Real Returns

2 Corinthians 5:1 - 10 (ESV)

1 For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,
3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked.
4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.
5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.
6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord,
7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.
8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.
9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.
10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

- Paul was a tentmaker (Acts 18:1-3) and here he used a tent as a picture of our present earthly bodies. A tent is a weak, temporary structure, without much beauty; but the glorified body we shall receive will be eternal, beautiful, and never show signs of weakness or decay (see Phil. 3:20-21). Paul saw the human body as an earthen vessel (2 Cor. 4:7) and a temporary tent; but he knew that believers would one day receive a wonderful glorified body, suited to the glorious environment of Heaven!

1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 18 (ESV)

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.
14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.
16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.
18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.
2 Thessalonians 3:13 (ESV)
13 As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.

- To those hardworking believers, those who were not lazy, Paul said, Never get tired of doing good. In contrast to the idlers who had persisted in their idleness even since Paul’s last letter, these hardworking believers should not let the idlers cause them to become discouraged in their work. Paul had written almost the same thing to the Galatians: “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up” (Galatians 6:9). Paul knew that the believers could become discouraged when they tried to do right and received no word of thanks or saw no tangible results. But Paul challenged all of the believers to keep on doing good and to trust God for the results.

1 Corinthians 15:51 - 58 (ESV)

51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.
53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.
54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:
   "Death is swallowed up in victory."
55 “O death, where is your victory?
   O death, where is your sting?”
56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.
57 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

**Monday Morning Moment:** “Do not grow weary in doing good!”

**Be a Berean** “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” Acts 17:11

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