

Sermon #141 — Romans Series

Title: **THE HOPE OF HEAVEN**

Text: *Romans 13:11*

Subject: *Living for Eternity*

Date: Sunday Morning—April 15, 2018

Reading: *Psalms 126:1-6*

Introduction:

As I read Paul's epistles and think about the man who wrote them, I cannot help getting the idea that he was a man who lived in the immediate prospect of eternity, in the immediate prospect of heaven. **It seems to me that the Apostle Paul lived as a man to whom heaven was next door, just across the street, right over there.** To him it was not far away, but close, close by — just over there.

ASIDE THOUGHT

He wrote about heaven in considerable detail in some places. But, more often than not, he wrote about heaven in what appear to be passing comments. — Do not misunderstand me. Those passing comments were written by divine inspiration. But they seem to have been, in Paul's mind, just things that popped into his mind as he wrote, aside

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thoughts, having little to do with the subject about which he was writing. **The hope of heaven was always before him, always on his mind, in immediate prospect, just across the street — just over there.**

Let me show you what I mean. In 1st Corinthians 7, as he wrote about the home, marriage, and living in this world, right in the middle of the chapter, gives us one of those passing thoughts, an aside comment. He says...

(1 Corinthians 7:29-31) “But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; (30) And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; (31) And they that use this world, as not abusing *it*: for the fashion of this world passeth away.”

The time is short. The Lord is at hand. Maranatha. The Lord is at hand. — And that

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was the way it was all through his life. That is how he lived. To Paul, the hope of heaven was real. He lived as a man to whom heaven was just over there. That is the way he lived from the day God saved him. On the Damascus Road, suddenly, the Lord Jesus appeared, the Son of God stepped into his life; and from that moment on, he was there. **No matter where he was or what he was doing, Christ was there, heaven was just across the street — just over there.**

- Making Tents — Just over there!
- On Board a Ship — Just over there!
- Travelling to Preach — Across the street!
- Writing to the Churches — Right there!
- In Prison — Just over there!

As the hope of heaven seems to have consumed Paul's thinking, it ought to consume ours. — We ought to live every day, throughout the day, with eternity before us, just across the street, just over there.

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As God the Holy Ghost will enable me, I want to inspire your heart and my own with **THE HOPE OF HEAVEN**. Oh, may God give us grace to live in the immediate hope of heaven all the time! That is my subject — **THE HOPE OF HEAVEN**.

My text in the 13th chapter of Romans, is one of those aside thoughts, one of those passing comments Paul was inspired to make about the hope of heaven. He has been talking about submission to civil authority, paying taxes, living graciously for the glory of God. Then, in verse 11, he says...

(Romans 13:11) “And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

SALVATION

“*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*”
— We commonly speak of salvation as that state of grace experienced in the new birth, that bless state

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into which every sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is introduced when he passes from death unto life, being delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

“The moment a sinner believes,
And trusts in his crucified God;
His pardon at once he receives,
Redemption in full through his blood.

The faith that unites to the Lamb,
And brings such salvation as this,
Is more than a notion or name—
The work of God's Spirit it is!

It treads on the world and on hell;
It vanquishes death and despair;
And what is still stranger to tell,
It overcomes heaven by prayer.

It says to the mountains, ‘Depart,’
That stand between God and the soul;
It binds up the broken in heart,

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The wounded in conscience makes whole.”

— *Joseph Hart*

Salvation, so far as the forgiveness of sin, the gift of righteousness and the eternal life, and the safety of the soul are concerned, is given to us the moment that we are given faith in the Lord Jesus by the operation of God the Holy Ghost.

But the term “salvation” here, and in other portions of Holy Scripture, signifies that complete deliverance from sin, that glorious perfection, which will not be attained by us until the day of the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Salvation here signifies entire deliverance from indwelling sin, perfect sanctification, and includes the resurrection of the body and the glorification of body, soul, and spirit with Christ Jesus in the world to come. Salvation here refers to eternal glory in and with our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. At this hour our perfect salvation is nearer than when we believed.

