

The Teaching of Second Corinthians 5:1-8

I think it's impossible to properly interpret Second Corinthians 5:1-8 apart from its context, a context essentially beginning in 2:14 and extending through 6:13. So, even though it's over 70 verses, I believe it's *very* important to commence this series of studies with an unhurried and thoughtful reading and general examination of this semi-immediate context before presuming upon our presuppositions for an interpretation of the divinely-inspired words of Paul. [We'll return to these notes once we're finished with that task.]

To briefly summarize, Paul began by speaking primarily of the apostles as God's agents in the spread of the fragrance both of God's knowledge and His Christ among all men. To those inclined to accept their Gospel message, the fragrance was likened to an aroma of life to life, while to those uninclined to accept the message, it was likened to an aroma of death to death.

After introducing the life and death motifs in chapter 2 (vv. 14-16), Paul then capitalized on them with a discussion about death's association with the mere literary covenant of Moses and life's association with the spiritual covenant of Messiah. He concluded that section of this extended context by saying that those who refused to remove the veil of the old covenant from their eyes were those bound for a state of eternal death, while those who were open-minded enough to see that Jesus was the fulfillment of that covenant were being transformed by His Spirit into a state of eternal life. Incidentally...

We should also be keenly aware of Paul's numerous contrasts:

Descriptive Words & Phrases Describing The Clothing of the Time <u>Before</u> the Clothing of God's Eternal Habitation	If there were to be a time in between, Paul referred to it as a time of nakedness , of being unclothed (5:3-4).	Descriptive Words & Phrases Describing The Clothing of the Time <u>After</u> the Clothing of God's Eternal Habitation
perishing (2:15, 4:3, 16)		salvation (2:15, 6:2)
death (2:16, 3:7, 9, 4:10-12, 6:9)		life (2:16, 3:6, 4:10-12, 5:4)
stone (3:3, 7)		heart (3:2-3, 4:6)
letter of death (3:6, cf. 3:3, 7)		Spirit of life (3:3-8, 18, 5:5)
old covenant (3:14)		new covenant (3:6)
lowly glory (3:7, 9-11, 18)		lofty glory (3:8-11, 18, 4:4, 6, 17)
passing away (3:7, 11, 13)		remaining (3:11, cf. Heb. 12:27)
condemnation (3:9)		resurrection (4:14)
veiled (darkness) (4:4, et.al.)		unveiled (light) (4:4, 6, et.al.)
oppression (4:8-12, 6:4-10)		liberty (3:17)
sin (5:21)		righteousness (3:9, 5:21)
outward (4:16, cf. "flesh" in 5:16)	Notice how chapter 4 bleeds right into chapter 5.	inward (4:16)
seen (4:18, 5:12)		unseen (4:18)
temporary (4:18)		eternal (4:17-18, 5:1)
of the earth (5:1)		of heaven (5:1-2)
(man-made) tent (5:1)		building of God (5:1)
house (made w/ hands) (5:1)		house not made w/ hands (5:1)
house of mortality (5:2, 4)		house of life (5:4)
a mere earnest (5:5)		the very house (5:5, 5:1-4)
absent from the Lord (5:6)		present w/ the Lord (5:8, 18-19, 6:16)
mere faith-confidence (5:7-8, 4:12)		sight (5:7, 4:18)
old creation (5:17)	new creation (5:17)	
trespasses (5:19)	no trespasses (5:19)	

I don't believe it's mere coincidence that the administration of Moses and those who refused to remove the Mosaic veil from their eyes and accept Jesus as the Messiah were perishing &/or passing away simultaneously (cf. 2:15 & 4:3 w/ 3:7, 11, & 13; **note present tense**). So there was a group/body of people that, along with the Mosaic covenant, was perishing; and there was a group/body of people that, along with the Messianic covenant, was coming to life!

Speaking of perishing and coming to life here, think on these questions: [1] What's another way of saying that something/someone is coming to life? It/he/she is resurrecting! So would it be wrong to say that Paul had resurrection on the brain when he was dictating this portion of Scripture? I don't think so. And [2] would it make any sense whatsoever that Paul had physical death &/or physical life on the brain in this context? To the honest-hearted, the answer is obviously "No." And...

Speaking of a body of perishing people &/or a perishing administration, in a similar context by the same writer to the Romans he exclaimed: "Who shall deliver me from this body of death" (7:24)? Not only did he go on to answer that this "who" was Jesus (v. 25), but he also wrote in that same chapter (v. 6), "We have been delivered from the law [that which gave sin its strength, bringing forth death, 1 Cor. 15:56], having died to what we were held by [there's the captivity idea], so that we should serve in *the newness of the Spirit* and not in *the oldness of the letter* [almost verbatim language as he employed in 2 Cor. 3]."

Just as he spoke of his dying to the law, thereby being delivered from the body of death by Jesus in Romans 7, so here in 2 Cor. 4 he spoke about this same spiritual death he was experiencing and the evidence of it in his physical body (vv. 7-12).

In v. 14 he spoke of how that eventually both the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians would be raised from death to life to be presented together as and in a body of life.

In v. 16 he spoke of the external body (the flesh which, in Paul's theology, represented the old covenant creation, cf. Php. 3:3-6) as perishing (or passing away, cf. 3:7, 11, & 13), while the internal body (the true man, the spirit which, in Paul's theology, represented the new covenant creation, cf. 3:6 & 8) was being made alive (and that's the present tense rendering of the Spirit's work during that time in 2 Cor. 3:6; The KIT [Kingdom Inter. Trans.] reads, "is killing" & "is making alive"; cf. John 5:21 for the only other place that exact term, *zoopoiei*, is found); note the contrast of OT glory and NT glory in chapter 3 with the glory of the internal man in verse 17. (Cf. Rom. 2:28-29.)

In v. 18 he spoke of the temporal (physical, fading, & corrupting) body of death of chap. 3 versus the eternal (spiritual, glorious, & incorruptible) body of life of which they were all a part.

After our text passage (2 Cor. 5:1-8), in 5:16-17 Paul contrasted knowing Jesus according to the old covenant creation (the flesh, which was passing away) with the new creation found in Christ by which all things &/or people become new, that is, reconciled to God (vv. 17ff). (Creation = a people. In fact, *demiougos* [e.g. Heb. 11:10] is "literally 'the begetter of a people'" [p. 6 of *Retracing the Platonic Text*, by John Russon]; when God set apart His own special people, He thereby "created" a people for Himself [cf. 2 Cor. 6:16, etc.])

In chapter 6, after reminding them that the day of salvation prophesied in Isa. 49 had come upon them (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11), of which their physical suffering at the hands of Jews was evidence, Paul then quoted yet another passage in that connection about the dwelling place in which God could live with His people (vv. 16-17); this ability of God to dwell with humans thru Christ's work of reconciliation should remind us of Rev. 21:1-3 and then of John 14:1-3 (cf. 14:10-11 [Father IN the Son], 19-21 [Life in Father, Son, & them], & 23 [cf. 2 The. 4:14 about God coming with Jesus in His kingdom or His house]). Now...

