Second Corinthians 5

Introduction:

1. This is clearly one of the fullest chapters in the New Testament, containing references to the resurrection, heaven, the final judgment, the nature of preaching, the love of Christ, the response of saints, the duty of saints, and justification.
2. Though primarily a chapter to defend and explain Paul's ministry and the basis for his enduring many severe trials and his life of zealous service, there are many lessons for the humblest and simplest believer to lay hold of for himself.
3. The previous chapter was spent defending Paul's ministry, and this chapter is closely connected to it.

Outline of Chapter 5

1-8 Paul's confidence of heaven.
9-11 Paul's zeal in light of judgment.
12-17 Paul's zeal in light of Christ's love.
18-21 Zeal and reconciliation are all of God.

5:1 *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

A. Paul and his companions did not faint, because of their great faith in a glorious future (4:1,16-18).
B. A child of God with faith in his heart by the Spirit of God knows with certainty the future of heaven.
   1. This is quite amazing! The world's greatest thinkers do not know where we came or why we have to die, and we know with certainty both answers and the future life in a new spiritual body!
   2. Even Job, without hearing the gospel, knew that he would be saved from death (Job 19:25-27).
   3. Doubting salvation and the certainty of heaven only occurs with a grieved or quenched Spirit.
   4. Paul had no such problem, for he declared their great confidence (5:6-8), which was true of all saints in the final keeping of their souls (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; II Tim 1:12,18; 4:8 I Pet 4:19.
   5. If you want to assure your heart, then love and serve others by the Holy Spirit (I John 3:14-19).
   6. It is by spiritual fruit bearing in Christ that eternal life is proven (II Peter 1:5-11; I John 2:3-5).
   7. Paul was persuaded, fully convinced, that nothing could separate him from God (Rom 8:29-39).
C. What is the earthly house of this tabernacle? The physical body in which our souls presently dwell.
   1. Peter's death was putting off his tabernacle, which Jesus foretold (II Pet 1:13-15; John 21:18-23).
   2. Children should be told at funerals, "That body is just the old house that Christian once lived in."
   3. It is an earthly house, because it was formed from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7; 3:19).
   4. Our bodies are earthy – made of earth, because we came from earthy Adam (I Cor 15:47-48).
   5. Our bodies are earthy or earthly, because they are of the earth (John 3:12; I Cor 15:40; Jas 3:15).
   6. A tabernacle is a certain kind of house! It is only lived in temporarily (II Sam 7:1-3; Heb 11:9)!
D. How does the body dissolve? When the spirit leaves the body at death, the body returns to clay (4:7).
   1. So weak is this physical body that Eliphaz mocked it as being crushed by the moth (Job 4:17-21).
   2. At your next funeral, respectfully squeeze the corpse's hand: you will feel the dissolving clay.
   3. Even before the spirit leaves the body, it begins to disintegrate back to mere dust (Eccl 12:1-7).
E. What is the building of God? The glorified spiritual body for the soul in heaven (I Cor 15:35-57).
   1. If you want details about it, read I Corinthians 15:35-57, and fear being a fool (I Cor 15:35-36)!
   2. Job was confident his body would be restored right down to his own eyesight (Job 19:25-27).
F. The house in heaven, or the heavenly body, is not made at all with hands, for it is a spiritual body.
   1. But how does that differ from our present body? It was made from dust by the hands of God!
   2. The spiritual body waiting for you in heaven was not made by reforming natural matter at all!
   3. Though your present physical body was truly created by God, it is not the spiritual body to come.
G. The body waiting for the righteous is eternal, that is, the mortal saints will put on immortality!
   1. The body you were given at conception had a default life expectancy of about 70 (Psalm 90:10).
   2. There is planned obsolescence and self-destruction worked into every body because of sin.
   3. The spiritual body has a life expectancy of infinity (I Cor 15:53-57; I Thes 4:17; Rev 21:4; 22:5).

