

Tony Thibodeau 2 Corinthians 5:1-9

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[0 : 00] Now, hopefully, every single one of y'all meant that. Now, if some of y'all didn't mean that, then we're going to have a time of invitation at the end of the message where you can get things right with the Lord, amen?

Turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 5 if you have a copy of the Word of God with you here today. As I said, this is not a Thanksgiving-themed message, but the things we're going to talk about here today, I can't personally help but give thanks to God for what's to come.

You know, we just heard a song about heaven, and we're going to be talking quite a bit about heaven today because I don't know about y'all, but I am sure looking forward to heaven, amen? I mean, I'm not anxious on going there today. You know, the Lord will, and I'll get to see tomorrow, but if that's not the case, then praise the Lord, I'm going to heaven, amen?

Now, I hope every one of y'all can say the same thing. If not, then I pray that through this message here today, you can get things right.

[1 : 12] Let me ask y'all a question. And I know we're Baptists. I'm a Southern Baptist. I'm going to ask y'all to do something that us Baptists normally do. Let's raise your hands up high.

I didn't even tell you yet. How many of y'all, if I show up hands, are thankful all year round? I mean, every moment of your life, you are thankful.

You're not going to like this. Some of y'all lie in mind. Oh, my goodness. I think we would like to think that we're thankful all year round.

But sadly, I don't think some of us are willing to admit this. But I'll admit this for you. At times, we have the tendency to complain.

Do we not? Come on now. It's all right. You can say yes. That's okay. There's a popular phrase that goes around as far as like, don't be a Karen.

[2 : 14] Any of y'all ever heard that? Now, I hope there's no one in here named Karen. If so, look, I'm so sorry that they turned your name into a big running joke about the whole joke about not being a Karen.

You know, the typical person that overcomplains about things. And some of us may know people like that, right? That has the tendency to complain with a passion.

Complain, complain, complain. And I admit there are times I have a way of just overly complaining about things.

Some people make a hobby out of complaining about certain things. Like my lovely wife, for example. She'll complain about every other driver on the road. It's not a sermon if I don't bring up my wife some kind of way.

But we do complain. Let me ask you this. How many of y'all ever brought your complaints to the Lord? And we should.

[3 : 21] I mean, if we have an issue about something, we are to take these things to the Lord. Let me take it a step further.

And you don't have to raise your hands on this one. How many of y'all ever complained about God? Now, for y'all to say, oh, no, no, I don't ever complain about God.

Well, let me give you some examples. You ever said these words, God, why are you allowing this to happen?

God, why me? Or God, why me? God, why am I battling this illness? God, why is my child dealing with this illness?

Lord, why did you allow my son or daughter to get caught up in the things of the world? God, aren't you aware of what's going on?

[4 : 29] Now, if we're honest with ourselves, I think most of us, if not all of us, have cried out such words or something similar to that.

Where we may not be shaking our fist at God, but we may be upset towards God because of a situation or a season.

Let me repackage it. Or a season that we may be going through. If I may make a very blunt statement before we dive into the word, it would be this.

Life happens. We'd like to believe that the Christian walk is always a smooth walk.

That we never face any sort of trials in our lives. But the reality is, is that this is a very difficult world to walk in.

[5 : 42] Now, I'm not up here this morning to beat anyone up if you have complaints at times about certain things. That's a natural thing to be upset about things.

I'm just here to tell you that if you've ever complained about something or complained to God or about God, let me just say that you're no different than me. Okay?

In fact, Jesus said this in John 16, 33. I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. I mean, there's only peace through Jesus Christ. Amen?

Can we all agree upon that? But listen to what Jesus says. He says, you will have suffering in this world. He didn't say you might.

He said you will have suffering in this world. And let me just say this. If you are not dealing with something or have not dealt with something, if you've never had anybody come on you, you may want to go back and check yourself to see if your salvation is real.

[6 : 47] Because Jesus says that as a follower of his, we will have suffering in this world. But then he says, be courageous.