With all this body of death vs. body of life context surrounding our primary text of study, let's finally get to **2 Cor. 5:1-8 specifically**. (Let's read all eight verses before beginning.)

Verse 1: For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For: This term (*gar*) obviously directly connects this section with the last one; i.e., even under dire circumstances at the hands of Judaizers, Paul, due to what he introduced in this section, wasn't losing heart (4:16).

Know: This term (from the root *eideo*) is derived of the Greek term from which we get our word "video," meaning "to see" and therefore "perceive."

If: This term (*ean*) is usually translated as "if," indicating doubt; but it cannot be limited to that, for it's also used in some places in which no doubt is meant (e.g. 1 Cor. 9:16 ["when I preach the Gospel"], 1 John 3:2 ["when He is revealed"], and Rom. 9:27 ["though the number of the children of Israel ... is as the sand of the sea," which is of the same basic sentence structure as used here by the same writer]). So, especially relative to this general context, it's very possible that Paul, if he had written this in modern English, would've said, "We know that when our earthly house is destroyed..."

Our/We: As we've already gathered from the context, by the first person plural pronoun Paul was referring to himself, the other apostles, and all faithful Jewish Christians as opposed to his audience of Gentile Christians who were being heavily influenced by Judaizers to reject his gospel which excluded all things Mosaic (contrast "we" & "our" in vv. 1-11a with "you" & "your" in vv. 11b-13).

Earthly: This term (*epigeios*) literally means "on earth," and metaphorically refers to earthlings &/or the things earthlings would devise &/or build; it's only used 7 other times in all the Greek Old & New Testaments.

One of those times is in John 3:12: after Jesus spoke with Nicodemus for a while about how he'd need to be born again of the Spirit to be saved because his physical birth into Abraham's family wasn't enough, Jesus said to him that He had been speaking to him about "earthly things."

Another place is in Philippians 3, a chapter in which Paul wrote about the troublesome Judaizers; in vv. 18-19 he called them "the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their minds on earthly things." And...

The subject-matter of 2 Cor. 3—5 is very closely related to these two contexts.

House: This term (*oikia*) is used hundreds of other times in the Greek Old and New Testaments and simply refers to "a dwelling place." Since it can be used in both a physical (even for biological bodies [Job 4:19, 30:23, Ecc. 12:3, & Jer. 22:13]) and a spiritual sense (John 14:2 & here in v. 2), the meaning must be determined by context. So, in this context...

Earthly House apparently refers to a dwelling place associated with this physical realm as opposed to a dwelling of the spiritual realm (as the terms "God" & "heavens" later obviously suggest). And what might Paul have had in mind specifically when he wrote of this "earthly house"? I think his next term implies the answer to this question.

Tent: This term (*skenos*) isn't found anywhere else in the Bible except here and in v. 4. Besides the fact that it refers to a temporary dwelling place and that it's derived from the Greek term *skene*, little seems to be known about this term; so let's consider *skene*.

Firstly, just as we know that the English word "hypocrite" is from the Greek word *hypokrites* which refers to "an actor," so *skene* is the Greek word from which we get our English word "scene." How does that fit here? Well...

Early Greek *hypokritai* used “tents” or changing “booths” for their performances, and eventually, when scenic backdrops began to be used for their plays, that same term was applied to the staging props; over time *skene* came to be applied to any scenic background, thus coming down to us today as “scene.” In fact...

We do have one word in English just slightly closer to the term Paul used (*skenos*), our term “scenography” which is “the painting of stage scenery (as by the ancient Greeks)” (so says Webster). Anyway, “tent” is the main point here, something that “covers,” which is what the root *ske* in Greek essentially means.

Secondly, according to one scholar, *skene* is used about 300 times in the Greek Old Testament to refer to God’s tabernacle, meaning that it was obviously a common term used in relation to the very edifice that signified the old covenant habitation/world. Now let’s...

Consult three places in the New Testament where it’s used in this very manner:

In Acts 7:44 Stephen said, “Our fathers had the tabernacle (*skene*) of witness in the wilderness as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen.” Likewise, from someone, by the way, at Stephen’s stoning...

In Hebrews 8:5 Paul, when writing about the work of the priests, said that they served “the copy and shadow of heavenly things as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle (*skene*). For God said, ‘See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’” And...

In Revelation 15:5, of one of his visions John said that he saw “the temple (*naos*) of the tabernacle (*skene*) of the testimony in heaven.” Now here’s what’s significant about this verse:

There are two primary Greek terms for “tabernacle,” *naos*, which refers to the temple proper, and *hieron* which refers to the entirety of the temple area; so, e.g., when it speaks of Jesus running the animals out of the temple, it’s speaking of the area outside the *naos*—the *hieron*, not of the *naos* itself, for, by God’s own law, Jesus wasn’t allowed in the *naos* (cf. Trent, p. 27f).

This means that the word Paul used (*skene*) was used by John as another term for the temple (*naos*), the building which, according to Josephus, represented the old heavens and earth habitation or covenant world for God’s people.

I did happen to read the following on *skenos* (Paul’s exact choice of term here):

“For a Jew, *skenos* would be naturally associated with the desert wanderings of the Israelites after the exodus... To a Christian, the term would allude to the tabernacle as the locus of God’s presence among His people during the wilderness wanderings and then to the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ as the mode of God’s presence in believers during their pilgrimage of faith to the Promised Land of Christ’s immediate presence [*parousia*]” (The Second Epistle to the Corinthians by Murray J. Harris).

In a footnote he wrote that “Paul used *skenos* rather than *skene* because he wished to allude to the *ad interim* tent of meeting (Exo. 33:7-11) which was intended for provisional use until the tabernacle was constructed.” Sounds transitional. Huh?

With all this in mind, it appears that Paul wasn’t only thinking of the contrast between the old covenant world with the soon-to-come fullness of the new covenant world, but he was also thinking of the very time he lived as the anti-type to the wilderness wanderings, which, of course, wouldn’t be surprising since he also seemed to imply this in Hebrews 3:5—4:10, in which he even specifically referred to a generation as a period of forty years, the time spent in the wilderness (3:9-10 & 16-17).

Question: Who else thinks it might be slightly problematic to the traditional interpretation of this passage that Paul referred to a "plural" amount of individuals, while he referred to a "singular" house for them? (To me this pictures a plurality of family members living together in one house, under one roof, in this case in/under a new covering or covenant [two terms which, as one writer suggested, seem to be related]).

Destroyed: I didn't find this term (*kataluthe*) at all in the Greek OT, but I did find it 17 times in the NT: it's never used in reference to the demise of the human body (which is what tradition says Paul meant by "tent" in this passage), but I did find it used 8 times in the NT in reference to the destruction of the tabernacle (Mat. 24:2, 26:61, 27:40 [as well as Mark's & Luke's accounts of the same], & Acts 6:14).

The word means "to dismantle," an idea which, of course, corresponds perfectly to what one does with a "tent" when he's finished with it. Furthermore...

With reference back to our point about Paul's speaking of a plural amount of individuals and a single home for them, this term is an aorist tense verb, meaning that, as M. J. Harris said, "the event is viewed as a specific single occurrence"—a one-time incident for all simultaneously. Now how does that mesh with the intermittent deaths of individuals?

