

## Is Your Hope in the Resurrection or a Place of Safety?

(Go To Meeting)

Tom Fannin—December 17, 2022

I want to talk about something that I heard from one of the brethren, and he was commenting to me that where he had attended church services there was a man that he had known for a long time in the Church. This person had not been attending for some time, and he made a decision that he wanted to come back to church.

Upon talking to this person he was relating how he was noticing in the world how bad it was getting. A lot of the things that the Church has taught about for years that would be coming is now here. A lot of these things that we see going on in world, and this person identified these things.

He knew that he needed to get back to church and back to the faith, the things that he was called to, the things that he believed in. But one comment he made was:

As I saw these things happening in the world going on, I need to get back to church because I was to go to place of safety.

We're all really happy and it should be joy when someone decides that they need to repent and get back to this calling, this faith that God has called me to, and to follow God and Christ. We're always happy to have that and hear that.

But for someone to say that they need to be doing this because 'I want to go to a place of safety'<sup>2</sup>.

- Why?
- Why did this occur?
- Why was this in this person's mind?

*That's what this message is going to be about today:*

- Is our hope in the place of safety?

*or*

- Is our hope in a resurrection?
- Is our hope being a part of the first resurrection?
- Is our hope being firstfruits unto God and Christ?
- Is that where our hope lies?

*We know that that comes through Christ!*

I want to give a definition of hope, and this is what you would call a dictionary type definition of what hope means. Hope is feeling of expectation and

desire for a certain thing to happen. So, when we think about the resurrection, it is our expectation.

When God called us and our names are written in the Book of Life, the expectation is for us to be in the first resurrection. That's our desire for all of us for that to happen.

- Where does God and Jesus Christ want us to be?
- Where ultimately do They want us to be?

1-Thessalonians 2:10: "You *are* witnesses, and *also* God, how holily and righteously and blamelessly we conducted ourselves with you who believe; even as you know how we were exhorting and consoling each one of you, as a father *does* his own children, and *earnestly* testifying, that you may walk worthily of God, Who is calling you to His own Kingdom and glory" (vs 10-12).

When God called us, He was calling us to this Kingdom that we're looking forward to. Let's see what Peter says about this:

1-Peter 5:10: "Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while, Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle *you*. To Him *be* the glory and the power into the ages of eternity. Amen" (vs 10-11).

This eternal glory, this glory that God and Christ have that God wants to give us. This is what God has called us to, this what God wants us to have and where God wants us to be in this state. We know Who this eternal life comes through.

1-John 5:11: "And this is the witness: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one **who has the Son has eternal life**; the one who **does not have the Son of God does not have eternal life**" (vs 11-12).

We have Jesus Christ; He's living in us. We're building His mind and we know of His Truth.

Verse 13: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God **in order that you may know that you have eternal life...**"

We have this, we have this promise. We know that if we are faithful to the end, we will have

this.

“...and that you may *continue to believe* in the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (vs 13-14).

So, we have this life through Christ. It can be said in this life it's not about this life, *it's about the next life that we aspire to, the eternal life, the spiritual life that we will have!* We know that this physical body that we're in, God works with us and molds us. We try to build the mind of God and Christ and Their character in this physical life. But it's the next life that we hope for, aspire to and strive for. **What is our true hope?**

Jeremiah 17:7: “Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and **whose hope is the LORD.**”

That's our true hope, God and Jesus Christ as we'll read about here, and we're blessed for that.

1-Timothy 1:1: “Paul, *an* apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, according to *the* promise of life, which *is* in Christ Jesus” — *Who is our hope!*

We'll cover some chapters that we review when it comes to the resurrection. We will continue to talk about this hope that we have through Christ.

1-Corinthians 15:3: “For in the first place, I delivered to you what I also had received: that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures... [the Lord talk about in Jeremiah is our hope] ...and that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures” (vs 3-4).

Verse 12: “But if Christ is being preached, that He rose from *the* dead, how *is it that* some among you are saying that there is no resurrection of *the* dead?”

At this time I guess that there were some that preaching or teaching these things.