For I have conquered the world. See, Jesus didn't just say we're going to suffer in this world. He also said that we have a place of refuge in him.

And that's a good thing. Amen? Won't you stand, if you would, out of reverence for the reading of God's word?

2 Corinthians chapter 5. We're going to be reading verses 5. I'm sorry, 1 through 9 here this morning. The apostle Paul has some things to say about complaining.

And this is what he said. He says, for we know that if our earthly house, a tent is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

[7 : 59] In fact, we groan in this one. And we are not, longing to put on our house from heaven since when we are clothed, we will not be found naked.

Indeed, we who are in this tent groan, burdened as we are, because we do not want to be unclothed but clothed, so that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

And the one who prepared us for this very thing is God, who gave us the spirit as a down payment, the seal that God put upon us when we received Christ as our Savior and lived for him as Lord.

I just added that. Don't worry, I'm not adding or taking weight to the word, but it's just something about being sealed by the Holy Spirit of God. Amen? That means we're good.

We are good. All right. Verse 6. Therefore, though we are always confident and know that while we are at home in this body, we are away from the Lord.

[9 : 13] For we walk by what? Faith. Thank you. You're paying attention. And not by sight. Yet in the body, we are away from the Lord.

For, did I read that twice already? I guess God wants us to hear it some more. Amen? Amen.

Amen. Yet, verse 8, yet we are confident and satisfied to be out of the body and at home with the Lord.

Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our own aim to be pleasing to him. Pray to me if you would.

Father, thank you so much for this opportunity to come here today to bring forth your message. And Father, I pray that everyone here today would look past the weakness of this vessel that stands before them.

Lord, I'm just the messenger. And it's not my words that's going to change us here today. It's yours, Lord. So, Lord, may your word reign supreme in this place here today.

[10 : 26] Lord, may it be all of you and none of me, Lord. Father, may it be all of you and none of you. And Father, I pray that if there's anyone in this place that does not know you as they should, let today be their day of salvation.

Father, we thank you and we love you so much. And we pray and ask all these things in Jesus' name and all of God's people said, amen. Thank you. You may be seated.

Thank you.

Thank you, Father, I'm going to pray for the rest of the world. Like the old hymn, to stand upon the promises of God. And let's be real. I'm going to just tell you this right now.

I'm not really wanting to come and sugarcoat just to get a lot of amens and hallelujahs. I like to bring the truth of the matter so that we can truly see what the word of God has to say on the matter.

[11:46] I think y'all would appreciate that today, man. that there are times we don't stand upon the promises of God. We get overwhelmed, do we not?

I'm just here today to remind you of this truth as we face things that we may not quite want to face. So a couple of truths we're going to be just looking at here today. The first thing we see in this passage is that these complaints that we have, they're temporal.

They're temporal. Beginning in verse 1, Paul said that, For we know that if our earthly house, a tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God.

This house, this tent, this tabernacle, as scripture will sometimes refer to as.

[12:51] He says that it is destroyed. Now, destroyed there in the original Greek means to tear down, to put to an end, to make invalid.

Valid. What Paul was telling the church here was thanks to the redemptive work of Christ. And for us, for those that have placed their trust in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, this old self has been put to death, and we are now a new person in Christ.

In other words, the life that we love to put so much emphasis on is now invalid. Now, Paul was not saying that we should have this lackadaisical, careless attitude about ourselves and life in general. He's just simply saying that at times we have the tendency to put so much attention on this earthly vessel when our focus needs to be more on Him, more elsewhere.

And then in verse 2, he talks about, he says that in fact we groan in this one. We groan.

[14:22] He didn't tell them that we used to groan. He says that in a present tense, that we groan from time to time about certain things.

How many of y'all woke up, and before you can get both feet on the floor, you groan? Come on now.

I mean, I'm a Navy veteran. And if you ever served in the military, you're going to walk out of the military with some sort of injury, some sort of ache, some sort of pain.