MY EXPERIENCE

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I am a man the Lord God has lifted from the gates of death and snatched as a brand from the burning. He did it, if you will permit me to borrow David's words — *“That I may show forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation”* (Psalms 9:14).

Truly, *“the LORD hath done great things for me; whereof I am glad.”* But none of those great things the Lord my God has done for me compare to or give me such gladness as the salvation of my soul in and by the Lord Jesus Christ. How I rejoice to know that God, our King of old, is, ever has been, and ever shall be God *“working salvation in the midst of the earth!”*

I pray that God the Holy Ghost will graciously enable me to once more proclaim his salvation to you. How I pray, as I describe his salvation to you as he has revealed it in his Word, that he will make it your own.

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Turn with me, if you will, to 2 Corinthians 1:9-10. That which Paul states here, with regard to his deliverance from physical death by the hands of wicked men, is a very good declaration of God's great work of grace in the salvation of our souls by Christ.

(2 Corinthians 1:9-10) “But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: (10) Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us*.”

Proposition: Salvation is the deliverance of our souls from the sentence of death by the grace of God.

Let me speak of my own experience. As I do, I will speak for you, my brothers and sisters in Christ.

- There was a time when, as Paul put it in verse 8, “*we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life.*” — There was a time when the Lord God

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caused me to see that I was a lost sinner, cursed, condemned, under the just sentence of death, eternal death in hell.

- When I had the sentence of death in my soul, I was made to see that I should not, must not, and could not trust in myself.
- I was altogether shut up to Christ, graciously, sweetly forced to trust “*in God which raiseth the dead.*”

Now, trusting him, I am here to speak to you as one sinner to another, about God my Savior —
“*Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.*”

Salvation, I remind you, is a big, big word. It includes all that is involved in delivering our souls from the sentence of death into “*the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*” In our text and here, Paul speaks of this salvation as something accomplished in past, something being accomplished in the present, and something yet to be accomplished. — “*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*”

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If, as we search the Scriptures, we find that salvation is described throughout the Book of God in various stages: past, present, and future.

IN ETERNITY

1st — Salvation is a work of God accomplished in eternity, “*finished from the foundation of the world.*” That is what God the Holy Spirit tells us in **Hebrews 4:3**. All the works of God involved in this thing called salvation “*were finished from the foundation of the world.*”

- We were chosen in eternal love (Jeremiah 31:3).
- We were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8).
- We were accepted in the Beloved and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him before the world began (Ephesians 1:3-6).

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath

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blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

(Ephesians 1:7) “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”

- We were named the children of God, justified, sanctified, preserved and glorified in Christ by the will and purpose of God in old eternity (Romans 8:29-30; 2 Timothy 1:9-10; Jude 1).

(Romans 8:29-30) “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) Moreover whom he

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did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) God “hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

(Jude 1:1) “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called.”

AT CALVARY

2nd — The Spirit of God also declares that our salvation was finished by the obedience of Christ as our Substitute at Calvary. **When our Savior cried,**

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“It is finished,” **it was finished** (John 19:30; Hebrews 9:12). Redemption and righteousness were performed by Christ and finished by Christ when he died as our Substitute upon the cursed tree.

(Hebrews 9:12) “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.”

(Galatians 3:13-14) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

- He brought in everlasting righteousness for us.
- He put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself.
- He made us the righteousness of God.
- When he arose from the dead, we rose with him.

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- When he sat down in heaven, we sat down with him.

NEW BIRTH

3rd — **The experience of grace in salvation is also spoken of as something accomplished in the past.**

When I say, “the experience of grace,” I am talking about the experience of salvation, the experience of the new birth, the experience of receiving Christ. We who now live unto God have been saved. There was a time “*when we believed*” There came a time when we, who were dead in trespasses and in sins, were born again by God’s omnipotent mercy and grace, when we were called from death to life, by irresistible mercy, a time when we were given faith in Christ and sealed in him by the Spirit of God (Ephesians 1:13-14; 2:1-9; Psalm 34:6).

