

## Live In The Light Of Eternity.

Text: 2 Cor 5:6-11

Suggested Hymns:

485, 482, 172, 294, 457

1) We Know That Judgement Day Is Coming

2) We Have It Right Here And Now

3) Do Not Despise This Present Life

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is 2 Corinthians 5:6-11, <sup>6</sup> *So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.* <sup>7</sup> *For we walk by faith, not by sight.* <sup>8</sup> *We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.*

<sup>9</sup> *Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.* <sup>10</sup> *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.* <sup>11</sup> *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

If you were to study carefully the more than 300 New Testament references to the second coming of Jesus Christ and the end of the world, you would probably conclude that the word “preparedness” is the key word in the study.

The motto of some military units and rescue organisations is “*Semper paratus*,” which means “Always ready.” Defence forces and rescue organisations are always to be ready when duty calls. Nations, armies, and people must constantly be on the alert lest they find themselves in a hopeless situation.

The followers of Jesus are also to be in a continual state of preparedness. He is coming again, and He wants us to be faithful lest He find us unprepared. May the Holy Spirit keep us watchful, for we do not know when He will choose to

come. Therefore it is vital that we *Live in the Light of Eternity*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

## **1. Live In The Light Of Eternity Because We Know That Judgement Day Is Coming**

It is good for us to take a look at our lives in the light of eternity, for we know that there is a great day coming and that every person will have to appear before the judgement seat of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord said, *When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.*<sup>32</sup> *“All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.”*<sup>1</sup> St. John in the Book of Revelation records, *“Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him.”*<sup>2</sup>

What an exciting day that will be! Imagine, if you possibly can, that the coming of Jesus to judgement will be witnessed by the assembled universe. All people from all lands will be there, not just select people representing their countrymen but every person who has ever lived. It is too amazing even to imagine.

When Jesus says, “arise,” every soul from Adam to the last child born will respond. You and I will also be there, so we will do well to live our lives in the light of this universal judgement, having a proper relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches that the world as we know it shall end. John records in his first epistle, *“And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”*<sup>3</sup>

Again Scripture says, as we read in 2 Peter 3:10, *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”*

While we know for a fact that this world’s days are numbered, and that *“heaven and earth will pass away,”*<sup>4</sup> there is no reason for the Christian to fear. Believers in Jesus will be with Him.

Our text reads, <sup>10</sup> *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.* Christ will begin to divide the vast number of people.

*He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.* <sup>33</sup> *“And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”* <sup>34</sup> *“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”*<sup>5</sup>

The evidence on which the believer’s eternal destiny is based is clear. Jesus says, *Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.*<sup>6</sup> Confident faith in Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep, saves you eternally.

The Christian, whose life has been lived in the light of eternity, then has the fruit of his life examined. *He who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*<sup>7</sup>

*“I want to be in that number”* is the way a favourite spiritual song goes.<sup>8</sup> I am sure that each of you has this same desire, just as do I. There is only one way to obtain salvation, and that is *through our Lord Jesus Christ,*<sup>10</sup> *who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.*<sup>9</sup> It was at Calvary that the *“the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”*<sup>10</sup>

During Lent we often sing,<sup>11</sup>

There is a fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

To be in that number of the redeemed on the Day of Judgement, we must come by way of the cross.

You and I will also be judged according to what we have done *in the body*. How have we reacted to human need? How generous have we been in the simple things —like giving a hungry person a meal or a thirsty person a drink?

Martin of Tours was a Roman soldier. Once on a cold winter day this Christian soldier was entering a city. A beggar stopped him and asked him for alms. Martin had no money; but the beggar was blue and shivering with cold, and Martin gave what he had. He took off his soldier's coat, worn and frayed; he cut it in two and gave half of it to the beggar.

That night he had a dream. In it he saw the heavenly places and all the angels and Jesus in the midst; and the Lord was wearing half of a Roman soldier's cloak. One of the angels said, "*Master, why are you wearing that battered old cloak? Who gave it to you?*" And Jesus answered, "*My servant Martin gave it to Me.*" Scripture says in Matthew 25:40 that *inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.*'

The evidence on which the unbeliever's eternal destiny is based is also clear. Jesus says in Matthew 10:33 <sup>33</sup> "*But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.*"

Unbelievers will be condemned for their lack of spiritual life in Christ. Scripture says, "*Without faith it is impossible to please Him.*"<sup>12</sup> Jesus says, <sup>48</sup> "*He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.*"<sup>13</sup>

What a terrifying verdict the Lord will render on those who have had nothing to do with Him! "*Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'*"<sup>14</sup> No appeal. No pardon. Eternal separation from God. May God's Holy Spirit keep everyone here from such a godless end and lead us all to repent of all our sins and to rely solely on our Redeemer.

## **2. Live In The Light Of Eternity Because We Have It Right Here And Now**

As Christians we can have the certainty of eternal life right here and now. Salvation is given to us freely by Jesus. It does not come by a church or an ordinance. Scripture says in Acts 4:12 <sup>12</sup> "*Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*"

Jesus came down from heaven and died that you and I might never die. Our sins are washed away by Jesus. This is why St. Paul could write to the Corinthians that he and his co-workers were confident and of good courage. They walked by faith, for they were in Christ. So long as we are in Christ, we too can be filled with strength, courage, and confidence.

