

The Hope of Glory
Romans 8:18-25
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All people in Christ have “access by faith into this grace wherein we stand” and we should “rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:2).” This hope is a confident expectation that we will enjoy God's goodness forever. But what is “glory?”

"Glory" comes up well over 400 times in the English Bible. And the basic ideas are things like enduring value, brightness, beauty, honor, weight, confidence, praise and reputation. God is glorious (Ex 15). The Old Covenant of Law was glorious, and the New Covenant of Grace is more glorious (2 Cor 3). The Gospel is glorious (1 Tim 1:11), the church will be glorious when we pass beyond sin (Eph 5:27), our bodies will be glorious when we pass beyond death, and Jesus' second coming will be very glorious (Titus 2:13).

To have glory is to be full of meaning, significance, and worth. To give glory to God is to confess that He is the source of all glory. In short, “glory” is all that is truly enduring, important, and wonderful. Because this present world is far from God, there is very little glory; death, vanity, and ugliness rule for now.

But when God returns, Christians will return with Him in glory, and the whole creation will reflect God's glory as He intended; we will live in a world of glory. And so this passage teaches us how to...

Live in the hope of the glory of God!

Romans 8:18 The Careful, Decisive Calculation Of Hope

VS 18 “ For I reckon that” This is a careful deliberate calculation. Paul knew much about suffering:

His Jewish countrymen had him flogged five times, the Roman authorities had him beaten three times. He was also robbed, shipwrecked, often hungry, often homeless, imprisoned (2 Cor 11) and even had a death sentence carried out upon him in the city of Lystra (Acts 14)

But God preserved Paul through all of these things. And when Paul sits down to write the book of Romans, he counts the cost and is sure that all of his sufferings for the cause of Christ are cheap compared to the weighty glory to come.

Vs 18 “glory which shall be revealed in us” This could just as correctly be translated “**glory which shall be revealed to us.**” Our hope in Christ is not just for a glorious transformation within, but also for a glorious world without. We will be glorious beings, living in a glorious world.

Paul is certainly NOT living his best life now, but he is certain of better things to come; this is the hope of glory.

Christian, find hope and humility by meditating on the glory to come! Make a habit of comparing your momentary situation with eternal realities!

Romans 8:19-21 The Hope of All Creation

Vs 19 “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth...” The prophets kept speaking about the lower created order (the elements, plants, and animals) as though they would also celebrate one day.

“...the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands (Isa 55:12).”

“Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice (Psl 96:11-12).”

The created order “waits eagerly” for the full revelation of the Sons of God.

Vs 19 “...for the manifestation of the sons of God.”Romans 8:14 says that Christians are already the Sons of God but we are still beset by sin and frustrated by our own weakness. When Jesus comes back with us to rule the earth, we will be sinless and powerful; we will be as we were meant to be.

Accept God's adoption by faith, otherwise, you have no hope of the glory of God and will have no part in restoring the world marred by sin!

Vs 20 Vanity is the opposite of glory. Everything in the world now is frustrating and frustrated. Nothing works quite as it should.

The world was made to glorify God and be enjoyed by His children as they wisely, lovingly rule as God's representatives. But now, under the curse, every part of this purpose is frustrated.

Death and decay work in the world at all levels. Humans worship the creatures rather than appreciate them and give thanks to God. We handed over our authority in the world to Satan. And what power we do have we usually squander to scar the world and make each other miserable. And even the very best of us will die not knowing what will happen to their life's work.

This is the vanity of vanities that Solomon laments in Ecclesiastes. It seems like we just spin our wheels, and nothing changes in a lasting way. This is vanity and it frustrates even the wise and powerful.

“Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity. For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool. Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit (Ecc 2:15-17).”

Vs 20 But even in the depth of vanity there is hope in God “by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,” God trusted Adam and Eve with free will and authority over the world, and God's gifts and callings are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).

So when we chose to lead our world into death, He allowed us to go. God subjected the world to vanity and death, not because He wanted to, but because we chose it.

But there is always hope for the repentant, and God did not leave us to the death that we chose. He entered into death Himself to show us the way out when we come to our senses.

