

Dr. J. Ayodeji Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 6, 2 Corinthians 5 – Ambassadors for Christ Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 6, 2 Corinthians 5 – Ambassadors for Christ, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Ayo Adewuya's session on 2 Corinthians chapter 5 explores the concept of believers as ambassadors for Christ. The teaching examines Paul's motivations for ministry, rooted in his conviction of a future, suffering-free life, divine judgment, and God's reconciling love through Jesus. **Adewuya highlights Paul's confidence in the face of death, based on the promise of a spiritual body, the Holy Spirit as a guarantee, and the immediate presence of Christ after death.** The session further analyzes Paul's ethical imperative to please God, the judgment seat of Christ where believers will be rewarded, and the transformative nature of being "in Christ," resulting in a new creation. **Ultimately, Adewuya emphasizes the believer's role as an ambassador of reconciliation, delivering God's message of forgiveness and embodying Christ's righteousness in a sin-filled world.**

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 6 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Pauline Epistles → 2 Corinthians).



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3. Briefing Document: Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 6, 2 Corinthians 5 – Ambassadors for Christ

Briefing Document: Dr. Ayo Adewuya on 2 Corinthians 5 - Ambassadors for Christ

Overview: This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas presented by Dr. Ayo Adewuya in his session on 2 Corinthians chapter 5, titled "Ambassadors for Christ." Adewuya delves into Paul's motivations for ministry, his confidence in the face of death and resurrection, the concept of believers as a "new creation," the ministry of reconciliation, and the profound significance of Christ becoming sin for us.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. Motivation for Ministry (5:1-10): Doing the Right Things for the Right Reasons

- **Central Question:** Adewuya begins by emphasizing the crucial question of motivation: "Why do we do what we do? In other words, what is our motivation for what we do? These questions are so important; they're very pertinent and relevant to the ministry today. It's not good enough just to do the right things. We must do the right things for the right reasons."
- **Paul's Motivation:** Despite his trials, Paul's relentless pursuit of ministry was driven by:
- **Certainty of Future Life:** He was "fully convinced of a future life that is devoid of suffering and pain. It's a life without change, a life where death has lost its power." He had an "abounding hope of resurrection out of heaven."
- **Assurance of Future Divine Judgment:** Paul was also sure of "future divine judgment," which instilled in him "incredible confidence" because his relationship with God was right.
- **Belief in God's Initiative for Reconciliation:** Paul understood that "the reconciliation of humanity to God was God's initiative, motivated by love and manifested in and effected by Christ Jesus."

2. Confidence in the Face of Death and the Hope of Resurrection (5:1-10):

- **Earthly Tent vs. Heavenly Building:** Paul uses the imagery of an "earthly tent" (our present body) that is temporary and destructible, contrasted with a permanent, "building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (our future resurrected body). He states, "for we know that if our earthly tent, if the earthly tent we live in, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
- **Present Groaning and Future Clothedness:** Believers currently "groan" in this earthly tent, longing to be "clothed with our heavenly dwelling." This groaning is not out of hopelessness but a longing for liberation from the limitations of mortal existence. Adewuya highlights the "now and not yet" in this passage.
- **The Spirit as a Pledge (Arabon):** God has given us the Spirit as a "pledge" (Greek: *arabon*), which signifies both a guarantee that the final transformation will occur and a partial payment or first installment that gives us a legal claim to our inheritance. "He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the spirit as a guarantee."
- **Walking by Faith, Not by Sight:** While in the body, we are "away from the Lord," but we "walk by faith, not by sight." This corrects any misinterpretation that present fellowship with Christ is illusory.
- **Aiming to Please God:** Whether in the body or away from it, our constant ambition should be "to please him." This ethical imperative flows from the doctrinal truths Paul has presented.

3. The Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat) (5:10):

- **Reward, Not Salvation:** All believers "must appear before the judgment seat of Christ so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil." Adewuya clarifies that this is not about determining our salvation but about the assessment of our works and the receiving of rewards.
- **Moral Significance of Actions:** What we do in our earthly bodies has "moral significance and has eternal consequences." We will be seen for who we truly are, without pretense.

