

# A Theology of Heaven

## *Part One:* "Absent from the Body"

### Review:

- The nature of our resurrection
  - ❑ Physical – flesh and bone
  - ❑ Continuity – same body
  - ❑ Change – unfallen and imperishable

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*Essential for the eternal state which is a renewed earth*

What happens to believers  
when they die?

## The "Intermediate" Heaven

Philippians 1:21-23: Paul desires to  
"depart" and be with Christ

Luke 16:19-31: parable of the rich man  
and Lazarus (before the resurrection)

Revelation 6:9-11: martyrs in Heaven  
crying out to the Lord to bring justice  
on the earth

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

### Context:

- ❑ Not losing heart in spite of many afflictions
- ❑ Why not? Certain resurrection (4:14); incomparable eternal glory (4:16-18)

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

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

For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked.

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

Now He who prepared us for this purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a pledge.

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord – for we walk by faith, not by sight – we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

### 1. Longing for Resurrection

- *"earthly tent"* = current, decaying, mortal bodies
- *"building from God"* = our glorious, new, imperishable bodies

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Paul "groans" for his imperishable body

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

### 2. Desire not to be "naked"

- *"unclothed"* = no body; neither our current or imperishable body
- *"unclothed"* = physical death; a disembodied spirit

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Paul desired not to die but to be changed at the coming of Christ

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

### 3. Desire to be with Christ

- *"absent from the body"* = physical death; disembodied spirit
- *"at home with the Lord"* = in the presence of Jesus in heaven

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Paul preferred physical death so as to be with Christ

## "Intermediate State"

1. A temporal state of absence from the body awaiting the resurrection
2. Preferred to this life because it is to be with Christ in heaven
3. Not the ultimate hope or desire of the believer (the resurrection of the body!)