



A Letter of Grace

2 Corinthians

The Great Divide
(4:16-5:10)

1

Introduction

- One of the unchangeable realities of life is pain, peaking, decline, and death
- There are various attempts to deny, minimize, or control each of these
- In the end, they all are limited and eventually fail
- This can lead to despair, hopelessness, worry, and fear
- As followers of Jesus, we believe that there is a great divide, and decay and death are not the end, but the beginning of something much better than this world

2

Affliction vs. Glory (4:16-18)

So we do not *lose heart*.

Though our *outer self* is wasting away,
our *inner self* is being renewed day by day.

For this *light momentary* affliction
is *preparing* for us an *eternal weight* of glory
beyond all comparison,
as we *look not* to the things that are seen
but to the things that are unseen.

For the things that are seen are *transient*,
but the things that are unseen are *eternal*.

3

Tent vs. Building (5:1-5)

For we know that if *the tent* that is our earthly home is destroyed,
we have *a building* from God,
a house not made with hands,
eternal in the heavens.

For in this tent we *groan*,
longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,
if indeed by putting it on we may not be found *naked*.

For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened
—not that we would be *unclothed*,
but that we would be *further clothed*,
so that what is mortal may be *swallowed up by life*.

He who has *prepared us* for this very thing is God,
who has given us the Spirit as *a guarantee*.

4

Absent vs. Present (6-10)

So we are always of *good courage*.

We know that while we are *at home* in the body
we are *away* from the Lord,
for we *walk* by faith, not by sight.

Yes, we are of *good courage*,
and we would *rather be* away from the body
and *at home* with the Lord.

So whether we are at home or away,
we make it our aim to please him.

For we must all *appear* before the judgment seat of Christ,
so that *each one* may *receive* what is due
for what he has done *in the body*,
whether *good or evil*.

5

Application

- The great divide - our hope is not here and now, but in what is to come
 - Our physical decline (and death) is a *fact* of fallen nature
 - Our spiritual renewal (and faith) is a *work* of God's Spirit
- Hard times, dissatisfaction, and loss are coming
 - For every good thing attempted there are many more things we can't
 - This doesn't have to diminish our desires and efforts to push against what is decaying or difficult
 - Not by sight, but faith
- Hope offered to the non-Christian

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