Incidentally, we can already see, in vv. 1-4 here, that Paul was building upon the idea he introduced in 4:16; i.e., just as 5:4b about mortality being swallowed up by life corresponds to 4:16b about the inward man being daily renewed until the renewal was complete, so the destruction of the earthly house in 5:1a corresponds to the perishing of the outward man in 4:16a. [Cf. seed being sown, germ being raised in 1 Cor. 15:42-43; John 12:24.]

We Have: In the original this verb is in what's called "the emphatic position," meaning that Paul was stressing the certain possession of this building of God; i.e., he had no doubt there was a dwelling place for them in God's future/fulfilled kingdom. The kingdom being an inheritance, it's as we say of a youth who's about to inherit a great estate: "He *has* so much."

A Building: As with the previous term for "tent," this term (*oikodome*) is pretty interesting: it comes from *oikos*, referring to a "house or dwelling place" (as discussed earlier) and *doma*, referring to "an edifice with a roof" (*doma* being, of course, where we get our word "dome"); the two words combined signify an established, concrete structure (i.e. a permanent home as opposed to a temporary home). Not only is this a reminder of King Solomon's temple as opposed to nomadic Moses' tent of meeting, but this also corresponds perfectly to Paul's statement in 4:18 in which he contrasted the temporary with the eternal.

Although the noun *oikodome* primarily refers to a literal edifice, the term also is used metaphorically to refer to intellectual or spiritual edification; in fact, out of the 18 times this word is found in the NT, 12 of those times it's translated in this sense.

Three of the other six times it refers to the various buildings included within Herod's *hieron*; and the last three times were all by Paul as follows:

In 1 Cor. 3:9 he referred to the church as God's *oikodome* (cf. v. 16).

In Eph. 2:21-22 Paul said of those first generation Jew & Gentile *church*-members that they were the "*oikodome*, being joined together, growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God." So...

In 2 Cor. 5:1, when Paul used this term one last time, how should it be interpreted? He wasn't referring to intellectual edification. He wasn't referring to Herod's temple (for that *hieron* actually represented the very thing [the old heavens and earth, as Josephus spoke of] that Paul was contrasting in this context). So it seems to me that we should choose to interpret Paul here to be speaking about the same thing he was in Eph. 2 & 1 Cor. 3; i.e., he had the future habitation of all Christians in mind—the fullness of the kingdom, the new Jerusalem, the new heavens and earth, etc.

I like what MacKnight wrote: "This building is the city which Abraham and his sons, who were heirs with him of the promised country, looked for while they lived in tents, and of which city the builder and maker is God (Heb. 11:10). To this city Paul ... gave the name *New Jerusalem* & *The City of the Living God*, because (as in the earthly Canaan which was a type of the heavenly country) Jerusalem was the place where Deity resided by the visible symbol of His presence and to which the tribes went up to pay homage to God; so ... in the heavenly country there [is] a particular place where Deity ... manifest[s] His presence and receive[s] the worship of the church of the firstborn."

From God: This preposition is a translation of the term *ek* which means "from out of," i.e. out from/of something as its source; unlike the temporary tent of meeting that God indirectly had constructed by means of earthlings (Heb. 6:5 & Acts 7:44-46), the permanent building under consideration here is spoken of as being "from" (*ek*) God as its direct source.

A House: This is the same term as found above (the feminine form of the term Jesus used in reference to the *hieron* in Mat. 21:12-13, by the way), referring to a dwelling-place. However...

Since it fits perfectly into our notes at this point, and since Peter (in 1 Pet. 2:5a) used some of the same terminology that Paul did here, I think it's worth reading: speaking to Christians, Peter said to them, "You ... are being built up a spiritual house (*oikodomesthe*)" (cf. Heb. 3:6).

Besides that verse, Hebrews (which I, of course, believe Paul wrote) also sheds more light on our text: after speaking of "the true tabernacle" in 8:2, Paul went on in 9:11 to write that "Christ came as High Priest of the good things [*mello*, about] to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation." Hmmm, couldn't fit much better as we flow into the next phrase in 2 Cor. 5:1.

Not Made with Hands: George Beale wrote, "That Paul has a temple image in view is apparent from the phrase 'not made with hands,' which virtually everywhere else is a technical way of speaking about the new eschatological temple. In addition, the references to 'building,' 'house,' and 'dwelling' occur in Paul elsewhere with respect to Israel's temple or the church as the temple" (*The Temple and the Church's Mission*, p. 257). So let's consider some other passages in which this terminology is found.

Dan. 2:35 & 45 speak of Christ and His kingdom (which, by the way, are inseparable—they're one by virtue of being married) are spoken of as being "cut out without hands."

Though at one time it may have been considered by the Jews to be true, by the time of Acts 7:48, Stephen informed his Jewish audience that "the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands."

In Eph. 2:11 Paul spoke of the Jews as being the old covenant people who were known as "the circumcision made in the flesh by hands," while in Col. 2:11 he spoke of Christians in general as being those who were "circumcised with the circumcision made without hands." Lastly, when speaking of the fall of the old system and the rise of the new...

Paul said around AD 63, "Now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.' Now this, 'yet once more,' indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Heb. 12:27) taking our minds right back to 2 Cor. 3 (esp. v. 11).

Eternal: Of the term (*aionios*) for "eternal" in 4:18 (which is the same here) Thayer said it means "without end, never to cease, everlasting." Incidentally, speaking of time, *oikodome* above is related to *oikonomia* which refers to any administrative period (Eph. 1:10).

In the Heavens: At the time Paul wrote (ca. AD 56), this spiritual & eternal habitation for Christians was in the process of being built; it hadn't arrived yet and was thus still in heaven or the heavens (meaning the same thing; just compare the usage of such in Matthew's Gospel account with Mark's & Luke's accounts). Refer to Gal. 4:21-31 for more info.

Verses 2-3: For [as with the “for” of v. 1, this one is likewise connected to 4:16] **in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from Heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.**

This: This, of course, refers back to the “tent” of v. 1, the tent or tabernacle which was, in their minds (as well as in this context), the symbol of the old covenant world in which they were still then living; v. 4 supports this, saying, “we (plul.) who are in this tent (sing.) groan.”

Groan: If we’re going to continue using the Bible to explain the Bible (especially when the information comes from more than two or more letters penned by the same author), then, beginning at this point in 2 Cor. 5, it’s necessary to consult Romans 8.

So let’s read that entire chapter, then we’ll focus on vv. 18-23, perhaps even vv. 18-28. (This Rom. 8 paragraph must be kept in its chapters 4–8 context: chap. 4 speaks of how true righteousness/salvation for all men must come by faith, and chap. 5 speaks of Jesus being the answer to man’s problem with law & his need for grace; then chap. 6 speaks of their being baptized into Christ, enabling their future resurrection to life which would not be thru/due to law; then chap. 7 speaks of how the law essentially did nothing but frustrate God’s created or chosen people via Abraham [who was made righteous by faith, chap. 4]; lastly chap. 8 speaks of the fulfillment of the resurrection-life promise of chap. 6 to those of God’s created people who grueled their way through the transitional process, forever leaving behind their bondage to corruption caused by law, or rather man’s inability to be righteous via law.)

