

We Hope for What We Do Not See

Romans 8:24-25

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?
But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

REVIEW

I. What we've been learning in the Book of Romans

- A. All human beings are under the condemnation of sin.
- B. God loves us.
- C. He sent His own Son to die for us.
- D. We receive this gift by faith alone.
- E. The result is deliverance from wrath by union with Christ.
- F. Multitudes will think they are saved from wrath but are not.
- G. There are indicators of authentic salvation:
 - 1. Affections change.
 - 2. Behavior changes.
 - 3. Suffering increases.
 - 4. Hope strengthens. (our lesson today)

H. In more detail:

- 1. Affections change.

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:5)

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Col. 3:1-2)

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
(Rom. 12:2a)

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:5)

- A. For example: In this last verse, the issue is loving, sweeping self-denial at any price in order to do the Lord's will and serve others.
- B. There should be a life-long, continuing, increasing Christ heart in us, shown in love for the Word of God, devotion to prayer, kind faithfulness to the church, detection and disdain for the things unfit for God's kingdom, etc.

2. Behaviors change.

Those who are in the Spirit “do mortify the deeds of the body.” (Rom. 8:13)

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.” (Eph. 5:3-4)

“Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (II Tim. 2:19)

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.” (Phil. 2:13-16)

3. Suffering increases.

A. A true Christian is being changed inside and out to be more like his Lord, Jesus Christ. And the more he becomes like Jesus, the more the spirit world and lost humanity will hate him. And God doesn't disallow this suffering. He limits it to what we are able to bear, and He guides it to a profitable end (Rom. 8:28). What is this suffering?

1. Some suffering comes because of our sin, and some just for living in a sin-cursed world.
2. But the kind of suffering that results from our transformation in affections and behavior can usually be discerned to be of a special nature. Sometimes we are told clearly that it is because of our standards and decisions. Sometimes the Holy Spirit confirms.

B. We see from the lives of Jesus, Paul, Job, Daniel, and texts like Heb. 11:35-38, that this suffering can be physical, emotional, spiritual, lengthy, intense, and fatal.

4. Hope strengthens.

A. In our last study we saw 5 points of biblical instruction for how to handle suffering:

1. Acknowledge that reality IS hard.
2. But reckon on the comparative joy ahead if we suffer now.
3. Look forward to God's revealing of His saints and their service to Him.
4. Anticipate being released from our current bondage to corruption.
5. Abide in the hope of completed redemption that will include our very body.

B. So hope is now the topic. We know it's a very important topic at that. All believers are to abide 3 virtues: faith, hope, and love, these three (I Cor. 13:13).

C. What do we learn from our text today (Romans 8:24-25)?

II. We are in some manner “saved by hope.”

A. What it doesn't mean: saved from God's wrath.

1. That salvation is done by faith. Faith is trusting God. Hope is faith applied to God's promises. One commentator: “Faith respects the promise; hope, the thing promised.” Cf. I Pet. 1:3,5.
2. The application here in Romans 8 is hope that saves from despair when going through trials.
3. You might say hope was planted in Gen. 3:15 and reaped in Rev. 21:5.
4. Meanwhile, our present state is one of trial and probation.
5. Those who deal with God must deal on trust.
6. The evidence of true hope: patience (:25). Think on it. Why would this be?
7. We wait because we know God's promises are real, certain, valuable, satisfying, and will be received with utmost joy.

B. So we bear all suffering as we rest in confident expectation of all promised good.

1. We wait in confident expectation to see the one way of salvation to which we have devoted our lives and on which we have hung our eternity play out completely before us. This is called “the hope of the gospel” (Col. 1:23).
2. We wait in confident expectation that we believers, in spite of wretched lives of sin and failure, shall stand before the Judge who requires absolute perfection for entrance into His kingdom, and be declared sinless. This imputation of Jesus' spotless virtue to our account is the “hope of righteousness” (Gal. 5:5).
3. We wait in confident expectation that the Father who has planned all things and will cause all things to occur as He has planned will carry out His plans even for us whom He knew before the foundation of the world and predestined to do certain works and to be changed all the way from the dark frail sinners up to being like Christ. This the Bible calls the “hope of His calling” (Eph. 1:18).
4. We wait in confident expectation that, though we live in a cruel, painful world inhabited by devils and though we ourselves cry out who shall deliver me from the body of this death, we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption. This is the “hope of salvation” (I Thess. 5:8).
5. We wait in confident expectation that in our failures and in our successes by God's grace, in spite also of the failures and blindness and rebellion that plagues our land, in spite of the abortions and perversions and hardness of heart that is all about us, in spite of this and much more, in us and our deeds and throughout all the land and around the world, God shall yet receive glory in all things. This the Bible calls the “hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2).
6. We abide in confident expectation that when our life sojourns are over and our bodies laid in the grave that there they will not remain. No, not ours, nor the bodies of all our cherished family of God. But God shall raise our bodies to life. This corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and we shall rise never to die again. This the Bible calls the “hope and resurrection of the dead” (Acts 23:6).