And every day I deal with back pain and neck pain, and every time I get out of my truck, my kids make fun of me because I make this oop sound when I get out. We groan, right?

And I long for the day that I won't have to groan about that naggy lower back pain any longer. Paul just simply points us out to say that these groaning, these complaining that we have the tendency to do at times, it's a natural occurrence.

[15:35] But keep in mind that these groanings will not last forever.

Amen? I mean, y'all should get excited about that. Some of y'all don't seem too excited about not having to groan any longer one day. Listen to this.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2.20, and I'm sure a lot of y'all are familiar with this one, it says that I have been crucified with Christ. And it is no longer I who live, but Christ that lives in me.

The old person that complained so much about different things is now gone, is invalid in comparison to who I am in Christ. He said that the life which I now live in the flesh, right?

This tent, the life I now live in this tent, this tabernacle, this earthly house, he says, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

[16:47] Amen? It seems like Paul's just putting a little bit more emphasis on who he is in Christ instead of who he was.

And isn't it something at times how that old person likes to try to lure himself or herself up in our lives? So these complaints, these groanings that we have, they're temporal.

They're temporal because we see in the passage that they're going to be retired in heaven. So he says in verse 1, this tent's being destroyed, for we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Verse 3, he says, since we are clothed, we will not be found naked. Instead, we who are in this tent groan burdened as we are because we do not want to be unclothed, but clothed so that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

And the one who has prepared us for this very thing is God who gave us the Spirit as a down payment. An interesting language Paul uses here to say, to be clothed.

[18 : 16] I think that's one of the, if not the primary things we do in the morning, right, is that when we get up, we close ourselves, right?

Because I don't think there's not a one of us that would want to walk out of our house unclothed. Correct? Now, I'm not trying to make you blush or anything like that. I'm just saying, we all make sure that our pants are on and that we have a shirt on, that we do not walk out of our homes unclothed.

To be clothed is to be covered. And so Paul was saying here is that when we arrive into heaven, that we are, guess what?

We are covered. We're covered by Christ. We're taken care of. And he uses this word in here, our, our.

We put on our house from heaven. That our, oh, you are, our, saying is that those that belong to Christ.

[19 : 38] Those that have professed Christ as their Savior. Those that live for Christ as wolves. Let me remind y'all of something.

Heaven is not by default. Let me, let me, let me explain that to you so you you have a little clearer understanding what I mean by that.

When a person dies, they do not automatically go to heaven. Church membership is not going to get you to heaven.

If you fulfill some sort of position in the church, it doesn't matter, you know, deaconship doesn't get you into heaven. Sunday school teacher doesn't get you into heaven. And just so you don't feel as though I'm trying to beat people up, being a pastor does not get you into heaven.

Good deeds does not get you into heaven. Those are all good things. But the last time I checked, scripture says that Jesus is the only way to heaven.

[20 : 53] the only way. It's for those that have been born again, that have put their own self to this.

And Paul said a while ago where we read it, he is crucified with Christ. Remember when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus in John chapter 3? Nicodemus, an expert in God's law, and Jesus answered him and said in John 3, 3, for most assuredly I say to him unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Now, why did I go into all that? For this reason. These truths that we're looking at today in our passage, they only apply to the follower of Jesus Christ.

They only apply to those that have fully surrendered to Jesus Christ. These truths do not apply to non-believers. You cannot apply these truths into your lives without having Jesus primarily as your Savior and living in the glory.

That may shock some, but that's the word of God. Paul is speaking to believers.

[22 : 10] He's saying, yes, we may have these complaints, we may groan from time to time, but guess what? One day, this messed up, sinful, mortal life that we mourn over will one day be swallowed up when we see Jesus face to face.

I mean, that should get some of y'all excited. I'm not saying we need to go Pentecostal up in here, but we need to be shouting for joy knowing that one day, this world that we struggle with will be over.

Oh, man. 1 Corinthians 15, beginning in verse 54, Paul said this, that, so when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written that death is swallowed up in victory.