(Ephesians 1:13-14) “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with

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that holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

(Ephesians 2:1-9) “And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins: (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (6) And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: (7) That in

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the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (8) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

(Psalms 34:1-8) “I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. (2) My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad. (3) O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. (4) I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. (5) They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. (6) This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles. (7) The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (8) O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him.”

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Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, we received the atonement, we received justification, and we received life eternal. Now we stand in grace experimentally (Romans 4:25-5:11).

(Romans 4:25) “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

(Romans 5:1-11) “Therefore, being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: (2) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (6) For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (7) For scarcely for a

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righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (11) And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

MUST BELIEVE

If you would be justified before God in your soul, if you would be saved, if you would have Christ, you must believe on the Son of God. You must receive him (John 1:11-13).

(John 1:11-13) “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become

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the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: (13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Some men preach as if they are scared to death one of the non-elect might get saved! They throw up barbed wire, razor fences all around the gospel, doing everything they can to keep sinners from believing on the Son of God.

I never cease to be amazed that the heads of sinful men often swell with such dizziness, under the intoxication of heart-pride, that they imagine themselves smarter than God and presume to assert that that the very language of Holy Scripture is heretical and blasphemous, if not qualified by their own “explanations.” Recently, an imaginary theologian who thinks he has come to “new light” has vehemently asserted that anyone who uses the terms “saving faith” and “effectual faith” is a blaspheming heretic. Were his assertions not so serious and deluding, they would be laughable.

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OUR SAVIOR’S WORDS

Would you like to hear what the Lord Jesus said to sinners in his day who trusted him?

- **To the Woman with an issue of blood** he said...

(Matthew 9:22) “But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, **Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.** And the woman was made whole from that hour.”

(Mark 5:34) “And he said unto her, **Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole;** go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”

(Luke 8:48) “And he said unto her, **Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole;** go in peace.”

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- **To the Woman of Canaan** he said...

(Matthew 15:28) “Then Jesus answered and said unto her, **O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.**”

- **To Blind Bartimaeus** he said...

(Mark 10:52) “And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; **thy faith hath made thee whole.** And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.”

- **To Another Blind Man** he said...

(Luke 18:42) “And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: **thy faith hath saved thee.**”

- **To the Woman Who was Forgiven Much** he said...

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(Luke 7:50) “And he said to the woman,
Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.”

- **To the Leper Who was Healed** he said...

(Luke 17:19) “And he said unto him, Arise,
go thy way: **thy faith hath made thee
whole.**”

GOD’S GIFT

We recognize and rejoice in the fact that faith in Christ is the gift and operation of God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:8-9; Colossians 1:12). No sinner can or will believe on the Son of God, except God the Holy Spirit graciously causes him to do so by omnipotent, effectual grace (John 5:40; 6:37, 44; Psalms 65:4; 110:3). Every gospel preacher proclaims, and every saved sinner knows, that it is Christ (the solitary object of our faith) who has redeemed, justified, and saved us by free grace alone. He has reconciled us to our God.

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But **faith in Christ is not a passive thing**. In regeneration we are as passive as a child in birth. But being born of God faith in Christ is as active as a newborn baby crying to breathe and nursing at its mother's breast.

Yet the Word of God plainly declares that we receive the atonement by faith in Christ (Romans 5:10-11). We have the peace of complete justification and reconciliation to our God, by faith in Christ. **Yes, faith in Christ is effectual and saving in the experience of it**. — *“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”* (1 John 5:4).

OUR FAITH

Faith in Christ is not a notion, or a doctrine, or a principle. It is the heart confidence of every needy sinner who looks to Christ as his only Savior that causes him to confess, *“My Lord, and my God”* (John 20:28). Yes, it is God's gift and God's operation in us. Faith is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians

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5:23). Yet, it is our faith. If God gave it to me, that makes it mine.

NECESSARY FAITH

The breath in my lungs is God’s gift. He enables me to breathe. Yet, it is my breath and my breathing that is the evidence that God still gives me life. And the breathing of my body is as necessary to my living as God’s gift of life. The two cannot be separated. If you doubt that, try putting a plastic bag over your face and see if you can live without breathing!

