

The Third Gift: Expectation of Glory

“... we exult in hope of the glory of God.” — Romans 5:2b

1 March 2009

A. Some opening thoughts...

1. Spring

2. our text:

a. exult

b. hope

c. glory of God^A

d. hope and glory together^B

B. Hope

1. in the Christian context (with glory)

2. why Christianity is a religion of hope^C

a. its Author

b. its Certainty

c. its perfection

C. the Glory of God

1. what does this mean in the context of hope?

a. Abraham's bosom or paradise?

b. the Christian's after-life?^D

2. the greater future expectation^E

D. Applying this truth ...

1. are you looking forward to the morning?

2. are you ready for the morning?

^A Philippians 2:11, 1Corinthians 10:31

^B Ephesians 1:18; Colossians 1:27-28

^C Revelation 2:8, Hebrews 6:17-20

^D 2 Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:23-24

^E 1 Cor. 15:50-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-5:2; Romans 8:17-18; 1 John 3:2

A. Introduction

1. Spring

- a. will arrive (at least on the calendar) in three weeks.
- b. aren't we all eagerly looking forward to spring?
 - (A) after a winter of cold, snow, ice and freezing rain
 - (B) to the ground springing afresh into new life
 - (C) Maureen's seeds have arrived and she is planting them – indoors, of course, but soon to go outside
- c. Good Friday & Resurrection Sunday come in six weeks.
 - (A) and to these, too, we look forward each year
 - (B) as the message of the death and resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, is brought into focus afresh
- d. during this time, my desire is
 - (A) to refresh your hearts and minds with this gospel
 - (B) the good news of salvation through the cross
 - (C) and the blessings brought to us by His resurrection
 - (D) in the morning Bible class we shall be looking at Jesus' last night with His disciples as described in John 13-17
 - (E) and our Sunday morning messages will complete the theme of the seven gifts of justification in Romans 5

2. our text today is the second half of Romans 5: 2:

- a. "we exult in hope of the glory of God."
- b. we could examine this text on the basis of its principal words or phrases, taking each one independently
 - (A) first: **exult**
 - (1) which means not only to possess joy and gladness
 - (2) but also to speak of it; indeed, to boast of it
 - (3) but we shall set this theme of joy and rejoicing aside for a month until we come to the final gift of justification in this series, that of "Joy in God"

(B) then: hope

(1) hope, too, is an important part of joyous living

(2) in fact, it's important for living, period: ^{-(2)}}.

(a) as part of the school program, a teacher was sent to a hospital to help a boy keep up with his studies. She had not been told that he had been badly burnt and so was very upset when she saw him. However, she gave him the lesson on nouns and adverbs, although when she left, she felt she had accomplished little

(b) the next day when the nurse asked what she had done to the boy, she began to stammer out an apology. 'No,' said the nurse, 'we've been worried about that boy, but ever since yesterday, his whole attitude has changed. ... It's as though he's decided to live.'

(c) the explanation emerged later, as the boy said, 'they wouldn't send a teacher to work on nouns and adverbs with a dying boy, would they?'

(d) hope made the difference

(3) but that is not the kind of hope spoken of here

(C) lastly: glory of God

(1) living to bring glory to God is of the paramount importance to those who have been redeemed

(2) "and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2: 11), and,

(3) "... whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

(4) but that is not the emphasis on this phrase here

c. because when 'hope' and 'glory' are combined in the Bible

(A) and here are some examples of them together

(1) Ephesians 1:18 – '*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints'*

(2) Colossians 1:27-28 – ²⁷ to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ... ^{28b} so that we may present every man complete in Christ.'

(B) when these two are combined, there is a more specific allusion involved; that allusion is to heaven, to eternity

(C) and, as if you had not already figured it out from the bulletin, the reading, and the hymns that we

have sung this morning, heaven is the subject of our message

3. so what is meant by 'our hope of glory, of heaven'?
 - a. is it something uncertain?
 - b. is it something indefinite?
 - c. let's examine the subject more closely

B. Hope

1. what is meant by this word in the Christian context?
 - a. A Methodist minister from Sri Lanka told how he invited some Hindu friends to tea. While relaxing, he asked them to explain the hope their religion offered them. They had great difficulty in understanding what his question meant. Tamil, as a language, has no word for what Christians mean by hope. There is simply nothing comparable to the biblical concept of hope in the great religions of the East. ^{3}.
 - b. the religions of the world are 'hope so' religions
 - c. but, the word 'hope' as used in Scripture, is not a 'hope so'
 - d. it conveys the thought of a solid expectation
 - e. Before Maureen and I went to Japan and Korea, we made our wills, dealing particularly with the situation where, for example, an accident might take both our lives. Then we sent a copy to each of our children – with some very mixed and amusing responses, I may add. As a result they have a hope, a solid expectation of what they will receive. They know the what if not the when. Their expectation is founded on a trust they have in us, that we will not materially alter our wills in the future from what we have promised.
 - f. In Hebrews 9, we find that the new covenant or testament is spoken of as a will, a will established by Jesus Christ, and a will that has been made certain by His death
2. Christianity, then, is a religion of 'hope' because
 - a. its Author is '... The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life.' (Revelation 2:8) – the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the proof of our future glorification
 - b. Christian hope is a certainty
 - (A) Hebrews 6:17-20 – ¹⁷ In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the

promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, ¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a *hope* both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, ²⁰ where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