Oh, death, where is your sting? Oh, Hades, where is your victory? For the sting of death, the sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, like, oh, victory in Jesus. I'm not going to sing anymore, I'm just, I don't know about y'all when I sing that, there's this victory in Jesus.

[23 : 55] Because I don't know about y'all, I'm tired of struggling with sin. Did the preacher just say that? Oh, absolutely. I'm sure you're tired of struggling with sin as well. Praise the Lord that I'm saved once and for all from the wages of sin because of my salvation that I have in Jesus.

But I long for the day where no longer will I have to come to the Lord pleading for His mercy because I failed Him.

I long for the day where no more, where I won't have to come to the Lord telling Him that I'm sorry that I allowed circumstances to overwhelm Him when all I needed to do was just trust in Him.

Oh, oh, victory in Jesus. Oh, victory in Jesus. Finally, in this passage, we see that we need to be mindful of who we are when we moan, when we complain.

Verse 6, Paul says, therefore, I like that word, therefore. It's basically saying, now that I've done said how it is, this is how you need to respond.

[25 : 21] He says, therefore, though we are always confident and know that while we are at home in this body, we are away from the Lord, we walk by faith and not by sight.

I don't know about y'all, that's hard for me to do at times. And I think if you're honest with yourself, you could probably say the same thing. I'm not saying that we can't apply this, we are to apply this truth in our lives.

I'm just saying sometimes it's hard to say that we live by faith and not by sight, but Paul says we are to do so. We walk by faith and not by sight, yet we are confident and satisfied to be out of the body and at home with the Lord.

And he says it again, therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him. Some people may ask, well, how do I, how do I live a life pleasing to God?

And I say, well, the Bible just says obedience. Obedience. When he said to walk by faith and not by sight, it's just simply saying we're just going to be obedient to the one that has us all under control.

[26 : 54] You know, God is sovereign, did we not forget that? Do these things catch God by surprise when they have it? Oh, absolutely not. He's very aware of what's going on. And he also has a plan to make things right.

And that's why he tells them that we walk by faith. That we're confident, that we're satisfied. We trust that He's always going to be there for us.

You know, my pastor would tell me from time to time when I would call, oh, I don't know what I'm going to do. Oh, you got that person in your life? You should. That you get to call and say, oh, I don't know.

I don't know. I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know what to do. And my pastor would always tell me the same words. Just stay the course, Tony. Just stay the course, of course. Don't allow anything to deter you.

Don't allow anything to distract you. Don't allow anything or anyone. And when I say anyone, I'm not talking about people in general. I'm talking about the prince of this world, Satan.

[27 : 57] Don't let Satan discourage you from who you are in Christ. Don't let him plant thoughts into your heart and mind to get you to react in a way that would be dishonorable in the sight of God.

You ever taken matters into your own hands? I can't be the only one, right? And I will tell you this, I'm the master at Sabbath Hodge. I am.

And I only say that because when I take God out of the equation, I will mess things up. But you know when that happens? That happens when Satan says, God doesn't really have this.

I mean, I've seen this sign all over Shelbyville and some people's yards, right? God's got this. And then Satan will come in and say, God doesn't have this. Tony, you need to handle up on that if you're the neighbor of God.

And let me tell you something, that's a lie from hell. When you hear that small voice saying, you need to handle up on it, you need to take, you need to react in this way, like the, the Karen joke I talked about in the beginning when Karen goes to the manager and tries to take charge and make things happen.

[29 : 28] No. And then we laugh because we're like, oh, she's making a fool out of herself. Look at the way she's acting. Oh, man, listen, listen.

People are watching. People are watching. And I'm just simply saying that when we, when we overreact, when, when we, panic, we're, we're, we're displaying somebody that says, I do not trust the Lord.

Oh, it's, it's something how our actions may depict something. Like I said in the beginning, the title was temporal versus eternal.