Verse 13: “For if there is no resurrection from *the* dead, neither has Christ been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching *is* in vain, and your faith *is* also in vain. And we are also found *to be* false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised Christ, Whom He did not raise, if indeed *the* dead are not raised” (vs 13-15).

We know that Christ, as we will read here, is the Firstfruit.

Verse 16: “For if *the* dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised. But if Christ has not been raised, your faith *is* vain; you are still in your

sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Christ have then perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most miserable” (vs 16-19).

Wouldn't we be if it was announced today that this current life you have, this current life you're living in the flesh, this is it! ‘This is what hope you have, to live this life that you now have with God's Law and the instructions that He has given you.

***We would all be miserable at that announcement!*** But that is not really where our true hope lies. But thankfully that's not the case.

Verse 20: “But now Christ has been raised from *the* dead; He has become the Firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came the* resurrection of *the* dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ *the* Firstfruit; then those who are Christ's at His coming” (vs 20-23).

Verse 51: “Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (vs 51-52).

Paul talks about a couple of things happening there. There will be the dead who will be raised. The ones who are alive will be changed at this resurrection. Through Christ and Him being the first one being resurrected is our hope.

1-Thess. 4 we also review when we talk about the resurrections.

1-Thessalonians 4:13: “But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, that you be not grieved, even **as others who have no hope.**”

Down through time there have been a lot of people who had no hop, because they did not have the understanding that we have. But that's not us. We're not the ones who have no hope. We have this hope in the resurrection.

Verse 14: “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, **in exactly the same way** also, those who have fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say to you by *the* Word of *the* Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede those who have fallen asleep, because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with *a* shout of command, with *the* voice of an archangel and with *the* trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise

first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in *the* clouds for *the* meeting with the Lord in *the* air; and so shall we always be with *the* Lord. Therefore, **encourage one another with these words**" (vs 14-18).

That's what we strive to do within the Church when those who do fall asleep, and also others that we know who may not be a part of the Church, since we do know the Truth, we have this opportunity to comfort each other with this Truth that we have; with this hope that we have. We talk about God's Word, because we know it will come to pass.

Titus 3:4: "But when the graciousness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness, which we practiced, but **according to His mercy He saved us**, through *the* washing of regeneration and *the* renewing of *the* Holy Spirit" (vs 4-5).

All of us who are in covenant, we went through a process where we accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and we had repentance. We acknowledged our sins and then went into a covenant death through baptism, the watery grave, and then we had the receiving of God's Spirit within us, ***the sealing of us!***

Verse 6: which He richly poured out upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior; so that, having been justified by His grace... [that is the only way we are justified, through the grace given to us by God, through Christ] **...we would become heirs according to the hope of eternal life**" (vs 6-7).

It's good to review the Scriptures and cover the things that it talks about *eternal life* and what we have to look forward to, and what God's Word says about these things.

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!...."

it's pretty powerful to say that, that we can be called *children of God!*

"...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; **but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him**..." (vs 1-2).

We're going to find out what it's like to be like Jesus Christ and God, to have that glory when we're in the Kingdom. We will find out what that's like.

"...because we shall see Him exactly as He

is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure" (vs 2-3).

All of us who have this hope, there are certain things in the flesh that we work on and strive to do. Again, that's the hope!

1-Peter 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead."

When you read through the New Testament, whoever the author was of these books, the same theme occurs. This resurrection is through God the Father and Jesus Christ. They all write of this in the same manner.

Verse 18: "Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers; but by *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; Who truly was foreknown before *the* foundation of *the* world, but was manifested in *these* last times for your sakes; *even for you* who through Him do believe in God, Who raised Him from *the* dead and gave Him glory, **so that your faith and hope might be in God**" (vs 18-21).

Our faith and hope is in Christ, but the same faith and hope is in God the Father. God was One Who raised Christ from the dead. God the Father will also be working in us the same way. ***So, our faith and hope is in God the Father and Jesus Christ!***

We know that Paul and some of the ones who traveled with him, they were a lot of the time in perilous times, even fearful for their lives.