So not only is the word “groan” used here in vv. 2 & 4, but it’s also of the same original word Paul used in Romans 8:23 and in the same type of context.

The groaning Paul spoke of here was specifically said to be due to their earnest desire to be clothed upon with their heavenly habitation (see this idea also in v. 4).

Especially if we’re desperately wanting to go from a negative situation to a positive one, isn’t that the way we all do when we’re going through any sort of transition?

Those Jewish Christians saw how that their old covenant clothing was nearly worn out (cf. Heb. 1:11); it had come to the point that they would’ve been found naked had they not already had something prepared to cover them; like a poor beggar who had been promised new clothing/shelter, they were groaning with impatience.

Earnestly Desiring: This phrase is from one strong Greek term which—*I don’t believe coincidentally*—is found in Psalm 84:1-4. Note the plain probability that Paul had this very Old Testament text in mind: “How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young—even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in Your house.” (Likewise, Psa. 119:174 says, “I long for Your salvation” which would be realized in His shelter/house/clothing.)

To Be Clothed: As scholars such as Vincent and Thayer note, the Greek term here isn’t just from the term “to clothe” (as this translation makes it sound), it’s from a word which means “to clothe over, to put on over” (like they were putting on Christ). So what’s the point?

From what we’ll soon discover in v. 4, I believe Paul was using this term to exaggerate; i.e., and as we’ll get more into momentarily when we talk about the term “naked,” he was speaking about clothing which would cover them completely, once-and-for-all forever!

The point is that God wasn’t going to allow His people to experience a point in time in which they would be unclothed. Since Paul expounded upon this in v. 4, we’ll say more about this in that verse.

So in/with what did Paul say this plurality of persons would be clothed? Well, much like in v. 1 where Paul wrote of “a building from God ... in the heavens,” so here he wrote of their being clothed with...

Our Habitation from Heaven: Though the terms are related, the word "habitation" here isn't a translation of *oikia* as "house" is in v. 1; rather, this original term (*oiketerion*) places special emphasis on the inhabitants of a house, sort of how we today understand the term "home," an idea more closely related to the word "home" later in vv. 6 & 8:

"While our home is in the body, we are absent from our home with the Lord ... we would gladly leave our home in the body, and make our home with the Lord" (20th Cent. NT; cf. Rotherham, Coverdale, Amplified, Diaglott, & Young's as well). Furthermore...

I think it's important to note that Paul said "**our** habitation," corresponding with the "now-but-not-yet" principle and his "we have" phrase in v. 1 (reminiscent again of the youth who's about to inherit "his" fortune). And...

This administrative home was "from Heaven" because, at this time, it (per v. 1) was still in Heaven (cf. Gal. 4:21-31 & Rev. 21:10 then 1-4 [cf. Rev. 21:4 w/ 2 Cor. 5:17]).

If Indeed, Having Been Clothed: The "if" here is not from the doubtful condition term (*ean*) that we had to discuss relative to v. 1; this one is from the no-doubt condition term (*ei*) meaning "when" or "since" (cf. NIV, etc.). (Also "clothed" here is the term found in **1 Cor. 15:53**.)

We Shall Not Be Found Naked: Firstly, this is the same "we" Paul had been talking about all along in this extended context, viz. himself and the other suffering Jewish Christians.

Secondly, the original term for "found" means exactly that, "to be seen or found as." Seen or found by whom? Jesus. Paul didn't want to be found by Him without having on his wedding garment (cf. Mat. 22:11 & context; "garment" is related to "clothed" here).

Thirdly, the implication is that if they weren't found with the (New Covenant) clothing that was supplied, they'd be considered naked.

Fourthly, due to the adjacent context as well as the remote context, I believe that the clothing Paul had in mind was the cloak of righteousness, without which they'd be considered unprepared to meet their Redeemer in wedded bliss; after all, the main point of the transition period was to purify/prepare the bride for marriage (aka sanctification).

Righteousness is often spoken of in the Bible as a robe or cloak, something of an outer garment visible to all.

Job said, "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me ... like a robe" (29:14).

Just think back to Eden: Adam & Eve's physical nakedness and how they reacted to it after eating of the tree of knowledge is a sign of their having come to a realization of their spiritual nakedness. And just as man couldn't make an acceptable covering for his physical nakedness—God having to make it for him, so man can't make an acceptable covering for his spiritual nakedness—God having to supply that one as well; as Isaiah 64:6 says, "All our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment" (NASB) or "As a garment passing away, all our righteous acts" (YLT).

Now notice the wedding idea found in this next verse: "As a bride adorns herself..., so God has covered me with the garment of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 61:10, a prophetic chapter about the events of the first century).

By the way, earlier God prophesied of the Old Covenant that it "will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished" (Isa. 51:6, an idea alluded to by Jesus in Mat. 24:35 and Paul in Heb. 1:10-12).

In Revelation Jesus said that "he who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments" (3:5), and "I counsel you to buy from Me ... white garments that you may be clothed that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed" (3:18), and "blessed is he who ... keeps his garments, lest he walk naked." (Jesus wasn't speaking of physical nakedness in these statements; no, He was speaking of spiritual nakedness—a life lacking Christ's robe of righteousness, the complete robe of which would be theirs in the fulfilled new heavens and earth!)

We can't "live" w/o this: "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Pet. 3:13). Besides these verses...

Directly surrounding 2 Cor. 5:2, Paul spoke of righteousness, a righteousness only to be found within the confines of the New Covenant (3:9, 5:21, 6:7, & 14).

6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness?"

6:4 & 7: "We commend ourselves as ministers of God ... by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left."

5:21: "God made Jesus who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

4:2-3: "We have renounced the hidden things of shame [shame being the very effect of nakedness, cf. Adam & Eve], not walking in craftiness or handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth." [A very righteous passage.]

3:9: "Since (*ei*) the ministry of condemnation [the Old Covenant] had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory." But...

Since I'm convinced that 2 Cor. 5 is an obvious parallel passage to 1 Cor. 15, then certainly I can't neglect v. 34: "Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." And...

Fifthly, just for more information concerning the Bible and how the nakedness is often employed as a motif for sinfulness, lawlessness, insubordination, rebellion, etc.—that which only God has the power to cover, here are a few more Old Testament passages:

After Aaron had calmed down the Israelites by having them make a golden calf, Exodus 32:25 says, "Moses saw that the people were naked, for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame" (KJV).

Due to a bad king's influence, 2 Chronicles 28:19 says, "The Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz, king of Israel; for he made Judah naked and transgressed sore against the Lord" (KJV).

Speaking of Jerusalem's affliction due to her sins against God, Lamentations 1:8 reads, "Jerusalem has sinned gravely, therefore she has become vile. All who honored her despise her because they have seen her nakedness." And...

In Ezekiel 16:7-12 we find God's love for Jerusalem being demonstrated by covering or covenanting with her. [Let's read this passage.] So...