5:2 *For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:*

A. For what, or in what, did Paul groan? He groaned in his earthly house of this tabernacle (5:1,4), for he greatly desired to be clothed with his spiritual, immortal, heavenly body, which he had described.
B. Spirit-filled saints desire their eternal body, for every day reveals weakness and death, which is the consequence of sin, and which causes the whole creation to groan and travail in pain (Rom 8:17-25).
C. Continuing the metaphor of a house for the human body, Paul also referred to it as clothing, which is something you put on to cover nakedness and avoid exposure (Gen 3:7,21; Rom 13:14; Ep 4:22-24).
D. Man is body, soul, and spirit; but he can talk about his soul as distinct from his body, for the soul lives on after the physical body dies and dissolves, but it inherently craves a body (II Pet 1:13-15).
E. If there is an eternal body with eternal life waiting for us in an eternal heaven, we should groan for it.
F. A spiritual perspective knows that to be with Jesus Christ in heaven is far better (Philippians 1:23).
G. You will not have such a desire, unless you are born again and setting affections there (Col 3:1-4).

5:3 *If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.*

A. "We groan for death and heaven, if as described, we shall obtain a new body for our souls" (5:1-3).
B. For the following verse (5:4), continues this thought as desiring the new body, not merely death.
C. Paul's desire was not merely to die and escape this life, which would leave him naked; but he rather desired to have his new, spiritual body to clothe and house his soul forever, as he had just described.
D. Death is to have the soul unclothed from the physical body, which is its covering and house.
E. All men are three part beings, possessing a body, soul, and spirit. The body houses the other two.
F. When a soul is naked or homeless, that is, without its body, we usually call it a disembodied spirit!
G. There was no purpose to groaning for death, unless there would be a replacement body for him.

5:4 *For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*

A. Life in this body is no picnic, and the frailty of the human body generates a burden and groaning.
B. Paul refers to our physical body again as a tabernacle, which is only a temporary tent for the soul.
C. Paul did not merely desire death with groaning, but to obtain eternal life and his spiritual body.
D. The goal and issue are the obtaining of eternal life and heaven, not merely getting rid of this body.

5:5 *Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*

A. God created Paul, Timothy, and all the elect for this end – the enjoyment of a new body in heaven.
    1. The word "wrought" is the past tense and participle of the verb "work." God formed them for it.
    2. The selfsame thing is eternal life, heaven, and the spiritual body from heaven for Paul's soul.
    3. Paul's eternal inheritance was based on predestination, by the God Who works, or wrought, all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph 1:10-11), and so was Paul's adoption (Eph 1:3-6).
    4. Glorification is the end result of several operations of grace by the will of God (Rom 8:29-39).
    5. The blessed God is the omnipotent and sovereign Potter of humanity; and He afore prepared, or wrought, vessels of mercy for His own glory (Rom 9:21-24). Praise His glorious name!
    6. Paul's salvation was by God's eternal purpose, revealed by Jesus and His gospel (II Tim 1:9-10).
    7. How else could God display His glorious grace without saving human rebels against their will?!
    8. When the elect get to heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ will declare that their eternal inheritance had been prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34 cp Matthew 25:41).
    9. Eden's sin was not a surprise; salvation is not strictly remedial; God had planned it (Acts 15:18).
    10. It is a travesty of Arminian ignorance to think that election is taught in only one or two places.

11. What did God do for Paul? He created, predestinated, justified, and regenerated Paul for heaven!
12. There is no human merit in the obtaining of heaven, even in the case of zealous man like Paul.
13. You did not work for salvation and eternal life; God worked out the details of it for you! Glory!

B. The guarantee, down payment, surety bond, or assurance of eternal life is the Holy Spirit's presence.
1. Earnest money is a deposit or down payment to show the intent of a promising party to perform.
2. The Spirit, God's presence in a believer's life, is the earnest of heaven (II Cor 1:22; Eph 1:14).
3. If you are a born again believer, God and Christ are present within you by the Spirit (Jn 14:23).
4. The Holy Spirit comforts, convicts, teaches, assures, and justifies your behavior and conduct.
5. It is the Holy Spirit that causes us to joy in our Abba, Father (Rom 5:1-5; 8:14-16; Gal 4:6).
6. If you do not know this by experience, you are either not born again or are walking in the flesh.
7. The more you walk in the Holy Spirit, the more you will groan for heaven and be confident of it.

5:6 *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

A. What is the "therefore," there for? Paul drew a conclusion of confidence of what had gone before.
B. The exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which kept Paul from fainting, was certain (4:16-18).
C. Based on faith in God's purpose and the witness of the Spirit, Paul was confident of eternal life, which gave him confidence in life; for what physical sufferings can possibly compare (Rom 8:18)?
D. By faith, Paul knew there were only two places for his soul – home in the body or with Jesus Christ, so what is there to fear, since the removal of his physical body by death would deliver him to Christ!
E. The knowledge of eternal life made him a stranger and pilgrim here on earth (Heb 11:13; I Pet 2:11).
F. The following verse will plainly declare Paul's whole approach to life to be based on faith in heaven.