So it is with faith. We “*are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*” (Galatians 3:26). The Holy Spirit tells us plainly that the faith you have by his grace is “*your faith in Christ*” (Ephesians 1:15; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 2:5). It is God’s gift; and because God gave it to you, it is “*your faith.*”

And “*your faith in Christ*” is just as necessary, just as vital to your everlasting salvation, and just as precious (2 Peter 1:1) as God’s decree of election,

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Christ's accomplished redemption, and the Holy Spirit's effectual call. — *“Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”* (Hebrews 11:6).

TWO QUESTIONS

Do you, like the Philippian jailer of old, ask, “**What must I do to be saved?**” I do not hesitate to answer with Paul and Silas, “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*” (Acts 16:30-31). Do not allow anyone to put you looking to yourself, and your experience. — “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,*” and salvation is yours.

Do you ask, “**How can I know that I am saved?**” Answer this one question — “*Dost thou believe on the Son of God?*” (John 9:35) It does not matter whether you can answer “**What did you know** when you first professed faith in Christ?” or “**Was the man preaching** a sound gospel preacher?” or “**When did you believe?**” Those questions are totally irrelevant.

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This is the only question to be answered — “*Dost thou believe on the Son of God?*” If you now trust the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation is yours.

As for those imaginary theologians who are offended by these things, as far as I am concerned, if men find the language of Holy Scripture offensive, I do not hesitate to offend them. As I once heard another preacher¹ put it — “It is not blasphemy to say what God has said. It is blasphemy to replace what God has said with the words and wisdom of man. What he says plainly is what he means and all else is blasphemy!” Be assured, that which men call “new light” is old satanic darkness!

(Psalms 126:1-3) “When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. (2) Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.

¹ Pastor Gary Shepard

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(3) The LORD hath done great things for us;
whereof we are glad.”

BEING SAVED

4th — **This thing called salvation is frequently spoken of in the present tense.** By the grace of God, I have been saved from eternity, at Calvary, and in the new birth. And, by the grace of God, I am being saved. We who trust Christ are being saved. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 1:18 that the preaching of the gospel is “*unto us who are being saved*” the power of God. In Romans 13:11 we read, “*now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*”

Yes, I have been saved; and I am being saved. I have come to Christ; and I am coming to Christ — (“*To whom coming*” 1 Peter 2:4). I am being saving in this sense — I am “*kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*” (1 Peter 1:5).

- Kept from Temptation
- Kept in the Midst of Temptation

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- Kept in All My Trials
- Restored from All My Falls
- Continually Forgiven of All My Sins

(1 John 1:9) “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

(1 John 2:1-2) “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (2) And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world.*”

(Lamentations 3:21-26) “This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. (22) *It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (23) They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. (24) The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.*

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(25) The LORD *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him. (26) *It is* good that *a man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”

We rejoice in that which the Lord our God has done for us and in us. But, we rejoice to know that his work for us and in us is not over yet. There is more yet to come, more certain to come. It is written — “*He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*” (Phil. 1:6).

SALVATION NEARER

5th — **The Scriptures speak often of our salvation in the future tense too.** — “*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed!*” We live in the hope of heaven. Truly, with regard to this matter of our salvation, “the best is yet to come.” There is a very real sense in which the salvation of our souls is a salvation yet to be revealed.

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(1 Peter 1:3-9) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto **a lively hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) To **an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,** (5) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto **salvation ready to be revealed** in the last time. (6) Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: (7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (8) Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: (9) **Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.**”

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Let me talk to you just a little about this future tense of our salvation. Obviously, I cannot say much about because I do not yet know much about it; but I know a little.

DEATH

Salvation is near, the hope of heaven is before me, cause soon I will drop this robe of flesh and live.
— Then, I shall be saved.

(2 Corinthians 5:1-9) “For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: (3) If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. (4) For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. (5) Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who

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also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. (6) Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst 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, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. (9) Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.”

For the unbeliever death is a horrible thing. For the unbeliever, anything short of death is mercy. But, for the believer death is a great blessing.

