is going to be raised and also from Romans 8-11 God's going to make alive this body so here we come forth in our flesh and bones

just like Jesus did but when Jesus came forth in his flesh and bones nobody fell over backwards like they did when he came forth in Revelation 1-13 because he didn't come forth in his flesh and bones with his eyes like fire and a sword coming out of his mouth and a golden belt

around him he just came forth as a guy and he said look I'm here he ate the honeycomb and all but nobody passed out so you see he wasn't yet glorified he didn't have that house that that we see in Revelation 1-13 is his house that's the building that's compatible with his inward nature but what came forth was what went into the cave of Joseph of Arimathea because there were still prints in his feet and in his hands and it's the same body and your body is going to come forth now yes Mark raised from the dead by the spirit of God will have marvelous abilities and certainly Jesus did maybe that's the way man was made in the first place and when he died he lost that ability to be invisible and walk through doors and whatever I don't know about that but I know that as marvelous as our being

raised from the dead animated by spiritual life and then filled with the spirit of God and it says make alive your dead bodies Romans 8-11 by his spirit that dwells in you that would be wonderful in and of itself because that means we would be God will raise us I'm sure at the optimum age when we are at our best which probably varies from person to person and then freezes that I mean that's it we're alive in the spirit we can't die anymore that would be wonderful in and of itself but you see there's something far beyond that and that's this building I think I saw once in a kind of a I don't know whether it was a vision or my imagination or too much food before going to bed or what but I saw something and I believe it was my armor to ride behind the Lord and you know what was unusual about

it it was living it was living armor it had a life of its own and it was massive massive when I put this thing on I'm telling you I mean it was a massive living armor that has as its purpose the descent of the Lord on the horses of God it was armor for that purpose I think it was the Lord I don't want to fight about it but I think it was the Lord and so I don't know what this house will be like I don't know maybe that was the house maybe I'm guessing to be a soldier forever I don't know but I don't know what the house will be like but I'm sure it will be fantastic but the point is it's a building that is something that has been built is being built it's an eternal weight of glory and it's going to be what you make it by your response to the Lord and don't forget that you as an individual

I'm watching my time here you as an individual have a mark Paul didn't say I pressed toward the mark that God gave for some other guy it was the mark for Paul and you have a mark for you now you may attain that mark 30% or 60% or 100% and the potential is there the potential is there for you to realize fully whatever God's intention for you is and that doesn't mean that everyone is destined to be some great mighty ruler in the kingdom because not all people want that they're not into being a king whatever that mark is it is something that will make you supremely happy because it be what you are made for what God has made you for but whether you reach that mark depends on the diligence with which you apply yourself to what is going on today now if you attain the fullness of the mark that

God has set before you to attain as Paul put it to grasp that for which I have been grasped if you are so diligent as to come up with A plus on your report card and really fully grasp then your house this building will then be completed in every detail and so perfectly suited for your role in the kingdom if it's to be a warrior then maybe it will be armor if it's to be a ruler maybe it will be some kind of majestic crown or whatever it is or if it's to take care of babies and I believe there will be people who take care of babies then you will look like something that will make a baby feel good I mean wouldn't it be great you know here you've got a nursery full of babies all ready to be ministered to and here you come in with this massive

armor clanking in you know well that isn't going

to do the babies a bit of good they have to see someone that's going to make them feel real warm and good and cuddly and God knows that so it would be ridiculous for you to come in you know like King Nebuchadnezzar and here you're going to minister to a bunch of little babies that's ridiculous and I think there will be a lot of children of elementary school age that never were privileged to experience life on the earth and they want to learn art and they want to learn music and they want to learn all the things because they're going to be living on the earth and there will be people who teach them and they'll appear as teachers and maybe we'll have several different forms I don't know all I know is the good book says we have a building and that building is what we're making it if you're

having people are being mean to you right now for some reason or other things aren't going right then this is an opportunity for tremendous good and tremendous harm because if you react wrong if you manipulate and do things that are not right music you know that are not right what you're affecting is your building you're affecting your building and you're going to be given that someday and you can imagine Christians that have turned away from God or have let themselves be filled with gossip and hatred and unforgiveness and they're not God isn't going to put on them a body like the Lord Jesus that's ridiculous their inward nature is corrupt it's shrunken it's dwarfed and mutilated from the way they have responded to life's pressures and God's going to put on them a glorious body never will

happen so how we respond to our daily pressures and persecutions and perplexities and castings down are all important this is what it's all about whatever business you're in is important to the continuing of your life on earth but it's not it doesn't approach the significance of this building this is what you're going to look like this is the competence you're going to have this is the capability you're going to have this is what you're going to be known as when people see you coming because this building is going to come down on your flesh and bone look at it we have a building from God an eternal house in heaven not built by human hands meanwhile we groan longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling see it comes down on us it's not some stupid mansion that's built on the ground up