5:7 *(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

A. Appealing to his argument that he only looked at invisible things, he declared himself of faith (4:18).
B. The Christian life is one of faith – the just shall live by faith – in which they see past this vain world to a whole different world of things invisible to the natural eye. All objects of sense are vanity!
C. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1-3); which causes those with it to do great things contrary to the flesh, based on confident spiritual expectations.
D. Abraham looked for a city with foundations, and Moses quit Egypt with eyes on His invisible Christ!
E. A man with faith like Paul can endure most anything, for he is absolutely confident of the future; and he can experience fantastic joy and glory, in spite of suffering, by loving the invisible (I Pet 1:6-9)!
F. The expectation of resurrection and glorification is patiently waiting for the invisible (Rom 8:24-25)!

5:8 *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

A. Our confidence in heaven is such, that we would rather die and go to be present with the Lord Christ.
B. While Paul expressed confidence in being away from the Lord (5:6), he rather had greater confidence in being out of the body and present with the Lord.
C. A child of God can only be in two places! Paul did not consider three! Therefore, death is merely the removal from this place to heaven and immortal glory! Is your confidence similar to Paul's?
D. It is one thing to know truth intellectually; but it is quite another thing to be confident against death!
E. To be with the Lord is far better than staying here, which every one in the Spirit knows (Phil 1:23).

5:9 ***Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.***

A. Here we have another intermediate conclusion by "wherefore." If God has eternal life, immortality, and a new spiritual body prepared for those who please Him, then by all means let us please Him!
B. Paul presented salvation as a matter of labor and works, much more than current theology allows.
   1. Most theology is corrupted by Arminianism, which exalts a single, emotional, hokey decision.
   2. Paul labored to be accepted of Christ! Why did he not just relax and rest on accepting Jesus?
   3. Paul did all he could to make sure he attained unto the resurrection of the dead (Phil 3:8-11).
   4. Faith without works is dead and no evidence of salvation at all, contrary to Lordship opponents.
   5. The blessed Lord Jesus Christ does not care how well you can call on His name (Matt 7:21-23).
C. Paul emphasized labor to be accepted here; he also labored because he was accepted (I Cor 15:58)!
D. There are things Christians can be doing to be accepted here and there (Acts 10:34-35; II Pet 1:5-11).

5:10 ***For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.***

A. Though Paul used the plural pronoun "we" for Timothy and himself, he included all hearers (5:11).
B. We must all appear – this is not an option – it is an absolute certainty (Eccl 12:14; Heb 6:2; 9:27).
   1. God is not asking if you are willing to appear before Him, and you cannot escape by any means.
   2. This is the most horrific event of life, by which all others fade into total oblivion and vanity.
C. It is the judgment seat of Jesus Christ, because He is the coming Judge of all men, alive or dead, just or wicked (Matt 25:31-46; John 5:26-29; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom 14:10-12; II Tim 4:1; I Pet 4:4-5).
   1. This Jesus is almost entirely unknown to those Christians drunk on seeker sensitive philosophy.
   2. This sober passage will be one of the least used Bible verses in pulpits across America today.
   3. They have obliterated His judgment of the Jews for disobedience in 70 A.D. to obscure Him.
   4. Everyone today wants the deceitful, smooth things that get rid of a holy God (Isaiah 30:8-11).
   5. We need more preaching of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come (Acts 24:25).
D. There are fatalistic Antinomians, who do not believe that the elect will ever appear before Christ.
   1. It is too bad for them that Paul plainly denied their heresy, for he himself would be judged there.
   2. And in fact, his whole lesson here is for the elect, who should live in light of coming judgment.
   3. There must be a division between a judgment of inquiry and a judgment of condemnation: the elect shall have their lives examined and revealed, but they will not be condemned (I Cor 11:32).
   4. The books will reveal all men are sinners, but the elect are in the book of life (Rev 20:11-15).
   5. Go ahead and count on it! You better fear God, for He will judge your whole life (Ecc 12:13-14).
E. How will the elect and reprobates both receive the things done in their bodies on Judgment Day?
   1. The elect will be judged by discovery and sentencing as worthy of death, but saved by Christ.
   2. The reprobates will be judged by discovery and sentencing as worthy of death and sent to hell.
   3. A six-year old child in this church asked me to reconcile Psalm 103:12 and Revelation 20:11-15!
F. It is your daily wisdom to remember the eyes of the LORD are beholding everything (Prov 15:3).

