

Theme: Christians live with confident hope as they look forward to Christ's return: present suffering will pass, all things will be renewed, and we will share in Christ's glory forever.

I. Intro - The Importance of A Great Ending

- A. A great book or movie must have a great ending
- B. Sometimes this is a tragic end (1984), but other times it is happy (The Princess Bride)
- C. How does the biblical story end? What is the end of our hope?

II. Our Present Struggle & Our Hope of Glory!

- A. There is a real struggle for us now
 - ¹⁸ I consider that **our present sufferings** are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us...
 - ²³Not only so, but **we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly** for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Romans 8:18, 23
 - 1. Our present sufferings - persecution, ridicule, and struggle against sin
 - 2. We groan at present, eagerly waiting for more
 - 3. The presence of the Spirit makes this groaning worse - we now know things are not right!
 - 4. Our present life has struggle, suffering, and sin!
- B. There is a real hope for something better
 - ²⁴ For in this **hope** we were saved. But **hope** that is seen is no **hope** at all. Who **hopes** for what he already has? ²⁵ But if we **hope** for **what we do not yet have**, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24–25

- 1. Hope occurs 5 times in 2 verses!
- 2. There is hope - something much better is coming!
- 3. We have been given much - but there is something far greater we do not yet have

- C. Our present struggles don't compare to our future!
I consider that **our present sufferings are not worth comparing** with the glory that will be revealed in us. Romans 8:18

- 1. Not only is our future greater, but present struggles are not worthy of comparison with it!
- 2. The man who said this suffered rejection, beating, prison, stoning to death, and was eventually martyred
- 3. Yet all of that does not compare - our future must be glorious!

- D. Our future is glory
 - ¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with **the glory** that will be revealed in us...
 - ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the **glorious** freedom of the children of God. Romans 8:18, 21
 - 1. A keyword for describing our future: glory
 - 2. Glorious freedom - literally 'freedom of the glory'
 - 3. This is why theologians speak of the final stage of salvation as 'glorification' - glory is a key part of our future
 - 4. What is this 'glory' of which Paul speaks?

III. Understanding the Glory To Come

A. Glorification occurs when Christ returns & we see God

1. Paul hints at when this happens in our text

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as **we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** Romans 8:23

- a. Adoption as sons, redemption of our bodies, both speak of the resurrection of our bodies.
- b. This happens at the return of Christ

2. Scripture is explicit on this elsewhere

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Colossians 3:4

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. **But we know that when he appears,** we shall be like him, for **we shall see him as he is.** 1 John 3:2

3. Glorification - the consummation of our salvation - occurs at the return of Christ and not before

4. Glorification - our faith and hope will be sight - we shall see God as He is! That will be glory!

B. Glorification - our bodies are resurrected and changed

1. Glorification - glory revealed in our bodies

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly **as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.** Romans 8:23

- a. Glorification occurs at the redemption of our bodies
- b. Our actual bodies will finally receive the fullness of the salvation Christ brought to us

2. Our bodies will be transformed to be like the glorious resurrection body of Jesus!

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will **transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.** Philippians 3:20–21

- a. Our bodies will be changed to be like the body of Jesus!
- b. At that moment, all of our sin and weakness will be swallowed up in the glory of Jesus - forever!

3. Our transformed bodies will be glorified - filled with and radiating the glory of God Himself.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with **the glory that will be revealed in us.** Romans 8:18

- a. Some translations have revealed to us - 'in us' is a better translation here
- b. We will not just behold God's glory - we ourselves will be glorified and will radiate with God's glory

4. Our eternal hope is not just an end to suffering, but seeing, being transformed by, and radiating with the glory of God Himself! Friends that will be glory!

C. Glorification - creation itself is renewed, purified, and restored

1. Creation itself needs to be renewed and purified

The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Romans 8:19–21

- a. Creation is longing for the consummation to come
 - b. Creation subjected to frustration - placed under the curse at the fall [see Genesis 3:17]
 - c. But it will be liberated from the curse - its bondage to decay!
2. Creation's fate is linked to our own - past and future

We know that **the whole creation has been groaning** as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ **Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan** inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Romans 8:22–23

- a. Notice both creation and we, who are distinct from creation, groan
- b. Also, note we both wait eagerly - the same word is used in v19 of creation and v23 of us
- c. Paul uses the common OT practice of personification to show that all of creation will be swept up into the consummation of salvation
- d. Friends, when everything is renewed, that will be glory!

D. Glorification - the consummation of God's plan

- 1. A major motif in Scripture - creation, fall, redemption, and consummation
- 2. What was created was affected by the fall
- 3. What was affected by the fall is in view in redemption
- 4. What was created, affected by the fall, will be restored at the consummation

- 5. God has not abandoned His creation to destruction - it will be restored and brought into glory!
- 6. We live in the hope of the reality that we are glory bound!

IV. Applying the Word

A. We have an eternal hope!

- 1. We have the ultimate hope in Christ - not just positive thinking, but the reality that creation will be renewed and we will share in Christ's glory!
- 2. Our hope is like that of the POWs Admiral Stockdale spoke about - we must keep hope that we will get home!
- 3. This is a hope that strengthens us in good times, sustains us in days of despair and grief, keeps us through death, and will endure for all eternity!

B. Living with a hope of glory

- 1. We must remember that eternal glory is FAR greater than anything in this age
 - a. We often think of this world as being more substantial, more real, more eighty than the new heavens and new earth - but this is totally backwards!
 - b. CS Lewis *The Weight of Glory*
 - 1. The play of words on glory and weight (glory means 'weighty in Hebrew')
 - 2. Our eternal home is heavier, weightier, more real than this present world!
 - c. *The Great Divorce* - even the grass of heaven is so thick and real we need to be toughened up to walk on it!

2. We need to remember that the joys, loves, and pleasures of this age are only echoes of the real joys, loves, and pleasures of the age to come!

The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things —the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself, they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshippers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited. - CS Lewis

- a. The best this life offers is just a hint, a pointer, a foretaste of the glory to come!
- b. This is why they never fully satisfy, and the more we look to them for ultimate fulfillment the more they disappoint.
- c. We should enjoy these things - but see through them to the glorious reality that we will experience for all eternity!

What would it be to taste at the fountainhead that stream of which even these lower reaches prove so intoxicating? Yet that, I believe, is what lies before us. The whole man is to drink joy from the fountain of joy. - CS Lewis

3. A call to follow Jesus now!
 - a. This glory is only found in union with Jesus - He is our hope of eternal glory!
 - b. Christians should fervently pray for, reach out to, and serve those around us!
 - c. If you have never looked to Jesus for salvation - do so today! You do not want to miss the glory to come!

C. The Table - A Taste of Glory!

1. The Table reminds us of the Incarnation - God takes matter seriously!
2. This Table is also a pointer to the wedding supper of the Lamb!
3. God meets us here to sustain us on our way to glory
4. Come and taste the glory of the age to come!

Christ Our Hope of Glory

Romans 8:18-25

August 24, 2025

Communion/On That Day

1 Peter 5:10

Teaching keywords: Hope; glorification; second coming; eschatology; resurrection; fall and curse; heaven, hell, and eternity

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 1 Peter 5:10

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:18-25