4. Motivation for Service Driven by the Fear and Love of the Lord (5:11-15):

- **Reverential Awe:** The "fear of the Lord" is not terror but "reverential awe" for Christ as our divine assessor. This motivates faithful and diligent service. "Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others."
- **Persuading Others of the Gospel:** Paul's service involves persuading people of the truth of the gospel and the sincerity of his own motives.
- **The Constraining Love of Christ:** Paul's actions are also driven by the "love of Christ constrains us [or urges us on] because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore, all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them." This love encompasses both Christ's love for us and our love for Christ.
- **Living for Christ, Not Self:** The purpose of Christ's death is that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him.

5. The New Creation in Christ (5:16-17):

- **No Longer Judging by Human Standards:** Because of Christ's work, believers "regard no one from a human point of view." Our perspective is transformed by God's view.
- **Radical Transformation:** "So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. Everything old has passed away. See, everything has become new." This is not merely a new religion but a fundamental change in being. Adewuya uses the story of Ebenezer Scrooge as an illustration of such profound transformation.
- **Filled with God's Presence:** This new creation is "a life that is filled with the presence of God, a life that is transformed by the power of God, washed and cleansed by the blood of the Lamb."

6. The Ministry of Reconciliation (5:18-20):

- **God's Initiative:** "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." Reconciliation is God's work, bridging the gap created by sin.
- **Christ as Mediator:** "That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us." Christ's death at Calvary is central to this reconciliation.

- **Believers as Ambassadors for Christ:** God has entrusted the "message and ministry of reconciliation" to believers, calling us "ambassadors for Christ." As ambassadors, we represent Christ and deliver His message. "Now understand that we're ambassadors for Christ. We're ambassadors for Christ, and because we're ambassadors for Christ, we must represent him." Our message is "be reconciled to God."

7. Christ Made Sin for Us (5:21):

- **Sin Offering:** "For our sake, he made him to be seen who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. He made him to be sin for us." Adewuya clarifies that while Christ was made a sin offering, he did not become a sinner.
- **Complete Identification:** There was a "complete identification of the sinless Christ with the sin of the sinner," including the consequences of separation from God. This is why Jesus cried out on the cross, "Father, Father, why have you forsaken me?"
- **Extrinsic Righteousness:** Just as Christ's sin was extrinsic to Him, the "righteousness of God is extrinsic to us." Through this exchange, we become the righteousness of God in Christ.

Conclusion:

Dr. Adewuya's session on 2 Corinthians 5 provides a rich understanding of Paul's motivations for ministry, his unwavering confidence in future resurrection, and the profound transformation that occurs in believers through Christ. The passage highlights our identity as a new creation, entrusted with the vital ministry of reconciliation as ambassadors for Christ. Adewuya concludes by emphasizing the gravity of this role and challenging listeners to consider whether they are true ambassadors or an "embarrassment to Christ."

4. Study Guide: Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 6, 2 Corinthians 5 – Ambassadors for Christ

Study Guide: 2 Corinthians 5, Ambassadors for Christ

Key Themes:

- **Motivation for Ministry:** Understanding the driving forces behind Christian service, particularly in the face of hardship.
- **Hope of Future Glory:** Paul's conviction in a future life characterized by resurrection and freedom from suffering.
- **Certainty of Divine Judgment:** The reality of the judgment seat of Christ and its implications for present living.
- **Ministry of Reconciliation:** God's initiative to reconcile humanity through Christ and the believer's role as ambassadors of this reconciliation.
- **Transformation in Christ:** The radical new creation that occurs when one is united with Christ, marked by a changed perspective and life.
- **Living by Faith, Not Sight:** Navigating the present earthly existence with confidence in future realities unseen by the physical eye.

Key Concepts:

- **Earthly Tent vs. Heavenly Dwelling:** Paul's metaphor for the present perishable body versus the future permanent, resurrected body.
- **Groaning:** The believer's experience of frustration and longing for ultimate transformation amidst the limitations of mortal existence.
- **Pledge (Arabon):** The Holy Spirit as God's guarantee and down payment of the believer's future inheritance and resurrection.
- **Walking by Faith:** Operating based on trust in God's promises and unseen realities rather than immediate sensory experience.
- **Aim to Please Christ:** The ethical imperative for believers, driven by the anticipation of future judgment and the desire for Christ's approval.
- **Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema Seat):** A future event for believers where their works and character will be assessed for reward, not salvation.