5:11 ***Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.***

A. When Paul had a chance to speak to Greek philosophers, he told of coming judgment (Acts 17:31).
B. When Paul had a chance to speak to a governor, he told him of coming judgment (Acts 24:25).
C. Paul knew the terror of the Lord by faith in the Scriptures (Eccl 12:13-14; Is 45:23; Rom 14:10-12).
D. Have you read the excuses of a man with one talent and the judgment given him (Matt 25:14-30)?
E. Paul and his colleagues were confident that their transparent lives were acceptable to God and men.
F. For a complete dissection and application of this text, see, "The Judgment Seat of Christ."

5:12 ***For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.***

A. Paul said, "My purpose is not to promote myself to you, but to give you an answer for my defense."
   1. Paul was not promoting himself for their approval, acceptance, or his advantage of them (3:1).
   2. Paul wanted them to know the faith, life, hope, and sufferings of the apostles to glory in them.
   3. And he wanted them equipped to be able to defend him against his detractors in the church.

B. Paul's gospel, sufferings, faith, and life were all based on faith and truth, which deserved their glory.
   1. He had described the final judgment and claimed integrity before God and them (II Cor 5:11).
   2. His zeal in serving Christ was based on the sober reality of the coming judgment (II Cor 5:9-11).
   3. His life was one of faith in invisible spiritual things of heaven and immortal glory (II Cor 5:1-8).
   4. He endured enormous sufferings for the Corinthians by God's renewal and faith (II Cor 4:8-18).
   5. He preached a gospel that was superior to any Judaizer and hid only to the lost (II Cor 3:1 – 4:7).

C. The false teachers at Corinth, who opposed Paul, had no real religion, but gloried in fleshly image.
   1. They despised and ridiculed his appearance and speech in contrast to his letters (II Cor 10:10).
   2. We do not know how Paul looked, but he had some weaknesses (II Cor 10:1; Gal 4:13-16).
   3. They gloried in education, eloquence, wisdom, riches, appearance, and other vain pretenses.
   4. They had no real religion of the heart, known by holiness, Christian love, honesty, and service.
   5. There are many such politicians today, who have no use for God's truth or God's simple people.

D. Paul's religion was obviously very much based in his heart and proved by his cheerful sufferings, constant faith, pure doctrine, holy life, exaltation of Christ, service to others, and deep humility.

E. True ministers of Jesus Christ have pure hearts (I Sam 13:14; I Chron 28:9).

5:13 ***For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.***

A. Going further with the slanders of his detractors, Paul implied an accusation of madness: though some slander us as being crazy, we are truly zealous to our great God (Acts 26:24-25 cp Mark 3:21).
   1. When refined seminary graduates with doctorate degrees, fine pulpit styles, tender bedside manners, suave and urbane styles, in expensive suits meet a John the Baptist, Jesus, or Paul with truth and zeal, they resort to ridicule and slander every time (Matt 11:18; John 7:20; 8:48; 10:20).
   2. A truly committed minister will appear deranged to the world and carnal Christians, for they do not understand his zealous passion and sacrificial commitment to spiritual things and others.

B. If some think us crazy, deranged, or immoderately fanatical, it is for the glory of God in Jesus Christ.

C. If you perceive us to be balanced, moderate, and sober, it is to teach and warn you in Christ Jesus.

D. Regardless of how they were viewed, Paul and colleagues were committed to serving God and man.

E. The churches of Christ need more men of truth and zeal that could draw similar slanders from men.

F. If believers live a holy, Christian lifestyle, they will be called strange (II Timothy 3:12; I Pet 4:1-5).

5:14 ***For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:***

A. Having defended his ministry and methods with an appeal to God's holy judgment, he now takes a different course with an appeal to Jesus Christ's example and salvation by infinite love for sinners.
   1. He had begun the prior section by explaining his great zeal in light of coming judgment (5:9-11).
   2. He now explains his zeal, which was sometimes slandered as fanaticism, in light of Christ's love.
   3. To be constrained is to be pressed into something by being compelled, forced, or obliged.
   4. For further examples of "constrain," see Acts 28:19; Gal 6:12; Job 32:18; and I Peter 5:2.

