

“I Don’t Wait Anymore” chapter 11 study outline

Sometimes I struggle to keep perspective, to realize that my life is like a vapor or a passing shadow, as it says in James 4:14 and Psalm 144:4. But it’s so important that I fight to keep that perspective. It matters in two ways. First, it means any suffering that I might be walking through won’t last very long in the grand scheme of eternity. (We saw that when we read 2 Corinthians 4 in our chapter 9 study — that our “light momentary affliction” is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory.)

But it also means this — that the time I have here on earth should be invested wisely. Let’s look at the next chapter in 2 Corinthians to see a little more about what God has in mind when it comes to our time, our life and our story.

Read 2 Corinthians 5.

- Just like Paul used “jars of clay” to describe our earthly bodies in 2 Corinthians 4, he uses another here in 5:1 — “tent.” What does that tell us about the nature of our life here? In light of that, do you think it matters more to invest your heart in things that matter here on earth, or things that matter in eternity?
- In the first section (verses 1-10), we see a little bit more about what it looks like to wait for eternity in this “tent.” What kind of verbs do you see in verse 2? Have you ever felt like your heart was doing one of those things? Does it help that feeling make sense to know that you were made for a permanent home somewhere else, not to arrange everything in your life here to set up permanent camp?
- We also see in this section that though Paul would *rather be in heaven with the Lord* (do you feel that way?), if he is here on earth, he wants to use his time well. We see more of that as we read through the chapter. In verse 15, we see that if we live, it’s so that we can live for Christ.
- What does that mean? What does it mean to live for Christ, to live like we’ve been given a specific purpose with our new life in Jesus? Read verses 16-21. What does it mean to be Christ’s ambassador and to have the ministry of reconciliation?

Questions for discussion:

- You read Naomi’s story on page 181. Is there a person or a group of people you’ve had trouble loving in the past? How might it change your perspective to see them as Christ does, in light of eternity?
- In what ways might your perspective, behavior and words change if God gave you a “new pair of eyes” to see your life through the lens of eternity?
- Are there ways you could cut out some things in your life that aren’t purposeful to make time to get to know people who don’t know Jesus yet?
- What’s a practical first step you can put into action this week?
- How often do you think about the people around you and whether or not they know the hope of Jesus?