2-Corinthians 1:9: "For we had the sentence of death within ourselves, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God..."

Sometimes in life there are those who face this. Where you reach a point where you're trust just goes to God because it looks imminent that you're going to pass away.

"...Who raises the dead" (v 9). ***If we reach that point where we're going to go to sleep, we know that it's God Who raises the dead!***

Verse 10: "Who delivered us from so great a death, and continues to deliver; in Whom we have hope that He will even yet deliver."

There's lot's of deliverance from God that occurs in this physical life, and He will continue to

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deliver. But there's a final deliverance, and that's the change that's coming for all of us.

Now I want to talk a little bit about the teaching of *a place of safety*. Many of us who have been in the Church for a long time and a lot of us were a part of the Worldwide Church of God in times past, you remember this teaching of *a place of safety* that the Church would be taken to.

It was ingrained in our mind. I know for myself, it was something that I thought about.

- What would it be like when we got there?
- What would we be doing?
- How would things be setup?
- How would things get accomplished?

You thought about it, and you meditated on it. It something that was taught pretty often, and it was ingrained in our mind.

Sometimes we have to look at some of these teachings and what the motives were that were behind some of them. Unfortunately, a lot of that teaching in Worldwide Church of God came down to *control!* Also *fear!* Many times it was presented as *you needed to be part of that church organization* to be able to qualify to go to *a place of safety*; that your faithfulness needed to be that organization!

Within some of the Churches of God today, these things are still taught. It shouldn't be that way! What we should be teaching to all the brethren is our hope is in God the Father and Jesus Christ!

- They are our life
- They are our *place of safety*

*For whatever They choose for us! Whatever may befall us, our hope is in Them, and Their deliverance for us!* That's where our mind and thoughts need to go to continually, and not this teaching that still exists of *a place of safety!*

- What's in the Bible?
- What does the Bible teach?

*That's where we should always go back to when we think about doctrines and teachings!* What does God's Word say about these things! Let's take time to review what God's Word says regarding the Church during the end-times, and what it will be like. I'll just say that it's always important for us to remember, as God's people:

- what we know
- the things that we know to be true
- the things that we know will occur
  - ✓ we know that we're in covenant

- ✓ we know our names are written in the Book of Life
- ✓ we know there will be a resurrection from the dead of the firstfruits

*These are things we know!* There are other things that we really don't know for sure what's going to happen, and in particularly with us in our future in this physical life. But we know what's coming in the spiritual life.

So, it's always good to keep our mind on what we know, the Truth we know from God's Word.

Revelation 12:7: "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels warred against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels warred. But they did not prevail, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent who is called the Devil and Satan, who is deceiving the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him" (vs 7-9).

Verse 10: "And I heard a great voice in heaven say, 'Now has come the salvation and the power and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ because the accuser of our brethren has been cast down, who accuses them day and night before our God.'"

We know that nobody can bring an accusation against the saints, the ones who are faithful to God. ***We have been redeemed by the blood of Christ!***

Verse 11: "But they overcame him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death."

*That's what need to remember, the lives that we have!* They look at their lives and how they are living, and they love them not unto death. This life we're living now, because we know what's coming for us, and that Jesus Christ and God the Father are the most important things no matter what state we find ourselves in.

Verse 12: "Therefore, rejoice you heavens and those who dwell in Them. Woe to those who inhabit the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, having great wrath *because* he knows that he has *only* a short time."

We know that as time continues on, times will get tougher in this world, including for God's people and the Churches.

Verse 13: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman

who had brought forth the man-Child. And **two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly to her place in the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.** And the serpent cast water out of his mouth as a river, so that he might cause her *to be* carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed up the river that the dragon had cast out of his mouth. Then the dragon was furious with the woman and went to make war **with the rest of her seed...**” (vs 13-17).

I think that in the *King James Version* it's called 'the remnant.' But really the translation here is correct, "...the rest of her seed..."

"...who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v 17).