B. The logical implications of God's great salvation through Jesus Christ leave every saint obligated.
   1. Paul's careful and simple argument begins here and continues through the end of the next verse.
   2. His argument begins clearly with his words, "Because we thus judge," which leads to reasoning.
   3. If a substitute died for a man, then by implication that man had been condemned to certain death.
C. For a complete dissection and application of this text, see, "The Love of Christ Constraineth Us."

5:15 ***And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.***

A. We are dealing with practical salvation, the holy lifestyle that Paul was "constrained" to live (5:14).
B. Paul continued his holy reasoning from the previous verse, introduced by "because we thus judge."
C. Jesus Christ's glorious death for the elect, and then His subsequent resurrection, should cause the elect, who were justly condemned to death without Him, to live for Him with Paul's zealous passion.
D. If a debtor of 500 pence loves more than a debtor of 50 pence (Luke 7:41), how much more should we love, who have been frankly forgiven an eternal death?
E. Our debt is to live for Him, and nothing else – doctrine, church, or men – will suffice at all.
F. We are not our own, and it should clearly show (Romans 6:11-12; 14:7-8; I Corinthians 6:19-20).
G. The first of three occurrences of "henceforth" is in this verse, which means our lives ought to change from the time we come to know Jesus Christ in truth by blessed wisdom from God.
H. This verse, rather than teaching that some for whom He died will not live due to unbelief, is teaching the specific and definite purpose of His death (Titus 2:14).
I. The "all" here is all those under consideration, all those for whom He died. The context rules.

5:16 ***Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.***

A. Observe the "wherefore," which drew a practical conclusion from Paul's appeal to Christ's love for his fanaticism in serving Jesus Christ (5:14-15).
B. Observe the three occurrences of "henceforth," which indicate the point of practical conversion by "thus judging," which is the beginning of a new way of looking at all things by learning Christ.
C. You must understand "know" as affectionate respect and "flesh" as carnal perspective and values.
   1. Paul and Timothy did know many other men, both by cognizance and affection, which were yet in physical bodies, so we must seek for a further sense of the word "flesh."
   2. Neither Paul nor Timothy had known Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry of incarnate flesh.
   3. Therefore, we understand Paul to say, after learning Christ aright, he did not care about any carnal or worldly relationships with men, nor did he even hold to his former carnal and worldly views of an earthly Messiah. His adoration and affection for men after the flesh was gone.
   4. The knowledge of Christ's love, leading to a life dedicated to Him alone in passionate zeal, caused Paul to lose all desire and esteem for fleshly relationships, which had been built on a carnal foundation of earthly values and affection, which would only hinder him now.
   5. Consider the emphasis in the Bible on not fearing men or seeking their approval (Job 16:19; Prov 29:25; Luke 14:26; Matt 12:47-50; I Cor 4:1-3; Gal 1:11; 2:5-6; Col 3:11; James 2:1-4).
   6. Paul's thoughts and desires of the Messiah were once fleshly, based on Jewish fables of an earthly kingdom with national glory, and consistent with Moses' law and justification by it; but now they were only spiritual thoughts of His saving death as his Mediator with God.
   7. The two uses of henceforth here are from the same word in verse 15, which shows the forward change in perspective and conduct from knowing Jesus Christ in truth.
   8. The greatest measure of our faith and religion is a spiritual perspective of Jesus Christ, which ought to be of great admiration, thankfulness, appreciation, and devotion.

9. Paul did not care in the least for the carnal approval of any men, especially those that gloried in appearance, but not in heart (5:12). He was totally sold out to seeking God's approval in Christ.

D. If Jesus Christ will judge Paul, and if He died for Paul, then why would any mere man impress Paul?
   1. "Wherefore" indicates that Paul is appealing to his solitary ambition of pleasing Christ (5:9-15).
   2. The conclusion here of not being impressed by any man is based on the two aspects of the Lord.
   3. Henceforth is important, which means, from this time forward, after his conversion to Christ.

E. It is important to remember how much emphasis the false teachers put on human appearance and reputation (3:1; 5:12; 10:10-12; Gal 2:6), but Paul sought only the acceptance of God (5:9).