there because when we are clothed we will not be found naked for while we are in this tent we groan and are burdened because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed in other words we don't want to just die with our heavenly dwelling so that what is mortal may be swallowed up and that term swallowed up I think also appears in 1 Corinthians 15 by life so this body has in it life so that's why it's so important that when you're crushed down that you call on the Lord so that your life increases because this body this body is constructed from life it's constructed from eternal life it's substantial it's a form of life now notice that carefully now it is God who has made us for this purpose do you see that? it doesn't say God has made this for us it says God has made us for this which

is in contrast to John 14:3 now in my father's house and many mansions if it were not so I would have told you I go to prepare a place for you there the place is being prepared for us here we are being prepared for the place see that? so the place has to be prepared and we have to be prepared there has to be preparation in both accounts alright he has made us for this purpose and has given us the spirit as a deposit guaranteeing what is to come therefore we are always confident to know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord we live by faith not by sight we are confident I say and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord see Paul is under pressure at this time so we make it our goal to please him whether we are at home in the body or

away from it for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may receive what is due him literally that each one may receive what he has done for the things done while in the body whether good or bad so we are going to receive the good that we have done and we are going to receive the bad that we have done unless we have confessed that bad have turned away from it and God has cleansed us from it in that case it has removed us far from us what does the Old Testament say the east is from the west he has cast all our sins behind his back we do have that opportunity to pass before the judgment seat of Christ now and get that bad taken care of but if we do not it will be given to us at the coming of the Lord as part of our resurrection and the Bible is absolutely clear

on that we shall receive the good we have done and the bad we have done unless we take care of it now okay shall we stand you are all very attentive tonight bless you alright while we are praying if you have done some bad today take it to the Lord it says if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness so while we are praying tonight take advantage of that because you do not want to face bad you have done today in the day of resurrection hallelujah oh Father how real you are to us tonight Lord praise your holy name you are right here you are right here and we bless your holy name we bless your holy name oh hallelujah blessed be your name oh hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah amen amen God is setting his seal on the word

tonight I tell you God is setting his seal on the word this is it isn't it Lord this is exactly what you want preached throughout the earth today this is what God wants preached to his church today he wants his church alerted to the truth of this God wants his church alerted and I say that because so many of us are involved in working to this end and God is saying he wants this known he wants his Christian people to understand the consequences of their actions oh hallelujah Lord the Lord says he comes to give every man as his work shall be and he wants that known in his churches that the Christians will be apprised of this he shall give every man as his work shall be hallelujah to those who in long suffering and patience strive for immortality and eternal life and those who do evil are

facing wrath and judgment and God wants that word published today you want that word published today I know that Lord hallelujah oh God help us to be so faithful and help us each one to Lord to be willing oh hallelujah God wants that word published today people hallelujah help us Lord so many of us Brian and Eddie and Lloyd and Larry and others are helping in different ways praying and giving and so on maybe I've missed one but I didn't mean to Mark and Overton has helped and others just realize God wants that word published today God wants that word published today Mark and Larry I hope I haven't missed anyone but God wants that word published today He wants his church to know that what they're doing has consequences for the day of the Lord Father help us in this church Lord so many are

laboring so hard and maybe some I didn't even mention Lord and Stan and Lisa and others that aren't here but God so many have labored so hard to help in the way that they have to give with what they have to give Lord I know you're blessing us but help us to be diligent and to be aware Lord there's a whole church world out there that does not realize that what they are doing and they're expecting to be just carried up to heaven and somehow be changed and not understanding now Lord you have entrusted us with the word help us to be totally totally faithful with what you have given us for we will surely be held to account Lord because you have entrusted us with your holy word now Lord bless us and I pray Lord that you will enable us to greatly expand what we're doing not for our glory Lord

but just so that your will may be done and so your churches may be alerted help us Lord on the internet and the books and booklets and the audio tapes and the video tapes and those that hear the tape and

share with others and everything help us Lord to be utterly faithful with what you have given us that we may rejoice in that day that we served our generation by the will of God help those of us tonight Lord who are confessing to you some inappropriate response we made today that did us no good and possibly harm help us to clear that up now in Jesus name hallelujah hallelujah help us to clear that up Lord and to take heart realizing you do forgive us and encourage us to go on and do a better job tomorrow praise your holy name Lord help us, help us Lord we want to do good and we want to be

trees of life now and in the world to come

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