With the judgment in mind, John recorded Jesus as saying, "'Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk [i.e. be found] naked'" (Rev. 16:15).

Verse 4: For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.

For: As mentioned in reference to the last two “fors” in vv. 1 & 2, so here I believe this “for” is likewise connected to 4:16; so let’s recap Paul’s words, including this verse:

“Even though our outward man is perishing, yet our inward man is being renewed day by day.” Why? “Because {4:17-18} our light affliction {Who’s ‘light affliction’? Paul’s and other Jewish Christians’ who were suffering in part *for* Gentiles, 4:12}, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

“Even though our outward man is perishing, yet our inward man is being renewed day by day.” Why? “Because we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Again...

“Even though our outward man is perishing, yet our inward man is being renewed day by day.” Why? “Because in this [tent] we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, since indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.” Once more...

“Even though our outward man is perishing, yet our inward man is being renewed day by day.” Why? “Because we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.”

Although he took this passage relative to individual, afterlife bodies, I still like what M. J. Harris said about this verse: “Verse 4b states the purpose and actual result of the receipt of the heavenly dwelling—the swallowing up of the mortal body by the revivifying action of the indwelling Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2, 11; 2 Cor. 3:6, 18). This transformation forms the climax of the incessant process of inward renewal (4:16b). I.e., 5:4b is related to 4:16b as 5:1a is related to 4:16a. For Paul, resurrection consummates rather than inaugurates the process of spiritual re-creation. From one point of view, the spiritual body was a future gift that came by outward investiture; from another, it was a present creation that finally came by inward transformation.”

We: “We” who? The same “we” Paul had in mind throughout this connection: Jewish Christians, those who were dying to their old mode of existence (corresponding to their bearing “the dying of the Lord Jesus” in 4:10 who died “to the flesh,” 5:16) and coming alive to their new mode of existence (corresponding to “the life of [i.e. provided by] Jesus” in 4:10, also alluded to here in v. 4: “that mortality [i.e. their dying] may be swallowed up by life”).

We who are in this tent groan, being burdened: What’s the “tent” in this context again? It’s the old covenant temple or world or mode of existence, as has been discussed numerous times already in this textual study: not only is it from the same original term found in v. 1, but it’s also synonymous with that which was dying in them (4:12), that which was “temporary” (4:18), that which was considered their “earthly house” (5:1), that in which they groaned (5:2), i.e. that which was mortal (5:4). (Incidentally, since it’s obvious that “mortality” is equivalent to their “earthly house” [v. 1], then it should also be obvious that “life” here is equivalent to their “heavenly house” [vv. 1-2].)

What’s interesting to me about this phrase is this: Referring momentarily back to the “we” here, Paul seemed to clearly delineate between the Jews and Gentiles here in this phrase. Why? Well, just emphasize and listen to it this way: “We—*who are in this tent,*” thereby excluding those (Gentiles) who were *not* in that tent. So...

It was primarily Jewish Christians who were groaning to be once-and-for-all shed of their old mode of existence (meaning, of course, that they’d in turn be liberated from their brethren in the flesh who were persecuting them for accepting Jesus as the Christ). Paul, using himself as an example of all Israelites, well demonstrated this strong desire in Romans 7:23-24.

Not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed: Something I believe is important to note here is that, in the original, this clause is in the middle voice, meaning that it refers to an action that someone performs which involves himself; i.e., Paul was saying something more along these lines: “not because we wish to unclothe ourselves, but because we wish to further clothe ourselves” (cf. GWT, ISV, Wey., & YLT for middle voice renderings).

Another significant factor about this clause is that we haven’t been taught to notice that Paul was being sarcastic; i.e., he made this statement in order to *deny the obvious*—that they weren’t enduring what they were enduring merely (as he just said in v. 3) to be found naked by the Lord, but that there was a purpose in it all—to be found clothed even more so than they ever had previously been clothed; i.e. they had never been able to clothe themselves in perfect righteousness before, but now that was the very blessing they were working toward.

One more thing: the phrase “further clothed” here is from the same term as found in v. 2, a term meaning, not merely clothed, but “clothed upon” or “clothed over,” expressing an exaggeration; i.e., in a metaphorical sense, Paul seemed to be saying this to his Gentile audience: “We aren’t trying to undress ourselves, but to over-dress ourselves!” (This idea reminds me of 2 Pet. 1:10 in which Peter wrote of an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom.)

Recalling our previous discussion of nakedness in relation to Adam & Eve, just think, as soon as rebellion and *self*-assertiveness reared their ugly heads..., shame, guilt, and *self*-consciousness took over; and those pathetic attempts at self-concealment were replaced by God’s own provisional covering—His divine gracious response to human defiance. From that point, being unclothed became a metaphor for being exposed to the judgment of God, something that can be seen in a very literal way in the case of the punishment for prostitution in which the skirt was lifted over the harlot’s face (cf. Jer. 13:26).

That mortality may be swallowed up by life: In the Greek there’s a definite article preceding the term translated “mortality” here, meaning that some other versions do a better job in rendering this clause by the more concrete phrase “that which is mortal” instead of by the abstract word “mortality”: “so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by [that which is] life” (NIV, cf. ASV, RSV, & NASB). In fact, the reason I added “that which is” here...

In the Greek, even the term for “life” is preceded by a definite article, indicating that Paul was speaking of a specific kind of life, i.e. the life that he had been talking about in this context—spiritual, eternal, liberated, new-creation, righteous, reconciled, resurrection life (cf. 2:16—5:21, esp. 2:16, 3:6, 4:10-12, & here in 5:4)! This life of reconciliation was **so** absolute that it, as it were, would just entirely swallow up that which was mortal (that which was earthly [v. 1] and therefore subject to death, making me think of Daniel’s prophecy about Jerusalem’s AD 70 destruction being like “a flood” [9:26]—something which “swallows up” the land; after all, the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was the outward sign of the extinction of the old [earthly/fleshly] mode of existence [cf. Luke 21:22].) Well...

As we already noted a few times in our study of the first three verses, it would be negligent of us to fail to consider some verses in 1 Cor. 15 in reference to 2 Cor. 5:4; although we must wait for an in-depth study of 1 Cor. 15 at a future time, *we should at least read verses 42-57 in connection with 2 Cor. 5:4.*

Let’s not leave 2 Cor. 5:4’s connection to 1 Cor. 15:54 without emphasizing Paul’s reference to Isaiah 25:6-9 in which the swallowing up of death was prophesied to occur at the time of salvation, implying that there’s still no forgiveness or salvation if the death under consideration hasn’t been stripped of its power (cf. Isa. 28:16-19 in which the annulment of death was prophesied to occur at the time of the Jews’ demise).

Although I want to continue our study in 2 Cor. 5 through v. 8, as we conclude our examination of the first four verses, the *main* ones that I wanted to consider, let's do so by considering the following charts that I believe lend support to what we've discussed.

[Studies on 2 Cor. 5:1-4 by Tony E. Denton, 9/09.]