We can learn to love our Lord with deep affection, for He first loved us with the deepest, sacrificial love which is possible only of God. When we live our lives in the light of eternity, we are ready to meet Him even if He should come this very day or if we should be called to meet Him.

Everything that has a beginning has an ending. A baby is born, then grows up. It becomes an adult. Later, nature takes its course, and old age strikes. Finally death comes, reminding us that all life on earth ultimately comes to an end.

I wonder if you ever think about the futility of it all. But now think about this great truth of our text, *knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord*. Do you see? Our real home is with our Lord Jesus in heaven. While we live on earth in our sinful bodies, we are actually in exile.

Too often we look upon our life here as the ultimate joy, when in reality, in comparison with our heavenly home, it is far worse than a Siberian salt mine. Jesus is indeed with us right here, but the nearness of His presence and the clearness of His vision in that future life will be so much closer and brighter so that here, by comparison, we are absent from Him altogether.

Fellow exiles, keep living in the light of eternity because, like the heroes of the faith who died before receiving what was promised, we have a magnificent homeland prepared for us by our God.

St. Paul leads his Corinthian congregation to look heavenward when he says, *<sup>8</sup> We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord*. Our faith now embraces something we have never seen.

Peter made this clear as we read in 1 Peter 1:8-9, *<sup>8</sup> whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, <sup>9</sup> receiving the end of your faith -- the salvation*

*of your souls.* To be at home with the Lord is the entry into life and into a body in which service can be complete, and the adoration of our Lord can be perfect.

### **3. Live In The Light Of Eternity But Do Not Despise This Present Life.**

For all his longing for the life to come, Paul does not despise this life. He is of good courage, *always confident.* This is a life that wins. This is just a first instalment of greater things to come.

The Christian should enjoy the foretaste of life everlasting. In a way we are citizens of two worlds. We have one foot in time and one in eternity. While here, away from our real home, *“we make it our aim ... to be well pleasing to Him.”*

There are various ways in which we can do this. As we “walk in faith,” trusting in Jesus, let us do as the author to the Hebrews suggested to those waiting for the day of judgement.

We read in Hebrews 10:24-25, *“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.* How important that we help build one another up in our holy Christian faith!

Considering that it is later than we think, how circumspectly Christians ought to walk, *“Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”*

As you live in the light of eternity, share your life in Christ. Our text reads, *“Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.* We aim to please because we know the love of our God, yet we stand in awe of our Maker and Judge. Share Christ with others. Witness to Jesus by speaking out boldly for Him.

Have you ever tried telling another person about Jesus and His redeeming love? It is the nearest thing to Paradise to know that by your humble effort and the power of the Holy Spirit another person has joined the ranks of the saved. Success may not always be evident or immediately apparent. The invitation you

extend may even be declined. But you have had the satisfaction of extending the invitation.

Those who reject Christ and your invitation to come to Jesus will be in no position to point the accusing finger at you on Judgement Day, saying: "*You knew Jesus, but you never told me.*" Continue to persuade men and women, boys and girls of God's great truths. For every sinner that repents your joy is shared by the angels in heaven.

The Holy Spirit will keep us in the true faith, for He increases our faith as we feed on the Word of Life. What blessed assurance of redemption He brings us! What comfort to know that as we approach the Lord's Table we receive the very body and blood of the Saviour, whose life was given into death that we might be pardoned from our guilt!

What comfort to know that as we enter into our church the Spirit of God will attend to our needs through that powerful Gospel which is the dynamite of God unto salvation!

What comfort to know that as missionaries and teachers and fellow Christians speak out in behalf of the living Jesus, His Word will not return to Him void but will accomplish exactly what God intends for it to do!

O Holy Spirit, continue to bring the message of mercy into the hearts of the needy. Keep us steadfast in our faith so that we understand Your truth as never before. Help us always realise that only the love of Jesus as expressed in the giving of His life for us on Calvary can maintain us in life.

We do not know exactly when our Lord will return, but it is clear that we must be prepared for that great and exciting day. How thrilling it will be for the Christian to actually see the nail prints in the hands of Jesus as evidence that He died on the cross for our redemption!

Today we walk by faith, but on that climactic day will come the unveiling, and we shall see Him no longer as through a glass, darkly, but face to face. What a glorious hope! What a glorious life! Yes, keep living your life in the light of a glorious eternity. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 25:31-32

<sup>2</sup> Rev. 1:7

<sup>3</sup> 1 John 2:17

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 24:35

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 25:32-34

<sup>6</sup> Matt. 10:32

<sup>7</sup> Gal. 6:8b

<sup>8</sup> When The Saints Go Marching In

<sup>9</sup> 1 Thess. 5:9b-10

<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 53:6

<sup>11</sup> Hymn 68

<sup>12</sup> Heb. 11:6

<sup>13</sup> John 12:48

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 25:41

<sup>15</sup> Rom. 13:13-14