Know that this world's vanity is not the end of the story!

Trust Jesus and live "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us (Titus 2:13-14)!"

Vs 21 From bondage and corruption to freedom and glory...the vanity of the world is not the end of the story.

The saved will rule on earth with Jesus for a thousand years after His return (Rev 5:10, 20:4). We will be completely free from sin and we will help to deliver the rest of creation into the "liberty of the children of God."

At the beginning of this Millennium, the world will have been ravaged by the waste of the Antichrist and the wrath of God. But there will still be life on earth, and some humans will survive to repopulate the world.

The mortal humans on earth will live in a world full of justice and the knowledge of God. War will be obsolete (Isa 2:2-4). Death will be rare, and the natural world will no longer be full of suffering (Isa 11:6-9). There will be some wastelands in memorial of sin but much of the world will be fruitful and rich like Eden (Joel 3:18-21).

God's grace is never an excuse for laziness. We should not use this hope as a reason to ignore our responsibilities to be good stewards of creation now. But we have much hope knowing that when the Lord rules, and we with him, our work as stewards will no longer be frustrated; the natural world will be full of glory and liberty.

Find hope knowing that the glory of God will be known in this world. His good purpose, declared in the Beginning, will be accomplished at the end!

Romans 8:22-23 The Clarity of Glory

Vs 22-23 Here Paul uses the image of childbirth to give us perspective on the hope of glory. The suffering of the created world and our own internal struggles are like the pains of childbirth.

Labor is hard, painful, and messy but it does not last forever. And when the temporary sorrow is ended, a new immortal being has been brought into the world to be enjoyed.

Jesus uses an illustration like this when He comforts his disciples on the night of His betrayal.

"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you (John 16:21-23)."

Vs 23 “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Just as Christians are the Sons of God but we are not fully manifested, we have received the adoption but not all of it yet.

Just as our spirit is now being renewed by the Spirit of God, one day God will redeem our bodies from death.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory (1 Cor 15:51-55).”

Hope because all in Christ will see the goodness of God in a new body! The sorrow of the world and the struggle within are very real, but they are temporary!

Romans 8:24-25 Hope, Patience, Faith in the Glory of God

Vs 24 The Bible teaches that “For by grace are ye saved through faith (Eph 2:8).” Here we see how closely hope and faith are bound. Faith is informed trust in Jesus, and hope is the confident expectation of His coming.

Vs 25 Faith and hope in the glory of God strengthen our patience.

Jesus talks about “patience” as steadfast fortitude.

“And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls (Luke 21:16 -19).”

The patience of the saints is a resolve to do right by God at any personal cost.

Patience is a refusal to worship idols knowing that you will be burnt alive. Patience is making the decision to seek the good of a person when they are horribly unlovable. Patience is doing the right thing knowing that everyone is going to make fun of you for it. Patience is denying yourself vengeance and trusting God to judge the wicked.

Hope in the Glory of God so that you will have the patience to overcome!

CONCLUSION

Your entire hope of glory depends on you being a child of God through faith in Jesus. Without Jesus, you have no part in God's glory, with Jesus you have the hope of glory that cannot be lost.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom 6:23).” Once you have accepted God's free gift...

Habitually perform the calculation of hope. Learn to place every hardship and victory on the scales against the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (2 Cor 4:17)!"

This will keep you encouraged and humble.

Learn to see suffering and death as the anomalies that they are. Rejoice in hope knowing that you will have a part in returning the glory of God to the earth when He comes!

This is important because the world system teaches that suffering, chaos, and meaningless death are all "natural." We must stand up to this lie and stand for the glorious hope of the creation!

When you are going through a particularly trying time, or are discouraged by the state of the world, see these temporary things in the light of eternal glory! Remember that like childbirth, God is using temporary sorrow for our eternal good and His eternal glory!

God has a purpose for suffering, and you are not alone in your sorrow. Remember that all in Christ will enjoy a physical life in the glory of God.

Meditate on the hope of glory so that you will have patience! Be grounded and sustained by the hope of glory!

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor 15:58)."

Live in the hope of the glory of God!