

"AT HOME WITH THE LORD"

A Homegoing Celebration for a Matriarch of Paw Creek

Scripture Text

2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-8

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens... We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Introduction

- To this beloved family, to the saints of God, to the neighbors and friends, and to the Paw Creek community that loved her so dearly, today we stand in the presence of both grief and glory.
- We grieve because a mighty oak has fallen.
- We grieve because one of the great mothers of this community has answered the Master's call.
- We grieve because a voice that spoke wisdom, strength, correction, and encouragement for ninety-two years is no longer heard among us.
- But while earth is grieving, Heaven is rejoicing.
- While our hearts are heavy, the angels are celebrating.
- While we are saying goodbye, Heaven is saying welcome home.
- For ninety-two years, God allowed this precious woman to walk among us.
- For ninety-two years, she carried herself with dignity.
- For ninety-two years, she stood as a pillar of strength for family and community.
- For ninety-two years, she demonstrated what it meant to love God, love family, and stand for what was right.
- She was one of the matriarchs of Paw Creek.
- Not because she demanded the title.
- Not because she sought recognition.
- But because her life earned it.
- When she spoke, people listened.
- When she corrected, people remembered.
- When she prayed, people were covered.
- When she loved, people felt it.

- She was a mother to many.
- Some she raised.
- Some she mentored.
- Some she encouraged.
- Some she prayed through storms.
- Some she helped when nobody else would.
- Her influence stretched far beyond her own household.
- She helped shape generations.
- And today we honor a woman whose footprints can still be seen all over this community.
- Now when we look at this casket, we must understand that what lies before us is not her.
- This is only the earthly house Paul speaks about in our text.
- The woman we loved has already moved out.
- The child of God we cherished has already changed addresses.
- The believer who trusted Jesus Christ has already stepped into eternity.
- And Paul says, "We know."
- Not we hope.
- Not we guess.
- Not we wonder.
- **But we know.**
- That when this earthly house is dissolved, there is another house waiting.
- And because she belonged to Jesus Christ, she has moved from a temporary dwelling into an eternal home.
- There are three truths from this text that remind us why today is not simply a funeral—it is a celebration of victory.

I. THIS EARTHLY HOUSE WAS TEMPORARY

- Paul says:

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved..."

- The body is only a temporary residence.
- It was never designed to last forever.
- Time leaves its mark on every earthly house.
- The years pass.
- Strength begins to fade.
- Hair turns gray.
- Steps become slower.
- The body becomes weary.
- And eventually every earthly house reaches the end of its journey.
- At ninety-two years old, Ms. Verline had traveled a long road.
- She had seen things many of us can only read about.
- She had lived through seasons of change.
- She had witnessed births and deaths.

- Victories and disappointments.
- Joy and sorrow.
- She had carried responsibilities.
- She had borne burdens.
- She had weathered storms.
- Yet God sustained her through it all.
- And now the earthly house has completed its assignment.
- The body grew tired.
- But her soul never belonged to the grave.
- Can I remind somebody today that death only affects the house.
- Death cannot touch the soul.
- Death cannot destroy the promises of God.
- Death cannot cancel salvation.
- Death cannot separate the believer from the love of Christ.
- This body may rest in the earth.
- But the soul belongs to God.
- And because she trusted the Lord, this temporary house has given way to something far greater.

II. GOD HAD A BETTER HOUSE PREPARED

- Paul continues:

"We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

- What a promise.
- God never intended for His children to live forever in broken bodies.
- He never intended for us to remain in houses touched by sickness, pain, weakness, and death.
- Instead, He prepared something better.
- Something eternal.
- Something glorious.
- Something made by His own hands.
- For years this faithful woman lived in an earthly body.
- A body that aged.
- A body that became weary.
- A body that experienced life's hardships.
- But today she occupies something far better.
- No more pain.
- No more weakness.
- No more medications.
- No more hospital visits.
- No more sleepless nights.
- No more suffering.

- No more tears.
 - No more heartaches.
 - No more burdens.
 - Everything that troubled her here has been left behind.
 - And that's why believers do not grieve like those who have no hope.
 - Because we know this is not the end.
 - The cemetery is not the final destination.
 - The grave is not the final chapter.
 - The tomb is not the final word.
 - Jesus has already spoken the final word.
 - And that word is life.
 - Because He lives, she lives also.
 - Because He conquered death, she conquered death.
 - Because He arose from the grave, she shall rise also.
 - The same God who carried her through ninety-two years on earth has now welcomed her into eternal glory.
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III. SHE IS NOW AT HOME WITH THE LORD

- This is the shouting ground of the text.

Paul says:

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

- Notice Paul doesn't describe a waiting room.
- He doesn't describe uncertainty.
- He doesn't describe fear.
- **BUT He describes confidence.**

Why?

- Because the believer's future is settled in Jesus Christ.
- The moment she closed her eyes on earth, she opened them in Glory.
- The moment her earthly journey ended, her heavenly journey began.
- The moment her labor ceased, her reward started.
- Can you imagine what happened when she entered Heaven?
- Can you imagine the reunion?
- Can you imagine the joy?

- Can you imagine hearing the Savior she trusted all these years say:

"Welcome home."

- Can you imagine hearing:

"Well done."

- Not well planned.
- Not well intended.
- Not well started.
- **But well done.**
- Good and faithful servant.
- Enter into the joy of your Lord.
- What a day that must have been.
- The woman who spent her life talking about Him finally saw Him.
- The woman who spent her life trusting Him finally stood before Him.
- The woman who spent her life serving Him finally entered His presence.
- And now she is home.
- She's not visiting.
- She's not passing through.
- She's not staying temporarily.
- **She is home.**
- Forever.

Conclusion

- Now family, if you'll allow me for just a moment, I want you to stop looking at what was lost and start thinking about what was gained.
- Because while we lost a mother...Heaven gained a worshiper.
- While we lost a matriarch...Heaven welcomed a daughter.
- While we lost her presence...She gained His presence.

(Whooping)

- And I can almost see her now.
- Walking the streets of gold.
- Standing beneath the tree of life.
- Joining the heavenly choir.
- Seeing loved ones who went before her.
- But above all else...

- Seeing Jesus.

(Whooping)

- The One who kept her.
- The One who carried her.
- The One who strengthened her.
- The One who saved her.
- The One who sustained her through every trial.
- The One who never left her side.

(Whooping)

- And I hear Him saying,
- "Daughter, welcome home."
- "Your praying days are over."
- "Your crying days are over."
- "Your suffering days are over."
- "Your labor days are over."
- "Your fighting days are over."
- "Come on into the joy of the Lord."

(Whooping)

- And family, that's why we don't have to hang our heads today.
- That's why we don't have to surrender to despair.
- Because the grave is not her address.
- Heaven is her address.
- Glory is her address.
- The Father's house is her address.

(Whooping)

- For ninety-two years she walked by faith.
- For ninety-two years she trusted God.
- For ninety-two years she stood her ground.
- For ninety-two years she poured herself into family and community.
- And now faith has become sight.
- Prayer has become praise.
- Hope has become reality.
- And the child of God is finally home.
- Absent from the body.
- Present with the Lord.
- And all God's people said Amen.
- Amen