

BEREANS Bible Institute

Module III. "Ghost Stories" in the Bible – Part 7 Is Paul's Ghost Absent from His Body & Present with the Lord?

... But the Bible says: "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord?" (2 Cor. 5:8)

2 Corinthians 4:7 - 5:11 LGV *7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the abundance of the power may be of God, and not from us. 8 In everything [we are] being afflicted, but not distressed, perplexed, but not despairing, 9 persecuted, but not abandoned, down-cast, but not destroyed, 10 always carrying around the dying of the Master Jesus in the body, so that the life of Jesus¹ may appear in our body. 11 For we, the living, are always being turned over to death because of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may become manifest in our mortal flesh. 12 As also indeed death is operating in us, yet the life in you.² 13 Yet having the same breath of the Faith, according as has been written, "I believe, consequently I speak." We also believe, consequently we speak, 14 having observed that the one having awakened the Master Jesus will also awaken us through Jesus,³ and will present [us] together with you. 15 For everything [we do] is because of you, so that the grace having increased through [our] many [deeds], thanksgiving may excel unto the glory of God. 16 Through this we are not despondent. But even if our exterior man is decaying, the inner is being renewed day by day. 17 For our momentary light affliction is producing a greater and greater weight of glory for us. 18 [We are] not dwelling on what is seen, but the unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is permanent. 5:1 For we have observed⁴ that whenever the terrestrial abode of the tent⁵ should be destroyed, we have a dwelling out from God,⁶ an abode not made by hand, permanent, in the heavens.⁷ 2 For in this we groan, longing to be dressed with our residence out of heaven, 3 if indeed, clothing ourselves also, we will not be found naked.⁸ 4 For also, those being in the tent are groaning, being burdened, over which we are unwilling to be stripped,⁹ but to over-clothe ourselves, so that mortality¹⁰ may be swallowed up by life! 5 Yet the one completing us unto this same thing is God, the one also having given to us the deposit of the Breath. 6 Having courage, then, always, and having observed that communing¹¹ within the Body,¹² we are communing¹³ away from the Master, 7 (for we walk by belief, not by sight). 8 Yet we are encouraged, and pleased, rather, to commune away from the Body,¹⁴ and to commune together with the Master. 9 Because of this we are also anxious, whether communing together or communing apart, to be well-pleasing to Him, 10 for all of us must appear before the judgment bar of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed [for] what was practiced through the body, whether good or evil. 11 Having observed, then, the fear of the Master, we persuade men, yet we have been made manifest to God. But I expect also to have been manifested in your consciences.*

¹ The resurrection, as demonstrated by Jesus' own resurrection

² Because of the Apostles' continuing their mission despite severe persecution, the Corinthians may receive immortality.

³ Jesus will sound the trumpet to awaken the dead, (1 Thess. 4:16)

⁴ The perfect tense of the verb to "see" implies knowledge from observation, either personally or through the Scriptures. Here Paul referred to the Apostles' eyewitness of Jesus' resurrection.

⁵ Paul used the metaphor of a "tent" for the fragile and temporary nature of our mortal bodies.

⁶ The Greek preposition "ἐκ" means "out from within." The "dwelling" is not a new body, but immortality which is literally "out from God" (See: 1 Tim. 6:13, 16).

⁷ This is a reference to Jesus' resurrected physical body, seated at the right hand of God.

⁸ Here Paul used the term "naked" as a mockery of the Platonic concept of a bodiless ghost. Paul and his readers will not be disembodied ghosts. This was the mistake that Paul corrected in 1 Corinthians 15.

⁹ This is another jab at the Platonic idea of a disembodied ghost

¹⁰ This shows that the "tent" metaphor is not the body itself, but the characteristic of "mortality."

¹¹ The Greek participle "ἐν-δημοῦντες" literally means "communing-within," referring to socializing, fellowshiping, or communing together among one's own kin or kind.

¹² The "Body of Christ," the local assembly (1 Cor. 12:12)

¹³ The Greek participle "ἐκ-δημοῦμεν" literally means "communing-outside," referring to socializing, fellowshiping, or communing outside of one's own kin or kind.

¹⁴ The "Body of Christ" metaphor refers to the current, temporary manner in which believers gather in the assembly apart from the head (Jesus) who is currently in heaven.