5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

A. We are dealing with practical salvation, the holy lifestyle that Paul was "constrained" to live (5:14).
   1. Do not miss "therefore," for it draws a conclusion from what just went before – zealous service.
   2. Paul had laid down two glorious motives for Christian service – judgment and love (5:9-15).
   3. He has mentioned labour (5:9), being accepted (5:9), judgment for things done (5:10), persuading men (5:11), manifest unto God (5:11), being beside himself (5:13), being constrained to exceptional activity (5:14), and the full commitment of those understanding salvation (5:15).
   4. And he has just repudiated any carnal or fleshly view of men, including even the Lord (5:16).
   5. After Paul described his zealous approach to Christ (5:9-16), he exhorted "any man" to it as well.
   6. If any man became convinced of Christ's love for him, he would be a new creature by obligation, just as Paul had reasoned out by his example for the obvious learning of the Corinthians readers.
   7. Do not miss the three occurrences of "henceforth" in 5:15-16, which indicate a new beginning, and which are based on Paul's "thus judging," or coming to a new understanding of all things!

B. This verse of Scripture is viewed several different ways involving different phases of salvation.
   1. The predominant position is the vital phase of salvation – regeneration makes us new creatures.
   2. But every honest Christian knows that all things are not made new, for he still struggles with sin.
   3. And there is the danger of losing Paul's example and exhortation by this leap to vital salvation.
   4. Others see a legal position in Christ that leaves them judicially new in Christ Jesus without sin, which might be true in other places, but there is no contextual reason for it here.
   5. And there is a dispensational view that sees the move to things of the new covenant of (3:1-18).
   6. But we understand it by context to be our practical salvation and conduct in Jesus Christ.

C. How can a man be in Christ practically? He believes on Christ, and he is baptized into Jesus Christ.
   1. True Christian conversion is being baptized into Christ (Gal 3:26-29; Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:12).
   2. True Christian conversion is putting off old things and putting on Jesus Christ (Rom 13:11-14).
   3. Therefore, "if any man be in Christ" can certainly be understood in a very practical sense.

D. How can any man be a new creature, with old things passed away and all things become new?
   1. By putting on the new man, created after God's image in true holiness (Ep 4:22-24; Col 3:1-10)!
   2. God created us in regeneration unto good works, which we show by bearing them (Eph 2:10).
   3. By being crucified to this world through Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4-6).
   4. It is a carnal Christian remaining in his old sins that is not properly in Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:9).
   5. There is an appeal for Christians to serve holiness as they once served sin (Romans 6:19; 7:6).
   6. Did not Paul show us how to have a change by counting all things as merely dung (Phil 3:7-14)?
   7. The life of Zacchaeus surely took a violent change for new things before Christ (Luke 19:8-9).

E. Is not the language of "all things" too strong for a practical application of this verse to conversion?
   1. The same Paul taught Christians to be transformed by the renewing of their minds (Rom 12:1-2).
   2. No, it is not, for Peter used similar language describing the full conversion of saints (I Pet 4:1-5).
   3. This is the same question men raise when considering John's strict statements (I John 3:6-10).

5:18 ***And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;***

A. What is the connection of the all things of 5:18 and the all things of 5:17? All things are of God.
   1. This verse is a transitional verse, taking us from the practical "all things" of 5:17 to the legal work of God to reconcile and justify us by Jesus Christ of 5:18-21.
   2. Paul transitioned to the work of God for us (5:18-21), by giving the credit for all things to God.
   3. The foundation for all things – eternal life (5:5), Christ's death (5:14-15), and a changed life (5:17) are all of God, founded in His eternal predestination and vital regeneration, both by grace.
   4. No matter what we work out, it was worked in us first by our glorious God (Philippians 2:12-13).
   5. No matter what part of salvation we consider, it is of God, for without grace we can do nothing.
   6. He had earlier left his line of reasoning to give all the credit for eternal life to God (5:5).
B. Reconciliation is putting two warring parties at peace with each other, which is a relational term.
   1. We often use it relative to warring marital spouses, just as does the Bible (I Cor 7:11).
   2. Is it different from justification, redemption, or propitiation? No, just another facet of salvation.
   3. When did reconciliation occur? On the cross of Calvary (Dan 9:24; Rom 5:10; Col 1:20-23).
C. What is the role of the minister? He is the bearer of the good news of reconciliation (II Tim 1:9-10).

