Our scripture comes from 2 Corinthians 5:1-5. While you’re finding that, an old farmer heard about this invention called the chain saw. One day, he went up to Ace hardware and bought him one – top of the line! The next day he brought it back. He told the salesman, “That is the worst saw ever! It doesn’t make life easier, it’s harder!” The salesman shook his head, “I can’t believe that. It’s top of the line and will cut a hundred times faster than your handsaw.” The farmer said, “Nope! It’s slower.” Taking the saw, the salesman cranked the engine. The farmer grabbed his arm and said, “What’s that sound?” How’s your life with Jesus in it?

**2 Corinthians 5:1-5 For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.**

Last Wednesday was Ash Wednesday. We begin a time of remembering, of repenting, of recommitting our lives to Jesus. This is a time to recall that we are dust! All of us are dust – from the dust we came and to the dust we shall return. The ashes are a reminder that we are only passing through this world – it is not our home. When we are in Jesus, we are on our way to a new place that looks nothing like this shattered world we see all around.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5, gives us a great reminder. In verse 1, For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. He calls our bodies tents or tabernacles. Our bodies are a temporary residence. We were never meant to remain. Dust, meant to return to the earth, like those we’ve laid to rest. Passing, each day, each hour, each minute towards our building made by God in heaven. The first is temporary, aging, changing. The second unchanging and permanent. The first requiring constant upkeep. The last perpetual in God.

Verse 2, For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven. Our spirits groan for our heavenly home. Have you ever sat with a loved one and heard them groan to go home? They’re tired and long to go. An interesting thing happens in the Greek as we pass from verse 1 to verse 2. In both, we read the word house, but in the Greek, this word house is different. In verse 1, the word used means an abode – a place to dwell. In verse 2, the word means a residence – a place of permanent dwelling. A real home. We groan in our spirits to move from the impermanent to the permanent, from the temporary to the eternal.

Paul adds an if in verse 3 (no nested if) -if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. Not everyone has a home waiting in heaven. Those who have been clothed in the Blood of Jesus, covered in His righteousness, and made a choice for Him, will not be found naked when they die. They will be found clothed. Clothed, enduo, meaning invested in, arrayed in – not just some patchwork clothes, but valuable clothing that we are literally wrapped in! Those who die without Jesus are found to be naked and alone, no Mediator behind the veil. When we are in Christ, we are not found naked, but clothed – ready for our heavenly habitation.

Verse 4 - For we who are in *this* tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. We groan for our new home. We groan because we believe in what’s to come. We are confident that, at the moment we shut our eyes, death will be swallowed up for us and we will emerge victorious on the other side. In less than a blink of an eye, we’ll be looking into Jesus face. We don’t spend one second homeless, one second naked, one second afraid. We groan on this side, having the idea of praying silently, sighing in our souls. Out of this darkness we pass into the Light, and we’re instantly swallowed up in eternal life, never to be naked, never to be alone.

Verse 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. Paul finishes – God has wrought this for us - He alone accomplished this very thing through Jesus. The word prepared literally means He worked fully, accomplished, and finished this thing. Jesus, from the Cross said – It is finished The debt is paid, the work is done. Then, as a guarantee, God graciously gave us the Holy Spirit to indwell our souls, so that we might not forget, but have a reminder.

But we must first have accepted Jesus Christ. If we have not chosen Jesus, we are not clothed, we are naked. We’ll either pass into eternity even more clothed, to Life eternally, or we will pass into eternity naked, to death eternally, but the choice must be made on this side, while we groan in these temporary tents we call bodies. The time for choice is now. If you have not been clothed, you come right now and Jesus will array you! With a robe, with a ring, with a crown – Don’t risk passing from this world naked – Only Jesus can swallow up death and clothe you in eternal Life. Won’t you come and be clothed in His righteousness today?