Did we forget that everything that happens in this world is temporal? It's why we call it a season that it shall to come to pass. And that's why Paul said, therefore, now that I proclaim this to you, you know what to do.

I want to close with what he said because we read verses 54 through 57 in 1 Corinthians, but look what he says in verse 58, 1 Corinthians 15.

[30 : 53] Paul says, therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Stand firm.

hold tight. Stay the course. Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Hmm. Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Oh. Give yourself fully to the Lord. you know, giving ourselves fully to the Lord is not a Sunday morning thing. It's not a Wednesday night thing.

It's not a thing we do when we're around certain people. Giving ourselves fully to the Lord is that every waking breathing moment in our lives is in service to Holy God.

I've used this before from time to time. I used to tell folks, you know, that Jesus didn't partially die on a cross for you. We don't sing like Jesus gave it partially and partially to him.

[32 : 09] Oh, right? We give ourselves fully to him. It comes down to this. God honors obedience.

When you honor him with your life, he'll honor you in return. I believe as the apostle Paul did, that sometimes we forget that this world, these groanings that we have are temporal.

I do. But for the redeemed, those that have fully surrendered to Jesus Christ, we forget, that I pray that this was a reminder that one day we get to trade this all in for what awaits us in glory.

Didn't we sing a song a while ago that there's no scars in heaven? Listen, folks, sin wounds. sin leaves a scar.

And I'm sure a lot of us have scars all over us because of sin. Isn't it something that one day we get to trade this vessel in for something to turn?

[33 : 52] Be thankful for that. So here's the thing I'd like for us to do. For a lot of y'all in this room, you can be thankful that you have salvation in Christ.

But for some of y'all in this room, you may know about Jesus, but you don't truly know Jesus. Now I say that and be ugly.

And forgive me if it comes out that way, but I'm just simply saying this, that I never walk into a room assuming every single person in here had gone to heaven. It would be foolish of me to think that.

I'm just simply saying this, that you heard me say something during the course of this message.

These truths do not apply to non-believers. others. They only apply to those that fully surrender to Jesus Christ.

So there's only one of two types of people in this room, saved and not saved. If you're here today, you're saved, and based off this word, you can say that you're living in a manner that's bringing glory and honor to the Lord.

[35 : 12] Hey, praise the Lord. Keep going. That's my encouraging word to you. Don't stop, keep going. Or maybe here today, you know Jesus, but you're failing.

You may be failing because you may be facing something. I don't really know any of y'all here today. I don't know you personally like that. Say, I know what you're going through, but the Lord knows what you may be going through.

And I'm just simply saying, if you're struggling with something right now, that you're having a hard time just to simply lay at his feet, what's stopping you from doing so today?

You know when we lay our petitions at the feet of him, you know what we do sometimes? We'll put it at his feet and we'll go back and say, hey, Lord, are you working on that yet? Hey, Lord, have you taken care of that yet?

Hey, Lord, are you aware that I put something down at your feet? Hey, Lord, I know you're busy, so let me grab it back and hold on to, oh, man, listen. When we lay these things down in the feet, we leave them there and trust that he's on.

[36 : 22] Maybe that's you today. Maybe you're that person who needs to quit running away from God. Maybe you're that person that might have spent your whole life in church, but you never fully surrendered to Jesus.

Jesus. And if you're wondering if that's true or not, just look at the fruits of your life and they'll tell the story. So whatever you need to do today, I'm sure we're about to have an invitation here right now.

I might ask y'all to come up. Whatever you need to do today, do so while it's called today. We're not promised tomorrow, but if the Lord's putting it on your heart that there's a decision that you need to make, I'd love to talk with you.

I'd love to pray with you. If you don't feel comfortable with me, you don't know me, there are great men of God in this room right now. There's great women of God in this room that I'm sure that if you just go up to them and say, hey, I need to pray, I need to talk, they will be more than happy to do so. Father, thank you for this time that we have to come together, Lord, and I do pray that if there's any decisions that need to be made, may be done so here right now today, for we're not even promised