The others here remain faithful, they have the commandments and testimony of Christ. But their take to the wilderness and kept there for 3-1/2 years where they're nourished. We know that this is where the teaching came from on a *place of safety*. That is you belongs the Church you would go, too.

We read clearly here that there will be some who will go to a *place of safety*, but there will be others that won't be. The serpent—Satan the devil—has wrath and will come after them.

Revelation 6:9: "And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony that they held; and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, Holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And white robes were given to each of them; and they were told that they should rest a short time, yet, until *it* be fulfilled *that* both their fellow servants and their brethren also would be killed, just as they had been" (vs 9-11).

Hebrews 12:23: "...and to *the* spirits of the just who have been perfected"—*are there under the altar in heaven!*

In Ecc. 12 it talks about the spirit that God gives all of us, it returns to Him! We know this Truth. Bringing these things out we also know that there will be some who go to a *place of safety*, and some may fall into *martyrdom!* We will see what God desires and wants for all of us; we'll find out.

Luke 17:24: "For as the light of day, whose light shines from *one end* under heaven to the *other end* under heaven, **so also shall the Son of man be in His day.**"

Verse 30: "This *is* how it shall be in the day *that* the Son of man is revealed. In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away; and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind. **Remember Lot's wife.** Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two *women* shall be grinding together; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two men shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (vs 30-36).

Verse 37: "And they answered, saying to Him, 'Where, Lord?' And He said to them, 'Where the body *is*, there will the eagles be gathered together.'"

Speaking about what we read in v 33: "Whoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whoever shall lose *his life* shall preserve it."

This life we have now in what we're doing in this life, we're thinking about the Kingdom and what we need to be doing within our own selves—in our own mind and heart—preparing for God's Kingdom. We're not really concerned about this physical life, but looking forward to that next life.

Some of these things we don't know what God has in store for us, and what God wants us to be doing. But we know from God's Word the different states of the faithful, of the saints in the end-time.

We see from God's Word what will be happening at the end-time and whether we all go to sleep before Christ returns, or go to the place in the wilderness, or are part of the seed that Satan goes to make war with. We all need to keep our mind on what we know, and the hope we have in the resurrection. That's what our mind need to on.

We know a lot of brethren, all of us, who have already gone to sleep, and their spirit returned to God Who gave it, and they're just waiting for their name to be called. Like Job, he was going to wait until God called his name. Many are awaiting that right now.

We know that God the Father and Christ are really our *place of safety!*

Psalms 91:1: "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I will trust'" (vs 1-2).

These are the things that God wants us to have our mind on. That we really trust in God to

dwell with Him. We are under His protective wings. We know that in John 10 Christ talks about that He has us by the hand. Christ also talks about the Father, that He has us by the hand. ***No one has the power to take us out of the hand of God.*** God the Father and Jesus Christ are the Ones Whom we trust in and look to. Nothing can separate us from the love that They have for us.

These things should give us great confidence in what we have to look forward to, and what God the Father and Christ will do for us, in whatever state we find ourselves in the future.

Hebrews 13:5: “Do not allow the love of money to influence your behavior, *but be* satisfied with what you have; for He has said, **‘In no way will I ever leave you; no, I will never forsake you in any way.’** So then, let us boldly say, ‘The Lord is my Helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” (vs 5-6).

What can man do to us? *We’re in the hands of God!* We’re God’s children, as John wrote about. Whatever state we find ourselves in, we shouldn’t worry, but we should remember the Scriptures. As we move forward into the end-times—if these are the end-times—and it certainly looks like we’re getting closer, and we find ourselves in difficulties and whatever it may be, we need to always remember the Scriptures. Meditate deeply on the Scriptures and upon Christ and the promises given to us. These will help sustain us.

Others who have gone before us have gone through tribulations also in their time. It wasn’t the end-time Tribulation, but certainly a lot have gone before us, and have also been in trials and difficulties. Paul writes about this:

Hebrews 11:32: “Now, what more can I say? For time would fail me to relate *the accounts* of Gideon, Barak also, and Samson and Jephthah, David also, and Samuel, and the prophets; who by faith were victorious over kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, shut *the* mouths of lions, quenched *the* fury of fire, escaped *the* edge of *the* sword, were strengthened from weakness, became mighty in war, *and* turned back the armies of foreigners” (vs 32-34).

