

His Name Shall Be Called Wonderful (13)

Hope of Glory

In Paul's letter to the Colossians, the absolute deity and the preeminence of the Lord Jesus Christ is the central theme. Throughout the epistle, the apostle seeks to declare, defend and demonstrate the preeminence and supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ. The key phrase of the epistle is, *"that in all things he might have the preeminence"* (1:18).

In this short epistle the Lord Jesus is presented to us in His superior roles and in His completeness as creator and conqueror. We will see Him as our hope, our head, our life and our leader.

A number of times in the epistle, the apostle Paul refers to a mystery. In chapter 1, he refers to a mystery among the Gentiles, *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (vs. 27). In chapter 2, he refers to the *"the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ"* (vs. 2). In chapter 4, he refers to the *"mystery of Christ"* (vs. 3). A mystery, as we see it in the Word of God, refers to a divine truth that was previously unknown, or unrevealed, but is now made known.

In the phrase, *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"*, we see not only a divine mystery revealed, but a divine title of the Lord Jesus Christ, *"hope of glory"*. The mystery that had been hid in ages past is that both Jews and Gentiles are part of God's great plan of redemption and together share in the benefits of salvation provided through the sacrificial, atoning death of the Lord Jesus on the cross. Paul points out in the book of Ephesians that Jews and Gentiles are reconciled unto God in one body through the cross (Eph. 2:13-16).

Here now, Paul expands on the mystery, announcing this tremendous truth, *"Christ in you the hope of glory"*. In the Old Testament, it was always God's desire to dwell among His people. The Lord gave instructions to Moses regarding the building of the tabernacle with these words, *"Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them"* (Ex. 25:8).

Now, in the New Testament, we are introduced to the blessed reality that Christ actually dwells in the believer. Paul stated, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"* (Gal. 2:20). Paul challenged the Corinthians to examine themselves as to whether or not Christ was in them (2nd Cor. 13:5). The apostle John wrote, *"whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God"* (1st Jn. 4:15).

The mystery also indicates that Christ dwelling in the believer is also *"the hope of glory"*. *"Hope"*, in the New Testament sense of the word, is a confident assurance, an expectation of that which has been promised, not a wishful longing. It is both a present reality and future certainty, based on the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and is used as a motivation to live for Him and to serve Him.

In his first letter to Timothy, the apostle Paul referred to his calling to preach the gospel, according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope (1st Tim. 1:1). Paul expressed to Titus his hope of eternal life, *"in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"* (Tit. 1:2).

Eternal life is both a present experience and a future expectation for all who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Numerous Scriptures contain the truth of eternal life as a present and personal possession, the very moment a person receives Christ as Saviour. Perhaps the most well known of these is found in the Gospel of John, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (Jn. 3:16).

Eternal life is also assured in the future. The Lord Jesus spoke of present consolation in this life, for all who follow Him, and in the world to come, eternal life (Mk. 10: 30). Jude exhorts us to keep ourselves in the love of God, as we look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a view to eternal life.

The hope, or assurance of eternal life is based on the fact that God cannot lie. Even Balaam, the false prophet had to acknowledge this fact. He said, *“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”* (Num. 23:19). The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews confirms that it is impossible for God to lie. The fact that God cannot lie, says the writer, gives those who have fled for refuge, a strong consolation, to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

Our hope is anchored firmly inside the veil, into the holiest of all, the very presence of God, where our Lord Jesus has entered for us. His triumph over sin death and hell, through the work of the cross and His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God, assures us that we will be there also (Heb. 6:18).

The *“Hope of Glory”*, is the sure and certain truth that we shall share in His glory. A verse that has been used a number of times in these Messages of Comfort, bears out this tremendous truth. The Lord Jesus prayed prior to His going to the cross to obtain eternal redemption for us, through the shedding of His own most precious blood, *“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me”* (Jn. 17:24).

Another verse, referred to often, contains the promise of the Lord Jesus to the overcomer, *“to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne”* (Rev. 3:21).

In addition to the hope, the assurance of future glory, is the hope of seeing our blessed Lord Jesus, as He is, and being changed into His likeness. It is a purifying hope. The apostle John wrote, *“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure”* (1st Jn. 3:3).

We are called to be holy. Peter quoting from the Old Testament (Lev. 11:44), exhorts us, *“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy”* (1st Pet. 1:15-16). The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, advises similarly, *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”* (Heb. 12:14).

*Christ in you, the Hope of Glory,
How our hearts the words inspire;
Revel in the wondrous story,
Fullness of our souls' desire.*

*Waiting in anticipation,
True devotion to Him give;
Let us serve in consecration,
Him who died that we might live.*

*Thus, in Christ our hope is centered,
Anchored safe within the veil;
Where He, too, has for us entered,*

*Refuge that can never fail.
Blessed hope, so purifying,
Proffered by sustaining grace;
On His mercy still relying
Til we see Him face to face.*
Bernie Payne