LIKENESS IN LANGUAGE: Corporate, Not Individual

Charts By Tony E. Denton

2 Corinthians 5

(OC) Tent/Tabernacle
(vv. 1 & 4)

Perishing to Destruction
(4:16 & 5:1)

Earthly (v. 1)

(NC) House/Habitation
(vv. 1-2)

We Have (v. 1)

Spirit Is the Guarantee
(v. 5 [cf. Heb. 6:4 & 10:29])

Eternal
(v. 1 [cf. 4:18])

Not Made with Hands
(v. 1)

In the Heavens/From Heaven
(vv. 1-2)

2 Corinthians 5

Building/Habitation =
Heavenly Tent/Temple
(vv. 1-2)

2 Corinthians 5

House/Habitation of God (vv. 1-2)

Hebrews

(OC) Tent/Tabernacle
(8:5, 9:2-8, 21, & 13:10)

Becoming Obsolete
(8:13)

Erected by Men (8:2, 9:11, 24, & 12:27)

(NC) House
(3:6 & 10:21 [cf. 'homeland' in 11:14])

Receiving (12:28)

About to Come
(2:5, cf. 1:14)

Not to Be Shaken
(12:28, cf. Darby's & Rotherham's Versions)

Not Erected by Man
(8:2, 9:11, 24, & 12:27)

In Heaven/Heavenly
(10:34, 11:16, & 12:22)

1 Corinthians 3

Building = Church (v. 9) =
Temple (v. 16)
(Cf. 2 Cor. 6:16)

1 Timothy 3

House of God = Church (v. 15)

2 Corinthians 5

House/Habitation =
Heavenly Tent/Temple
(vv. 1-2)

Renewing the Inward/Spiritual Man
(4:16)

Eternal
(v. 1 [cf. 4:18])

From Heaven/In the Heavens (vv. 1-2)

Ephesians 2

Building (same orig. term as 'house') =
Temple [cf. 'household' in v. 19]
(v. 21 [cf. 'church' in 1:22])

The New Man
(v. 15)

World w/o End (KJV, Web., et.al.)
(3:21 [cf. 2:7])

In the Heavens (v. 6)

+++++

Verse 5: Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

Prepared: The original term here is from *ergazomai* (to work) and *kata* (throughout, toward, etc.); i.e., it doesn't just mean "to work at" something, but "to work out" something toward a finished product. Although this is the only place in the entire Bible this exact term is found...

Paul used its base word (*katergazetai*) in this same context when he said in 4:17 that "our light affliction ... is working [out] for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So, not only from the close proximity of these two statements, but also from the similar wording of them, who can seriously doubt that these two verses are related?

There's a verse in the Old Testament which cries out to be heard, not only because the same Greek term is found therein, but also because it's an obvious parallel. After God had delivered His people from the Egyptians in such a miraculous manner, Exodus 15 records what's known as *The Song of Moses*. In that song is a verse which can be is nothing if not typologically prophetic in tone: In v. 17 the song says to God about His plans with His people in their new land, "You will bring your people in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which You have made [*kateir-gaso*] for Your dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established."

This very thing: This phrase harkens back to what we were just considering a few moments ago in 4:17. In other words, "this very thing" is the life of v. 4, the clothing of vv. 2-4, the heavenly habitation/house of v. 2, the building from God in v. 1, that which was not seen and eternal in 4:18, and that which was an exceeding weight of glory in 4:17.

Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God: As you've perhaps already noticed, this is in the past (actually aorist) tense, while 4:17 (which speaks of the same event) is in the present tense. Such being so...

Isn't this perfectly consistent to the "now but not yet" principle that we've discussed various times already? Sure it does, corresponding also to Paul's earlier statements about earnestly desiring this new dwelling (v. 2) that they already have (v. 1), statements which would otherwise cause inspiration to contradict inspiration. By the way...

Since I don't know enough about Greek to say this with authority, I'll simply say, for thought-provoking purposes, that I believe it's *possible* that the sentence structure of Paul's statement could be translated thusly: "Now He who has prepared this very thing for us is God." I don't believe it does any injustice to the passage this way, but in fact seems to fit very well and may even be what Paul actually meant to convey (the Contemporary English Version appears to take it this way by reading, "God is the One who makes all of this possible.")

Who also has given us the Spirit: The term “given” here is in the aorist tense, meaning that Paul was referring to a one-time action in the past; i.e., on The Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit into the world to accomplish a specific, time-limited task, a task we’ll consider relative to the next and last phrase of this verse:

As a guarantee: The original term here refers to “a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase-money for pro-property given in advance as security for the rest” (Strong), what we call “earnest-money.” Strong said that this Greek word has a Hebrew origin (*arabawn*), the word (only) used in Gen. 38:17-18 & 20 and translated as “pledge” in the NKJV. So the Spirit, i.e. the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, etc., were given to those first generation Christians as a tangible security deposit or seal that the promise of God was going to be fulfilled in/to them in their generation.

Earlier in 2 Cor. (1:21-22), Paul told them essentially the same thing: “He who establishes [lit. “is establishing”] us [the Jews] with you [the Gentiles] in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit.”

Earlier in our study of this great 2 Cor. 5 passage, we spent some time in Rom. 8 because of its evident parallelism to this passage; now we’ll refer to it again, for even this part about the Spirit in this context is found in Rom. 8:23: “We who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”

And, of course, we can’t ignore this same teaching in Eph. 4:30 & 1:13-14. Speaking again of redemption, Paul wrote the following: “Don’t grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” And, with reference to 1:13-14, I think we should read the entire context of vv. 7-14; so let’s consider that now, noting how well it expounds upon 2 Cor. 5.

Since the day of redemption for those who accepted the Lord and were thusly sealed with or by the Spirit was the day of judgment for those who rejected the Lord and were thusly *not* sealed with/by the Spirit (Luke 21:28, cf. Rev. 7:1-8), then the Spirit’s work was complete once God’s saints were redeemed. And that brings up our last point in this regard:

The Spirit’s job wasn’t merely to seal the saints of God in the sense of allowing them to perform signs and wonders, etc., but His job, by virtue of those miracles and revelation, was to actually produce the very change of this entire context: “We ... are being transformed ... by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Verse 6: Therefore we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

Therefore: Because they had the guarantee of the Spirit that God had prepared them for their new attire and abode, Paul said of himself and his Jewish Christian brethren...

We are always confident: This declaration takes us back to previous statements in this extended context:

2:14 → “Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ” or apparently more exact to Paul’s meaning, “Thanks be to God who is leading us to eternal victory in Christ.”

3:9-13 → Speaking of the glory of the ministry of righteousness that would remain when the previous glory that caused Moses to hide his face was removed, Paul said, “Since we have such hope [*confidence*, cf. Strong’s & NLT], we use great boldness of speech” (3:12).

3:18—4:1 → After speaking of that first generation of Christians going through the transformation from the glory of the Mosaical mode of existence to the glory of the Christian mode of existence, Paul said, “We don’t lose heart” (4:1).

(By the way, it's hardly coincidental that Paul used the same Greek term here for "transformation" that Matthew used in the similar context of Mat. 17:1-5 for "transfigured"; after all, in Mat. 17 the lesson is about the Christian mode of existence supplanting the Mosaic mode of existence.)