Verse 35: Women received their dead restored to life; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, **that they might obtain a superior resurrection.**”

That is key for all of us to remember, whatever state we’re all in, in the future these things were down so that ***a superior resurrection*** could be obtained, ***the first resurrection!***

Verse 36: “And others endured *the* trial of *cruel* mocking and scourging; yes, and moreover, of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned to death, they were sawed in two, they were *brutally* interrogated, *and* slaughtered by *the* sword.... [probably talking about Isaiah, and wicked King Manasseh did this to him] ...They went about in sheepskins *and* in goatskins, being destitute, oppressed, *and* ill-treated; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, *living* in caves and in holes in the earth. But these all, *though* they had received a good report through faith, did not obtain the promise, *because* **God had determined in advance to provide something superior for us so that without us they would not be made perfect**” (vs 36-40).

They’re going to be made perfect at the resurrection. That’s what they looked forward to, and we’re part of that, also; we’re going to be part of that same group with them looking forward to this resurrection. It’s going to be all those who were faithful to God in the Old Testament, and then Paul mentions some of them, and for all us, too, whose names have been written in the *Book of Life* in heaven.

So, when we consider all of these things, and all we have to look forward to, this hope we have, it’s good to talk about where we should be in this life in what we’re doing. To get to this next life and this resurrection, there are things we need to be doing and accomplishing.

Matthew 16:24: “And Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life shall lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it’” (vs 24-25).

It’s about the next life, and the things we’re doing in this life.

Verse 26: “For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, but loses his life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall render to everyone according to his doings. Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the Son of man coming in His Kingdom”” (vs 26-28).

We know that in this life we’re living now, there are certain things that God wants us to be doing.

2-Peter 3:10: “However, the Day of *the* Lord

shall come as a thief in *the* night in which the heaven itself shall disappear with a mighty roar, and *the* elements shall pass away, burning with intense heat, and *the* earth and the works in it shall be burned up. Since all these things are going to be destroyed, what kind of *persons* ought you to be in Holy conduct and Godliness?" (vs 10-11).

Since we know that these things are going to happen, how should we be in our conduct?

Verse 12: "Looking forward to and striving for the coming of the day of God, during which *the* heavens, being on fire, shall be destroyed, and *the* elements, burning with intense heat, shall melt. But according to His promise, we look forward to a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. For this reason, beloved, since you are anticipating these things, be diligent, so that you may be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless" (vs 12-14).

This is the state, when Christ returns, that He wants to find us in. Or if we go sleep before Christ returns, this is the state we need to be in: that we're found in peace and spotless/blameless. These things, we know, come through Christ. We know that all these things are coming.

Revelation 3:7: "And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia, write: 'These things says the Holy One, the One Who *is* true; the One Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My Word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who proclaim themselves to be Jews and are not, but do lie. Behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation, which *is* about to come upon the whole world to try those who dwell on the earth'" (vs 7-10).

So, there is a message here written to the Church of Philadelphia, and we know that these messages written to the Churches, there were Churches in different locations in Asia Minor. We know, also, that talks about different states of the Churches and spiritually within people, God's people and where they're at in their conversion and in their minds and hearts.

The thing here to pay attention to is those here (in Philadelphia) have kept God's Word. They have not denied the name of God or the name of Christ. They've been faithful and because of this

they're going to be kept from the time of temptation that's going to be coming upon the whole earth.

- Is this talking about the Great Tribulation coming?
- A time coming like it's never been before?
- A time we could be seeing the beginning of? *It potentially could!*

Nonetheless, we need to be doing what it says here; this message and this Church. These people are very faithful to God and Christ. That's what we need to be doing, all of us, then God will take care of us and provide for us.

We all want to be protected and kept safe. There's nothing wrong with praying to God every day—I hope we all pray every day—that He keeps us safe and our families safe, putting His angels about us and we fall under His complete protection.

