Walking By Faith, Not By Sight
2 Cor. 5:7

Introduction:

A. The conventional application of this passage strips it of some of its beauty and force.
   1. To "walk by faith, not by opinion" a scriptural sentiment, not this passage.
   2. To walk "by sight" is to walk by appearance — i.e., by what the eye can see.

B. The correct application of this passage can be seen by carefully reading the context.
   2. At home in body (seen), but absent from Lord (unseen). (5:6-8).

C. A study the context of this verse and Hebrews 11 gives great insight into this subject.

Discussion:

I. Explanation Of Walking By Faith, Not By Sight.

A. By faith in the evidence we accept unseen realities—as real as seen realities. (Heb. 11:1).
   2. Evidence (confidence) in things not seen.
      a. Did not see creation, but accept its reality based on evidence. (v. 3).
      b. Did see Jesus, but accept his reality based on evidence. (Rom. 10:6-8,17).
      c. Did not see much of what we accept as reality: News reports, court testimony, historical events, far-away places.

B. By faith we understand that what we see on the surface is not the total picture.
   1. Assyrian invasion of Israel was more than it appeared to be on the surface. (Isa. 10:5,6)
   2. Our present situation on earth is not total picture, there is more to come.

C. By faith we keep pressing on until we reach "a better country" (Heb. 11:16).
   1. Knowing that God will reward those who diligently seek him. (11:6)
   2. Knowing that our present problems and pleasures are temporary.
   3. Knowing that our present work for Lord is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58)

II. Examples Of Walking By Faith, Not By Sight.

A. Things not seen.
   1. By faith Paul looked beyond outward man to the inward man. (2 Cor. 4:18-5:10)
   2. By faith Paul looked beyond present suffering to future glory. (Rom. 8:18).
   3. By faith seven churches of Asia could look beyond surface to reality.
      a. Sardis apparently alive, but really dead. (Rev. 3:1).
      b. Laodicea apparently prosperous, but really poor. (Rev. 3:17,18).
      c. World apparently winning against Christianity, but Revelation shows unseen reality.

B. Things hoped for.
      a. Moved with fear, to avoid a flood like he had never seen.
      b. Preached 100 years with little visible results.
   2. Abraham (Heb. 11:8-19).
      a. Obeyed without knowing where he was going. (Heb. 11:8).
      b. Wandered and waited on God's promise. (Heb. 11:9,10,13-16).
      c. Offered Son based on faith in God's promise. (17-19).
      d. Only real lapse in faith was in having Ishmael.
         (1) Caused him grief.
         (2) Tried to handle God's end of the stick.
      a. He had a real "bird in the hand".
         (1) Enough wealth to buy anything he wanted.
         (2) Enough education to be anything he wanted to be in Egypt. (Acts 7:22)
      b. He knew pleasures of sin would pass away. (v. 25)
c. He feared the invisible God, more that wrath of visible king. (v. 27).
   (1) Enough to keep the Passover. (v. 28)
   (2) Enough to pass through the red sea. (v. 29).

Conclusion:
A. We have God's revelation, so:
   1. We can walk by faith, not sight.
   2. We can see beyond the present circumstance.
   3. We can see deeper than the surface.
B. We have God's promises, so we obey him with confidence.