5:19 ***To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.***

A. Here is further explanation of what was just stated, for "to wit" are God's words for an explanation.
B. There are four beautiful aspects to our salvation described here by the Spirit's inspired explanation.
   1. The blessed God, Who wrought us for immortal glory (5:5), sent Jesus Christ, Whom He chose out of the people to be our Saviour and Mediator (Ps 89:19; John 6:38-39; 17:2; I Tim 2:5).
   2. God reconciled the world of His elect, out of Jews and Gentiles, unto Himself, by putting away their sins and making them entirely acceptable to Him (Rom 9:21-24; Eph 1:3-6; Col 1:20-23).
   3. Instead of charging them with sin, He charged their sins to Jesus Christ, which put them in the glorious condition of being forgiven their sins (Ps 32:1-2; Is 53:5-11; I Pet 2:24).
   4. The message of this accomplished fact is brought to the elect by preaching, which is done by men chosen, gifted, and appointed by God (Eph 4:8-14; II Tim 1:9-10; II Tim 2:2).
D. Gospel preachers do not bring reconciliation or offer reconciliation, they bring the news of the facts!
   1. Gospel preachers do not bring life or immortality, they only bring them to light (II Tim 1:9-10).
   2. There is not one soul more or less in heaven by the labors or lack thereof of any or all preachers.
   3. The blessed God of heaven is not begging sinners at all to please let Him be reconciled to them!
   4. The gospel is a savor of life unto life and death unto death, but not death to life (II Cor 2:14-17)!

5:20 ***Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.***

A. If reconciliation was accomplished and finished at the cross, how did they yet need to be reconciled?
   1. They needed to know about this acceptance and forgiveness, as did Cornelius (Acts 10:34-35).
   2. They needed to have this glorious news of immortality brought to light (II Timothy 1:9-10).
   3. They needed to lay hold on eternal life by believing and obeying (I Tim 6:17-19; II Pet 1:5-11).
   4. Consider Paul addressing born again Jews, who were ignorant of reconciliation (Rom 10:1-5).
   5. God was already legally reconciled by Christ's death, but the elect need the practical news of it.
   6. God was already legally reconciled by His death, but the elect needed to know and believe it.
   7. The only ones who will hear and receive the news are those vitally saved (I Cor 1:18,24; 2:14)!
B. What good is an acquittal or pardon, unless a man is told about it? He still believes he is condemned.
C. What good is a surrender or truce, if the soldiers are not told about it? They think the war is still on.

D. When God's ministers are preaching the word of God, they should be received as God's servants bringing God's very words (I Sam 8:7; Mal 2:7; John 13:20; Acts 16:17; Gal 4:13-16; I Thess 2:13).
   1. An act against any ambassador or embassy is considered an act against the nation and people.
   2. The ministers of God have a great office and work, and they have beautiful feet in their work.
   3. They should be highly esteemed in love for their work's sake and paid (I Thes 5:13; I Tim 5:17).

5:21 *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

A. Here is one of the plainest statements of justification, reconciliation, and salvation in the Bible.
B. This is a legal verse, which does not address the eternal, vital, practical, or final phases of salvation.
   1. There is no possibility or potential in this transaction, for God purposed it and did it (Eph 1:11).
   2. Legally speaking, reconciliation was completed by Jesus Christ at Calvary (Romans 4:25; 5:10).
   3. Legal transactions are in God's mind, but as binding as any other transaction (Romans 5:12-19).
   4. God viewed the elect from eternity as reconciled, but He actually provided the price at the cross.
C. Consider the two incredible sides of the most fantastic legal settlement made in the world's history.
   1. First, God put our sins on sinless Jesus Christ, Who then died as a Substitute for them (Is 53:4-12; Dan 9:24; Rom 5:6-10,15-21; I Cor 15:3; Heb 9:15; 10:10-14; I Pet 2:24; 3:18; Rev 1:5; 5:9)!
   2. Second, God put the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ on us, by choosing us acceptable in Him (Acts 10:34-35; Rom 3:21-26; 5:15-21; 8:3-4; I Cor 1:30; Eph 1:3-6; Phil 3:9)!

Conclusion:

1. What will you do about the judgment seat of Christ? It should sober your every thought, word, and action.
2. What will you do about the love of Christ? You should pray to God for it to be increased (Eph 3:14-19).
3. Are you reconciled to God this morning? He is reconciled to believers. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "Salvation by Works," shows that salvation is much more than a hokey decision as Arminians think.
2. The sermon outline, "The Judgment Seat of Christ," which details II Cor 5:10-11 and motives for service from judgment.
3. The sermon outline, "The Love of Christ Constraineth Us," which details II Cor 5:12-17 and service motives from love.
4. The study outline, "When Were You Saved?" which provides an introduction and charts to the five phases of salvation.