(B) its certain

- (1) because God has promised it
- (2) because God's purpose is unchangeable
- (3) because God cannot lie
- (4) because it anchors our soul; surely, steadfastly
- (5) because Jesus our forerunner has already entered

c. Albert Barnes has commented 'Hope is a complex emotion, made up of a desire for an object, and an expectation of obtaining it. Where either of these is wanting, there is not hope. Where they are mingled in improper proportions, there is not peace. But where the desire of obtaining an object is attended with an expectation of obtaining it in proportion to that desire, there exists that peaceful, happy state of mind which we denominate hope.'^{4}.

d. Christian hope is a perfect hope, satisfying fully the soul's desire and giving assured expectation from God Himself that we will obtain that which we desire; that is of ...

C. The Glory of God

1. the Christian's hope, then, is sure, a certainty

a. but what is the glory of God to which this hope is directed?

b. the Lord Jesus gives a short history of two men

(A) one an unnamed rich man; the other a beggar, Lazarus

(B) the rich man in torment, Lazarus in Abraham's bosom

(C) and between these two there was a great gulf fixed, so that one could never go from one to the other

(D) Lazarus, after his death, was in the place of comfort

c. on the cross, Jesus promised the repentant thief who had faith in Jesus, that he would join Jesus in

paradise

- (A) paradise was a Persian loan-word taken into Greek
 - (B) it originally described the park gardens of the king
 - (C) in the Greek OT it was used to translate the phrase 'garden of God' or 'garden of Eden' as found in Ezekiel
 - (D) that picture of Eden is certainly found in the book of Revelation as we saw in our reading today
- d. but is this what is being spoken of as 'the glory of God'?

2. When a Christian dies

- a. he is not facing an uncertain prospect
- b. in facing death, Paul says, 'we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.' (2 Corinthians 5:8), and,
- c. 'But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that is very much better*; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.' (Philippians 1:23-24)
- d. and, in Revelation 6:9-11, we are told of the souls of the martyrs who are under the altar, awaiting for God to exact justice on their behalf, '... and they are told that they should rest for a little while longer ...'
- e. so for the Christian, the after-life is better than life
- f. but is this what is being spoken of as 'the glory of God'?

3. no, it is not – we are looking for something far greater!

- a. let's just turn together and read some passages about it
 - (A) 1 Corinthians 15:50-54^F
 - (B) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:2^G

^F ⁵⁰ Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up' in victory.

^G ¹³ But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we

- (C) Romans 8:17-18^H, and,
- (D) 1 John 3:2^I
- b. this is the glory of God for which we eagerly hope
 - (A) that we shall behold God and enjoy Him forevermore
 - (B) and that glory, moreover, will be bestowed upon us
 - (C) and, in God's eyes, it is as good as done: 'and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.' (Romans 8:30)

D. Conclusion: 'not everybody as talks about heaven goin' to be there'

1. The morning is coming: ⁵.

- a. Dr. W. A Criswell, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, was on an air-plane beside a well-known theologian. As they flew, this professor spoke of how he had recently lost his little boy in death. The boy had come home from school with a fever. It was thought to be just one of those childhood things, but it was virulent meningitis. The doctor gave no hope.
- b. This seminary professor, loving his son as he did, sat by the bed side to watch this death vigil. In the middle of the day and the little boy's strength ebbed away; his vision and brain grew clouded, and he said, "Daddy, it's getting dark isn't it?"
- c. The professor said, "Yes son it is getting dark, very dark."
- d. "Daddy, I guess it's time for me to go to sleep isn't it?"
- e. "Yes, son, it's time for you to go to sleep."

who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words. ^{5:1} Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. ² For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.

^H ¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*. ¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

^I Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is."

- f. The little boy had a way of fixing his pillow just so, and putting his head on his hands when he slept. He fixed his pillow in that way and, laying his head on his hands, said, "Good night Daddy. I will see you in the morning." He then closed his eyes in death and stepped over into heaven.
 - g. Dr. Criswell relates that the professor sat silently for a while. He just looked out the window of that airplane for a long time. Then he turned back to the pastor with the scalding tears coming down his cheeks and said, "Dr. Criswell, I can hardly wait till the morning."
 - h. that professor had this assurance because both he and his son knew Jesus as Saviour.
2. 'For His anger is but for a moment, His favour is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy *comes* in the morning.' (Psalms 30: 5)
- a. Christ dealt with God's wrath against sin on the cross so that by you and I might have this 'hope of the glory of God'
 - b. at a time of great sorrow, George Matheson wrote^{6}.
 - O Joy that seekest me through pain,
 - I cannot close my heart to Thee
 - I trace the rainbow through the rain,
 - And feel the promise is not vain
 - That morn shall tearless be.
 - c. I'm looking for that morning.
 - d. How about you? Are you ready for that morning?

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2. Adapted from Bits & Pieces, July 1991, quoted by Rev. Roy Fowler in “Rejoice in Hope” - Kerux sermons #21280
3. Adapted from Kerux illustration #227
4. Rev. Albert Barnes in his commentary on Romans 5:2
5. “I Will See You in the Morning,” Rev. Brett Blair's Illustrations – Kerux illustration #4735
6. “O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go” by George Matheson (1842-1906)