4:8-12 → What else but the confidence of which Paul spoke in 2 Cor. 5 could motivate him to speak of being "hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed"—all so that while death operated in them (Jewish Christians), life would operate in his Gentile Christian audience (4:12)? And the confidence of that corporate "life" spoken of in 2 Cor. 5:4.

4:13-14 → After saying that he spoke of such matters because he believed (i.e., due to his conviction), he went on to speak of his confidence in their being raised up together, inciting an abundance of thanksgiving to God.

4:16-17 → Just as Paul connected their being transformed from one stage of glory to another more excellent stage of glory with their not losing heart in 3:18—4:1, so here Paul made that connection again. Hear the confidence in his voice: "We don't lose heart. ... For our affliction ... is working for us a far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory."

5:1 → In this verse Paul wrote of their confidence again by speaking of how they knew that if their earthly house were destroyed, they had "a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And, coming full-circle...

5:5-7 → After he spoke of God's guarantee via the Spirit that all he had discussed would indeed come to fruition (and soon per v. 10), he wrote one last time in this context about their confidence which enabled them to walk by God-pleasing faith (cf. Heb. 11:6).

Knowing (lit. "having come to know," implying that this was something Paul didn't understand at one point in his life) **that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:**

Body (not bodies): So what "body" was he talking about? The then present "body" of the context, of course—the body of Moses (cf. all of 2 Cor. 3 about the Law of Moses, as well as 5:1 about their "earthly house" and their "tent," i.e. the body in which they existed). These Old Covenant people of God (Israel) are called "the body of Moses" in Jude 9. And why were they called "the body of Moses"? Because, as Paul told these brethren earlier in his previous letter to them, they (the Israelites) were "baptized into Moses" (10:2) just as Christians were "baptized into Christ" (Gal. 3:27) and are therefore correspondingly called "the body of Christ."

At home: Oddly enough, although scholar M.R. Vincent didn't agree with the body here being a reference to Old Covenant Israel, yet, when in his Word Studies in the New Testament he wrote about the original phrase for "at home," he supported my position by saying that it means "'in people' ... to be among one's own people" (which corresponds to what we discussed concerning the term for "habitation" back in v. 2, viz. that the original term there alludes more to the *inhabitants* of the house than it does to the *house* itself). Anyway, speaking of "scholars"...

It's interesting that so many others such as Barnes, Clarke, Lenski, & Robertson say the same thing Vincent did, yet—ignoring the plural "people"—they'll turn around in their bias to the traditional individual body explanation. So...

While the Jews, growing up in Judaism, may have *felt* perfectly "at home" in their ancestral body—the body of Moses, yet Paul, via the Spirit's revelation to him, no doubt, came to the realization that it was never meant to be a home of an eternal nature. In fact, he was saying here (cf. 4:18) that "as long as we're in this temporary home....

We are absent from the Lord: Apparently *ekdemoumen apo tou Kuriou* is somewhat difficult to translate into English: *ekdemoumen*, being in the genitive case (the case in which the prefix denotes motion “away from” something), Marshall’s Interlinear renders it this way: “we are away from home [*ekdemoumen*]—away from [*apo*] the [*tou*] Lord [*Kuriou*].” V.P. Furnish in The Anchor Bible rendered it this way: “away from our home with the Lord,” and in v. 8 Paul spoke of the desire to be “present with the Lord.”

Back in verse 3 we discussed the bride (the church) being prepared for her marriage to the Lord and the importance of being clothed in the wedding garment; well, with matrimony in mind again, we should be able to also see the connection between this verse in this context with 1 The. 4:17 (the only other place where the English phrase “with the Lord” is found in the KJV, and that by the same writer): speaking of the Lord coming for or to meet His bride in the air (i.e. the spiritual realm, cf. Luke 17:20) for their wedding ceremony, Paul said, “And so we shall always be with the Lord.” So...

Prior to that time, before the law, the sin, and the death had been rendered powerless at the resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26 & 54-55), i.e. until the bride was purified by the Spirit (Eph. 5:25-27), she couldn’t be with her Lord. In fact, when Paul, in his chapter to the Philippians about the resurrection to which Jewish Christians had only partly attained (3:16), used matrimonial language about that time of the final transformation of the body: “that I may know Him” (v. 10, cf. v. 20-21)—the language of two becoming one.

Verses 7-8: For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

We walk by faith: Out of the 98 times “walk” is found in the NT, Paul employed it 35 times in his letters (8 of those times just in the short Ephesian epistle); so it was obviously one of his favorite expressions to denote *the manner in which one conducts his life*.

The original term for “by” here is *dia*, a genitive term meaning “through” (cf. YLT) or “by means of” (cf. Diaglott); in fact, the Diaglott renders the original as, “by means of faith we are walking, not by means of sight,” which brings up the following thought.

Though the term “walk” isn’t a Greek participle (what we consider an “ing” word in English), it *is* in the Greek present tense, meaning that (as the Diaglott indicates) it may be translated as a participle in English. In other words...

Although there’s no essential difference in saying “we walk” and “we are walking,” I’m emphasizing this point because, in our contemporary English, the use of the participle consistently brings to mind a *concrete/steady* view of an action, while the non-participle oft-times brings to mind an *abstract/intermittent* view of an action (e.g. cf. Eph. 3:14 where *kampto* could be either “bowing” [as if Paul were bowing as he wrote] or “bow” [as if referring to that which he did on a daily basis throughout his life]).

In fact, Paul employed this very term in the same grammatical form in 1 Cor. 3:3: in the NKJV it’s rendered as the participle “behaving,” while in the NASB it’s rendered as the participle “walking.” So we should have no problem seeing that Paul was saying about himself and other faithful, Christian Jews that they, at the time of this writing, were *steadily* “walking” by faith. Now...

The only other time Paul referred to “faith” in this 2:14—5:8 context was in 4:13-14: “Since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written—‘I believed and therefore I spoke,’ we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus and present us with you.”

Paul quoted Psalm 116:10a, which, like 2 Cor. 4:13, is in the context of affliction, even to the point of death; but this psalmist, trusting that God was on his side, took courage and spoke out regardless of his circumstances. Likewise...

Paul (including his faithful, Jewish, Christian brethren) was saying that they ... "knowing" that they would be—get this!—*resurrected* right along with their faithful, Gentile brethren (there's the corporate idea) ... took courage in their state of affairs, a state which they realized was working out the life of Jesus, not only among/for them, but also among/for the Gentile Christians (cf. v. 12). And isn't that what our 2 Cor. 5:1-8 context has been about—resurrection-life (cf. v. 4)? Sure it is! Anyway, Paul said they were walking by faith...

Not by sight: This, of course, hearkens back to v. 18: "We don't look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." If that isn't a faith/courage supplier, then what could be?! So it's no wonder Paul went on to say ... again...

We are confident, yes: Since, back at v. 6 (not to mention what we just discussed), we spent an entire page discussing Paul's confidence as it's found throughout this connection, we'll move on to the next phrase.