I'm sure that we pray all of those prayers in different ways every day. There's nothing wrong praying about being protected and watched over by God. But we also pray for *His will*, whatever that is for us, that it will be the best thing. Whatever God desires for us.

Philippians 1:18: "What then *shall I say*? Nevertheless, in every way, whether in pretext or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed; and I rejoice in this, yes, and will also *continue to* rejoice. For I know that this shall turn out for my salvation through your supplication and *the* supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ; according to my earnest expectation and hope, that in no way shall I be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, Christ shall also be magnified now in my body, whether by life or by death" (vs 18-20).

Verse 21: "For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. Now if I live in *the* flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labor. But I do not know what I should choose. For I am hard pressed to choose between the two. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, *which is* far better; but to remain in the flesh *is* more necessary for your sakes" (vs 21-24).

This is our attitude, as well. We know if we depart from this physical life we have the resurrection to look forward to. We look forward to being with Christ and having that glory. It's far better, but there are also things in the flesh also that are needing to be accomplished in all of us:

- building the character of God
- building the mind of Christ
- being in Christ while we're in this flesh

While we have life we do these things! But as Paul talked about here, we look forward to being with Christ and all the other brethren, all the ones who have gone before us. But there are things that must be accomplished while we're here in this physical life.

Galatians 2:18: "For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor."

All of us worked at those things that we were a part of, the mind we did have, *the things that we are overcoming today in our lives as we're being converted*. Hopefully those things we have destroyed and put away as we're being changed and our minds being changed and being renewed continually.

Verse 19: "For I, through law, died to *works of law*, in order that I may live to God. **I have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live. Indeed, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me.** For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, **I live by faith—that very faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me**" (vs 19-20).

That's how we are to live in this flesh, Christ living in us by faith!

Jer. 29—Jeremiah is writing to God's people at that time, and here's what's said:

Jeremiah 29:11: "'For I know the purposes, which I am purposing for you,' says the LORD; 'purposes of peace and not of evil, **to give you a future and a hope.**'"

That's what God wanted for His people at that time. That's what God wants for the Church today, for all those whom He has called and placed His Spirit within. He wants "...purposes of peace... [for all of us] ...and not evil..." He wants a future for us, it's our hope of the resurrection. That's what He wants for all of us. We must trust in whatever situation we find ourselves in.

Proverbs 13:12: "**Hope deferred makes the heart sick...**"

When we think about hope and we define hope, it's an expectation that we have of something happening. It's our desire for that to happen. It's dual! We expect it to happen, but we also want it to happen. It's truly our desire for it to happen.

**"...but when desire is fulfilled it is a Tree of Life"** (v 12).

Our hope is not deferred! Our hope is now; it will be! God's desire for us will be fulfilled, and that is to be in His Kingdom, the resurrection. That's

where our hope lies, *in the resurrection through God and Christ!*

Yes, we may think about a *place of safety*, or being protected in the end-time, but that's not where our true hope lies. **Our true hope lies in the future we have forever, the forever inheritance with God the Father and Jesus Christ in the Kingdom!**

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- 2) 1 Peter 5:10-11
- 3) 1 John 5:11-14
- 4) Jeremiah 17:7
- 5) 1 Timothy 1:1
- 6) 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 12-23, 51-52
- 7) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 8) Titus 3:4-7
- 9) 1 John 3:1-3
- 10) 1 Peter 1:3, 18-21
- 11) 2 Corinthians 1:9-10
- 12) Revelation 12:7-17
- 13) Revelation 6:9-11
- 14) Hebrews 12:23
- 15) Luke 17:24, 30-37, 33
- 16) Psalm 91:1-2
- 17) Hebrews 13:5-6
- 18) Hebrews 11:32-40
- 19) Matthew 16:24-28
- 20) 2 Peter 3:10-14
- 21) Revelations 3:7-10
- 22) Philippians 1:18-24
- 23) Galatians 2:18-20
- 24) Jeremiah 29:11
- 25) Proverbs 13:12

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Ecclesiastes 12
- John 10

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