

## BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”  
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

## PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

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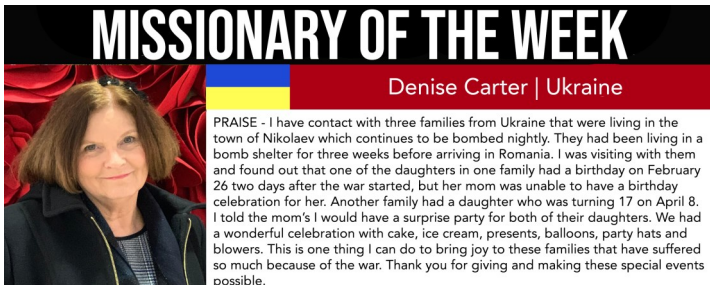
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### MISSIONARY OF THE WEEK

Denise Carter | Ukraine

PRAISE - I have contact with three families from Ukraine that were living in the town of Nikolaev which continues to be bombed nightly. They had been living in a bomb shelter for three weeks before arriving in Romania. I was visiting with them and found out that one of the daughters in one family had a birthday on February 26 two days after the war started, but her mom was unable to have a birthday celebration for her. Another family had a daughter who was turning 17 on April 8. I told the mom's I would have a surprise party for both of their daughters. We had a wonderful celebration with cake, ice cream, presents, balloons, party hats and blowers. This is one thing I can do to bring joy to these families that have suffered so much because of the war. Thank you for giving and making these special events possible.



**GROWTH GUIDE**

# The Great Exchange

Handout: 05/08/22

Study: 05/15/22

## Exchanging Suffering For Jesus’ Perfection

Paul says we groan in our present tent, because we long for our heavenly dwelling (II Corinthians 5:2). According to Ecclesiastes 3:11, God has “put eternity in [our] hearts.” Though we operate in time, we ache for what is everlasting because God created us to last forever. He made us for this very purpose (5:5). How do we know God will follow through on his promise to grant believers eternal life? Because he has given us the Holy Spirit as a down payment guaranteeing what is to come (5:5).

Every human being is rapidly headed for eternity, whether he or she realizes it or not. So, are you living your temporal days in light of your eternal destiny? Approach your every decision and maximize your earthly time by living from an eternal perspective.

While we live in our earthly bodies, we are away from the Lord (5:6) and have not yet realized the fullness of the glory that will be revealed to us when we are taken into God’s presence. Paul’s preference was to be at home with the Lord (5:8). But until that day, he exhorted the Corinthian believers, we walk by faith, not by sight (5:7).

As the apostle said previously, “We do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (4:18). Thus, we must live based on what God’s Word teaches us to believe instead of on what we can see. We walk by faith, trusting that God is telling the truth. Though we can’t see the eternal realities that he has promised, we act—living heavenly in a hellish world—because we are confident in him.

Regardless of his circumstances, Paul’s aim was to be pleasing to the Lord in all aspects of his life (5:9). For he knew he would have to give an account for his life as a believer. Indeed, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil (5:10). The Greek word translated “judgment seat” is *bēma*. In the ancient world, it was on a *bēma* that a ruler or person with authority would sit to render judicial decisions. Paul, for example, stood before the judgment seat (or “tribunal”) of Gallio in Achaia when the Jews made charges against him (see Acts 12–13).

One day every Christian will have to stand before Christ’s *bēma* to have his or her faithfulness (or lack thereof) evaluated and recompensed. Believers will be granted or denied rewards based on whether or not they have lived for Christ. There will be no hiding on that day. And there will be no actions in your Christian life that will be overlooked. Therefore, knowing that everything “good or evil” will be repaid, how do you want to spend the few days allotted to you?

Source: *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary*

## KEY VERSE

II Corinthians 5:2 (NKJV)

*“For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven”*

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## WEEKLY READINGS

**Monday: II Corinthians 5:1-10; I Corinthians 15:53-54**

### Introduction

1. On our cover, Tony Evans makes this statement: “Every human being is rapidly headed for eternity, whether he or she realizes it or not.” What are some reasons people might fail to realize this?
2. How can focusing on eternity help believers while they are suffering?

**Tuesday: II Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 3:20-21; I John 3:2**

### Know You Will Receive A Perfectly Heavenly Body

3. How do today’s readings describe our earthly bodies?
4. How do today’s readings describe our heavenly bodies?

**Wednesday: II Corinthians 5:2-4; Romans 8:22-23; Phil. 1:23-24**

### Realize You Will Suffer In Your Earthly Body

5. List ways in which you have suffered in your earthly body. What have you learned through this suffering?
6. What does it mean to groan for your heavenly body?

**Thursday: II Corinthians 5:5-8; II Tim. 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14**

### Walk By Faith With Confidence

7. According to today’s readings, what reasons does the believer have to be confident?
8. What is the desire of the confident Christian?
9. What does it mean to walk by faith and not by sight? Describe a time in your life when this has been true.

**Friday: II Corinthians 5:9-10; Colossians 1:16; Romans 14:10**

### Make It Your Aim To Please God

10. What should the aim be for the confident Christian?
11. Who will appear before the judgement seat of Christ? What is the purpose of this?
12. How can the judgment seat of Christ help us to aim our lives towards pleasing God?