

Home Sweet Home

2 Corinthians 5:1—10

Introduction

When Dorothy missed her ride back to Kansas in the professor's balloon, she was given a pair of ruby slippers and told to click the heels together three times while saying, "There's no place like home. There's no place like home. There's no place like home." Next, she's waking up in her bed, mumbling, "There's no place like home." She is surrounded by her Uncle Henry, Auntie Em, Hunk, Zeke, and Hickory. At the beginning of the story, Dorothy is longing for a place "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," a place far away where there are no troubles. Through her adventures in Oz, a place over the rainbow, she finds there are troubles everywhere. The message of the story is, "There is no place like **HOME, SWEET HOME.**"

The Blessings of Home

Indeed, for most of us, the thought of home conjures up feelings of safety, comfort, security, love, and familiarity. Home is where we are surrounded by friends and family. Home is a source of strength. God instituted the home when he told Adam and Eve, "*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*" (**Genesis 1:28**). Home is the original place of family, a father, mother, and children.

What Is Home?

But there is another saying about home: *Home is where the heart is*. Throughout our life, home may change. For the first twenty-nine years of my life, home for me was in Deerfield, Ohio. Even after moving to Indiana, I considered myself a "transplanted Buckeye," not a "Hoosier." My loyalties were "back home" in Ohio. Then I married Carol, became the step-father to Tony, Andy, and Helen, joined her church, and began cultivating friendships there. At the same time, my ties to "back home" were weakening. Now, this is my home. In Indiana my sense of home has shifted from Virgie to Indianapolis, to here in Dyer.

Make Yourself at Home

You've all heard the saying, *make yourself at home*. We often equate that with hospitality, like, *set a spell, take your shoes off*. But what is it that makes home a home? In a word, "relationships." The relationships we cultivate give us a sense of home no matter where we are.

Home and Away

Paul says that we are either going to be *at home in the body and away from the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6)*, or *away from the body and at home with the Lord (v. 7)*. We can't be at home with the Lord and in the body at the same time. As Cassiodorus said: *We have been expelled in the person of Adam from our abode in paradise, and we have our lodging in this land because we do not possess the blessedness of that native land; so we are seen to be foreigners in this world (Explanation of the Psalms 118:54)*. So, we have a choice: do we want to be at home in this body or at home with the Lord?

Coming Home

Paul says that we *would rather be away from the body and home with the Lord (v. 7)*. And that will happen when we leave this body at death or the resurrection of the dead, whichever comes first. But what can we do in the meantime? Remember, the *sense* of home comes from relationships. We can cultivate the relationships that tie us to our home in heaven instead of the relationships that hold us to the body. One thing that helps is cultivating the relationships we have in the church. We realize that church is not a place to go to on Sundays. It is a family. We spend time together, worshiping together, studying together, praying together, working together, playing together, and eating together.

Means of Grace

The best relationship to cultivate is the one with Jesus Christ. How do we do that? By staying in the Word and Sacrament. Hear the Word, read the Word, and study the Word to grow closer to Jesus. Receive the Sacrament of His body and blood, and He will strengthen your faith and your ties to that heavenly dwelling at home with the Lord – **HOME SWEET HOME**.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
