

Romans 8:18-25

Heaven is Hopeless

As we have been thinking about hope, it is time to consider that hope is not an eternal virtue. It has a shelf life. It is something that has no place in eternity for we will have all of our hopes fulfilled in Christ. However, it also is one of the most important things to possess in this life... this dichotomy is stunning when you consider it... Heaven, the place of our hopes, is itself, hopeless! This means that we must both hold on to our hope against that day, but also that we must not allow our hope itself to become that which we desire above its object. This truth keeps us grounded and allows our hope to have power to transform without becoming empty and vapid.

I. THE PURPOSE OF HOPE

a. To equip us for this life

Romans 12.9-21

Psalm 27:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living. ¹⁴ Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!

b. To prepare us for eternity

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

c. To sustain us in the training

Psalm 130:3–8

d. To give us a hunger for God and His Kingdom

2 Corinthians 5:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

e. To demonstrate the faithfulness of God

f. To help us know and love our God

2 Thessalonians 3:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

II. HOPE IS THE AIR OF THE LIVING

a. Heaven has no place for hope

Romans 8.24²⁴ For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

b. It is the gift that God alone gives us

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

c. It is one of the three core theological realities that drives us

1Corinthians 13.8-13

i. In "Mere Christianity" C. S. Lewis Writes:

"The three virtues that Paul sets forth as being of greatest importance in the

believer's life are faith, hope, and love (1 Corinthians 13:13). Although in our day faith and love are spoken of far more often than hope, it remains true that hope plays a vital role in faithfully following Jesus Christ. The importance of hope is highlighted by C.S. Lewis in his book, *Mere Christianity*, when he says— Hope is one of the Theological virtues. This means that a continual looking forward to the eternal world is not (as some modern people think) a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do. It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark on Earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with

Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth “thrown in”: aim at earth and you will get neither.”

III. HOPE IS THE PROMISE OF THE ADOPTED

a. It is through patience that we learn hope

Romans 5.1-5

b. It is through patience that we learn to love God

c. It is through patience and hope that we inherit the promises of God. Faith grows in that soil and nowhere else.

Hebrews 6:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² that you do not become sluggish,

*but imitate those who through faith and
patience inherit the promises.*

Hebrews 10:32–39

Ephesians 1:17–23

IV. HOPE IS THE STRENGTH OF THE WAITING

a. We endure the hatred and persecution of the world

Luke 21.8-19

b. We are strengthened as we learn to patiently trust Him

Colossians 1.9-14

c. Remember that patience ultimately produces hope

d. Bear always in mind that the chastisement of the Father IS love and is intrinsically tied to our hope...

Hebrews 12.1-11

V. HOPE IS THE ACCOMPLISHED REALITY OF THE GLORIFIED

a. We close our eyes on this life and open them gazing upon the face of the beloved

2 Corinthians 5:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

b. All of our suffering is ended

Revelation 21:3–4 (NKJV) ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There

*shall be no more pain, for the former things
have passed away.”*

c. We have our reward

*Revelation 22:12 (NKJV) ¹² “And behold, I
am coming quickly, and My reward is with
Me, to give to every one according to his
work.*

d. We will be made perfect

1Corinthians 15.50-58

*Romans 9:22–24 (NKJV) ²² What if God,
wanting to show His wrath and to make His
power known, endured with much
longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared
for destruction, ²³ and that He might make
known the riches of His glory on the vessels
of mercy, which He had prepared
beforehand for glory, ²⁴ even us whom He
called, not of the Jews only, but also of the
Gentiles?*

e. We can see God as He is

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV) ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.