Well pleased rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord: We should've studied verses 6-8 together, but our time ran out on the study of v. 6 alone. So, since verses 6 & 8 are directly linked, let's reconsider most of the comments we had on the last half of v. 6. (Here's a good question to think about: If Paul were dealing with physical-bodily resurrection in this context, why did he say that to be "present with the Lord" he needed to be "absent from the [or our physical] body"?)

Knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

Body (not bodies): So what "body" was he talking about? The then present "body" of the context, of course—the body of Moses (cf. all of 2 Cor. 3 about the Law of Moses). These Old Covenant people of God (Israel) were called "the body of Moses" in Jude 9. And why were they called "the body of Moses"? Because, as Paul told these brethren earlier in his previous letter to them, they (the Israelites) were "baptized into Moses" (10:2) just as Christians were "baptized into Christ" (Gal. 3:27) and are therefore correspondingly called "the body of Christ."

At home: Oddly enough, although scholar M.R. Vincent didn't agree with the body here being a reference to Old Covenant Israel, yet, when in his Word Studies in the New Testament he wrote about the original phrase for "at home," he supported my position by saying that it means "'in people' ... to be among one's own people" (which corresponds to what we discussed concerning the term for "habitation" back in v. 2, viz. that the original term there alludes more to the *inhabitants* of the house than it does to the *house* itself). So...

While the Jews, growing up in Judaism, may have *felt* perfectly "at home" in their ancestral body—the body of Moses, yet Paul, via the Spirit's revelation to him, no doubt, came to the realization that it was never meant to be a home of an eternal nature. In fact, he was saying here (cf. 4:18) that "as long as we're in this temporary home...."

We are absent from the Lord: Marshall's Interlinear renders it this way: "we are away from home [*ekdemoumen*]*—*away from [*apo*] the [*tou*] Lord [*Kuriou*]." V.P. Furnish in The Anchor Bible rendered it this way: "away from our home with the Lord."

Back in verse 3 we discussed the bride (the church) being prepared for her marriage to the Lord and the importance of being clothed in the wedding garment; well, with matrimony in mind again, we should be able to also see the connection between this verse in this context with 1 The. 4:17 (the only other place where the English phrase “with the Lord” is found in the KJV, and that by the same writer): speaking of the Lord coming for or to meet His bride in the air (i.e. the spiritual realm, cf. Luke 17:20) for their wedding ceremony, Paul said, “And so we shall always be with the Lord.” So...

Prior to that time, before the law, the sin, and the death had been rendered powerless at the resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26, 54-55, & our current context), i.e. until the bride was purified by the Spirit (Eph. 5:25-27), she couldn't be *with* her Lord. In fact, when Paul, in his chapter to the Philippians about the resurrection to which Jewish Christians had only partly attained (3:16), used matrimonial language about that time of the final transformation of the body: “that I may know Him” (v. 10, cf. v. 20-21)—the language of two becoming one. Now...

Having reminded ourselves of our previous comments on v. 6, we should have no problem comprehending v. 8.

Well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord:

So Paul and his Jewish, Christian brethren weren't only confident in their walk (i.e. in the necessity of it, that it was God-ordained), but (although harshly persecuted) they were even “pleased” that they were in essence *walking* out of a body of death and into a body of life, out of a place in which God could no longer be found and into a place in which God wasn't only present, but also from which He'd never leave (cf. Rev. 21—22). [Tony E. Denton, 11/09.]

2 Corinthians 5

Romans 8

Tent (body, 5:6 & 8) of mortality (death, 5:4)	Body of death (7:24, cf. 8:2 & 6)
Flesh VS Spirit (3:3 & 5:16)	Flesh VS Spirit (8:1, 4-5, & 12-13)
Law kills VS Spirit gives life (3:6)	Law of death VS Spirit of life (8:2 & 6)
Persecution (4:8-9)	Sufferings of this present time (8:18)
Resurrection, Spirit, Life (4:14, 5:4-5)	Resurrection, Spirit, Life (8:11)
Groanings (5:2 & 4)	Groanings (8:22-23)
Mortality swallowed up by life (5:4)	Redemption of the body (8:23, cf. 7:24)
Old creation (flesh) into new creation (5:16-17)	Old creation subject in hope (8:19-21)

2 Corinthians 5

Philippians 3

Death in us, life in you (4:12)	Poured out for you (2:17)
Groaning/Burdened (5:2 & 4)	Suffering (3:8 & 10, cf. persecutors 3:2 & 18-19)
This earthly tent (body, vv. 6 & 8) (5:1)	Body of humiliation (3:21)
Clothed/swallowed up tent (body) (5:4)	Transformed/conformed body (3:20-21)
Heavenly home (vv. 1-2)	Upward call/in heaven (3:14, 20-21)
Earthly house (v. 1) & things associated with it	Earthly things (3:19, 3-6, & 13) (Cf. Hos. 4:7.)
Not found naked/present with the Lord (vv. 3 & 8)	Found in him (3:9), perfected (3:12)
Resurrection (4:14 & 5:4)	Resurrection (3:10-11 & 21)

2 Corinthians 5

John 14

Groaning/Burdened (5:2 & 4)	Troubled (14:1)
They were absent from the Lord (5:6)	Place being prepared while Jesus was gone (14:2)
We have a building (5:1)	A place for the disciples (14:2-3)
Present with the Lord (5:8)	Jesus to receive them to Himself (14:3)
The Spirit was their guarantee (5:5)	The Spirit was promised (14:16-17 & 26)

2 Corinthians 5

Revelation 21

Old things (creation) passed away (5:17)	First heaven/earth passed away (21:1, cf. 20:11)
New creation (5:17)	New heaven/earth (21:1)
A house not made with (human) hands (5:1)	A holy city (21:2, cf. 21:10)
From God (5:1)	From God (21:2, cf. 21:10)
From heaven (5:2)	From heaven (21:2, cf. 21:10)
Building of God (5:1)	Tabernacle of God (21:3)
Present with the Lord (5:8, cf. 6:16)	God dwells with men, His people (21:3)
Groaning/Burdened (5:2 & 4)	No sorrow, pain, etc. (21:4)

Time would fail us to enter into the creation of a chart which would doubtless demonstrate how well 2 Cor. 5 corresponds to 1 Cor. 15, the chapter in which Paul initially wrote about this subject to these brethren.

[Tony E. Denton, 11/09.]

Personal Notes: V. 1: M. J. Harris thinks that Paul was harkening back to Mark 14:58, and I think he could very well be correct; however, I also believe that Jesus was talking about how He, in His resurrection-life, would become the new covenant world's temple (cf. Rev. 21:22 w/ the numerous passages about being "found in Him," e.g. John 14:1-3, 23, 17:21-24, Gal. 3:27 and on and on). It seems that most scholars/commentators just can't seem to avoid Mark 14:58 when commenting on this passage, indicating that they believe Jesus may very well have indeed made the statement found in that verse; they seem to really believe that Paul had Jesus' words in mind when he penned this passage, and, if so, then perhaps we should study that verse. {Paste Mark 14:58 study at the end of this one; it can be found in its own file.} (By the way, consider Christ Himself as being the temple of our dwelling, cf. Mark 14: 58 w/ Rev. 21:22, et.al.)