- **Fear of the Lord:** A reverential awe and respect for Christ as the divine judge, motivating faithful service.
- **New Creation:** The fundamental transformation that occurs when someone is in Christ, resulting in a new way of seeing and living.
- **Ministry of Reconciliation:** The task entrusted to believers to proclaim the message of peace and restoration between God and humanity through Christ.
- **Ambassadors for Christ:** Believers acting as Christ's representatives in the world, delivering His message of reconciliation.
- **Sin Offering:** Christ becoming sin for humanity on the cross, bearing the guilt and consequences of sin to provide righteousness for believers.

Quiz:

1. According to Dr. Adewuya, what is essential about our motivation for doing the right things in ministry?
2. What are the three main aspects of Paul's motivation for ministry highlighted in the beginning of 2 Corinthians 5?
3. Explain the contrast Paul draws between the "earthly tent" and the "building from God."
4. What does Dr. Adewuya say is the significance of 2 Corinthians 5 in relation to understanding what happens after a believer dies?
5. What is the meaning of the Greek word "arabon" in the context of the Holy Spirit being given to believers?
6. How does the understanding that believers "walk by faith, not by sight" relate to their present relationship with the Lord?
7. What is the purpose of believers appearing before the judgment seat of Christ, according to Dr. Adewuya?
8. What does Dr. Adewuya explain is the nature of the "fear of the Lord" that motivates Paul's service?
9. In what way has a believer's perspective changed when they no longer regard anyone from a human point of view?

10. What is the core message that believers, as ambassadors for Christ, are called to deliver?

Quiz Answer Key:

1. It is not enough just to do the right things; we must do them for the right reasons, meaning our motives should be pure and aligned with God's will.
2. Paul's main motivations were his full conviction of a future life without suffering, his certainty of future divine judgment, and his persuasion that the reconciliation of humanity to God was God's loving initiative through Christ.
3. The "earthly tent" represents our current, temporary, perishable physical body, while the "building from God" signifies our future, permanent, eternal, and heavenly resurrected body.
4. Apart from 1 Corinthians 15, 2 Corinthians 5 is a key passage that explicitly tells us what happens after a believer dies, offering insights into the transition and future state.
5. "Arabon" means a pledge or guarantee, or a partial payment/first installment that makes the final payment obligatory and gives the recipient a legal claim to what is promised. In the context of the Spirit, it signifies God's promise and initial endowment of our future inheritance.
6. It means that while believers are physically absent from the Lord, they are still in fellowship with Him through faith, and any separation is temporary, not indicative of a complete absence of relationship.
7. The judgment seat of Christ (Bema seat) is where believers will appear to receive recompense and rewards for what they have done in their earthly bodies, whether good or worthless; it is not a judgment on their salvation.
8. The "fear of the Lord" in this context is not terror but a reverential awe and respect for Christ as the divine assessor and judge, motivating believers to faithful and diligent service due to their accountability to Him.
9. A believer's perspective is transformed to one that evaluates things and people based on God's standards rather than superficial human criteria like nationality, wealth, or education; the primary evaluation becomes whether someone is a believer in Christ.

10. The core message that believers, as ambassadors for Christ, are called to deliver is the message of reconciliation: "Be reconciled to God," urging people to accept the peace and restoration offered through Christ.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Discuss the significance of Paul's shift in perspective regarding his own potential death before the Parousia and how this influenced his understanding of the believer's future hope as expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:1-10.
2. Analyze the metaphor of the "earthly tent" and the "heavenly dwelling" in 2 Corinthians 5:1-5, explaining what each represents and the comfort Paul derives from this comparison.
3. Explore the concept of the believer's motivation for ministry as presented in 2 Corinthians 5:9-15, focusing on the anticipation of the judgment seat of Christ and the compelling nature of Christ's love.
4. Explain the transformative nature of being "in Christ" as described in 2 Corinthians 5:16-17, detailing the implications of no longer regarding anyone from a human point of view and becoming a "new creation."
5. Discuss the role and responsibility of believers as "ambassadors for Christ" according to 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, emphasizing the message they are entrusted with and the significance of Christ being made a "sin offering."