John Trapp wrote, “To those that are in Christ death is but the day-break of eternal brightness; not the punishment of sin, but the period of sin. It is but a sturdy porter opening the door of eternity, a rough passage to eternal pleasure.”

For us death is not a thing to be feared but anticipated. — When I die I shall be saved! Why should Israel be afraid to cross the swelling Jordan

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into the land of promise with the ark of God before them? **Believers do not die in the sense that others do.** Our Lord said, “**Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die.**”

- To the ungodly, death is the penalty of sin; but to the believer it is just a change of location.
- Death to the wicked is the execution of justice; but to the believer it is a deliverance from sin.
- To the worldling death is the beginning of sorrows; but to the believer it is admission into glory.
- To the rebel death is imprisonment; but to the believer it is freedom.

Death will bring us into the presence of many friends. Death takes a wife from her husband, a child from its mother, and a father from his family. We cheer ourselves, however, with the prospect of a happy reunion in glory.

It is true, above all else, that we will see Christ and be with him. But it is also promised that we will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **When we die**

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Romans 13:11

we will leave some behind, but we are going up to “the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.” And we shall know one another then, even better than we do now, even as the disciples knew Moses and Elijah on the mount.

Dying in Christ means our most earnest and constant prayers will all be answered. How often have we prayed to be free from our trials and temptations! When we close our eyes in death, we will leave this veil of tears behind.

- Does your soul long to be free from all sin? It will be when this body lies in the grave.
- Oh, how our hearts long to be more like Christ! And we shall be perfectly like him in glory when we have put off this body of flesh.
- We pray for a brighter and clearer vision of Christ in his glory. After we are no longer hindered by the sight of things in this world, our eyes will be opened to see the Son of God as he is!

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Romans 13:11

We need not to weep for those who have died in the Lord! We might well envy them, but not weep for them.

The death of God's saints is accompanied with many comforts. Death can never separate us from the love of Christ. He will go with us through the dark valley. I am sure that the believer never has such full revelations of Christ's love, grace, glory, and greatness as he is given in the hour of death. The Lord will make his people triumphant over the last enemy in that hour.

(Exodus 15:16) "Fear and dread shall fall upon them (all our enemies); by the greatness of thine arm they shall be *as* still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, *which* thou hast purchased."

THE RESURRECTION

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Romans 13:11

Then, when Christ comes again in his glorious second advent, our bodies shall be raised from the grave.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. (16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (17) Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (18) Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Romans 13:11

This body must die. But, blessed be God, we shall arise! This is my satisfying confidence. — *“I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me!”* With such a hope, the grave causes me no alarm!

When we are raised in incorruption and immortality, we shall be glorified forever with Christ, glorified with the very glory of Christ himself (John 17:5, 22).

(John 17:5) “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

(John 17:22) “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:”

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Romans 13:11

What will that everlasting thing we call “glorification” be? What will heavenly glory be? No words of man can begin to describe that which awaits us. But we are told a few things about it.

- There will be no more sorrow or sighing forever!
- There will be no more sickness, bereavement, or death forever!
- There will be no more pain forever!
- There will be no more crying forever! — *“For God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes!”*
- There will be no more sin forever!
- And we *“shall see his face”* forever!

“We read of a place that’s called heaven.

It’s made for the pure and the free.

These truths in God’s Word He hath given. —

How beautiful heaven must be!

In heaven no drooping nor pining,

No wishing for elsewhere to be.

God’s light is forever there shining —

How beautiful heaven must be!

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Romans 13:11

Pure waters of life there are flowing;
And all who will drink may be free.
Rare jewels of splendor are glowing —
How beautiful heaven must be!

The angels so sweetly are singing
Up there by the beautiful sea.
Sweet chords from their gold harps are ringing.
How beautiful must be!

How beautiful heaven must be!
Sweet home of the happy and free,
Fair haven of rest for the weary,
How beautiful heaven must be!”

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN! — What a blessed hope this is. — “*We will rejoice in thy salvation!*” — “*For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed!*” May the Lord our God make his salvation yours for, Christ’s sake.

Amen.