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Ambassador:** An official representative of a sovereign state or ruler in a foreign country. In 2 Corinthians, believers are described as Christ's representatives on earth.
- **Arabon:** A Greek word meaning a pledge, down payment, or earnest money, serving as a guarantee for a future transaction or possession. In this context, the Holy Spirit is the "arabon" of our future inheritance.
- **Bema Seat:** A raised platform or judgment seat. In the New Testament, it often refers to a place of official judgment or reward. In 2 Corinthians 5, it signifies the place where believers will be assessed by Christ for rewards.
- **Divine Judgment:** The act by which God evaluates the deeds and character of individuals, both believers and unbelievers. Paul refers to the future divine judgment that motivates his ministry.
- **New Creation:** The radical transformation that occurs when a person is united with Christ through faith, resulting in a fundamentally changed nature and perspective.
- **Parousia:** A Greek term referring to the coming or presence of Christ, often specifically referring to his second coming.
- **Reconciliation:** The restoration of friendly relations between estranged parties. In 2 Corinthians, it refers to God's act of bringing humanity back into relationship with himself through Christ's death.
- **Resurrection Body:** The transformed, imperishable, and spiritual body that believers will receive in the future resurrection, distinct from their current mortal body.
- **Walking by Faith:** Living and acting based on trust in God's promises and unseen spiritual realities, rather than relying on sensory perception or immediate circumstances.

5. FAQs on Adewuya, 2 Corinthians, Session 6, 2 Corinthians 5 – Ambassadors for Christ, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions on 2 Corinthians 5: Ambassadors for Christ

1. What is the primary motivation that should drive Christian ministry, according to Paul?

Paul emphasizes that the underlying motivation for all Christian actions and ministry should be rooted in right motives, not just performing correct actions. He highlights several key motivators: a profound conviction in a future life free from suffering and death, the certainty of a future divine judgment, and the understanding that the reconciliation of humanity to God was God's loving initiative through Christ Jesus.

2. How does Paul describe the believer's present earthly body in contrast to their future state after death?

Paul uses the metaphor of an "earthly tent" to describe the believer's present physical body, highlighting its temporary, fragile, and destructible nature, prone to weakness and decay. In contrast, he speaks of a future "building from God," a permanent, eternal, and heavenly dwelling, not made by human hands, which signifies the resurrection body. This new body will be spiritual, imperishable, and perfectly suited for its heavenly environment.

3. What is the significance of the Holy Spirit as a "pledge" (arabon) for believers?

Paul describes the Holy Spirit as a "pledge" or "guarantee" (arabon), a term with commercial significance. This signifies both a down payment and a binding commitment. The present indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit in believers serve as a foretaste and a guarantee of their future resurrection and ultimate transformation. It assures believers of the full inheritance to come.

4. How does a believer's understanding of their future with Christ influence their present life and actions?

Knowing that residence in the earthly body means being absent from the Lord's immediate presence, believers walk by faith, not by sight, with a confident hope of being with Him. This future hope fuels their present ambition to please Christ in all things, whether in life or in death. This ethical imperative stems from the doctrinal truths of their future inheritance.

5. What is the "judgment seat of Christ" (Bema seat) and what is its purpose for believers?

The judgment seat of Christ, or Bema seat, is not a place where believers' salvation is determined. Instead, it is a tribunal where Christians will appear to receive recompense or rewards for what they have done in their earthly bodies, whether good or worthless. It is an assessment of their works and indirectly their character, highlighting the eternal consequences and moral significance of their actions during their mortal lives.

6. What does it mean to "fear the Lord" in the context of Christian service, according to Paul?

The "fear of the Lord" that motivates Paul is not a terror of punishment, but a reverential awe and respect for Christ as the divine assessor and judge. This awareness of personal accountability to Christ forms the basis for faithful and diligent service, driving believers to persuade others of the truth of the gospel and to live with pure and sincere motives. This fear excludes self-reliance and compels believers to depend on God.

7. How does being "in Christ" transform a person's perspective and relationships, according to this passage?

Being "in Christ" signifies a new creation, a radical transformation where the old has passed away and everything has become new. This new identity changes how believers view themselves, others, and even Christ. They no longer evaluate people based on superficial human standards but recognize fellow believers in light of their union with Christ. This new creation is a work of God, leading to reconciliation with Him.

8. What is the role and responsibility of believers as "ambassadors for Christ"?

As "ambassadors for Christ," believers are called to represent Him faithfully to the world. Their message is one of reconciliation: "Be reconciled to God." Like diplomatic ambassadors, they do not deliver their own message but Christ's, and their lives and actions are to be scrutinized as representatives of their sovereign. They have a grave responsibility to give a true and accurate portrayal of who Christ is, urging others to accept God's offer of reconciliation made possible through Christ's sacrifice.