

Living In Anticipation

Text : **Romans 8: 12-25**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Have you ever felt that life is generally a pain in the neck ?

1. We tend to get down when we're disappointed by people or events.
2. We sometime despair when sickness or pain seems to drag on endlessly.
3. Life seems so gloomy when we've lost someone we hold so very dear.

B. Everyone has difficult and frustrating times in their life.

1. Imagine what Jesus felt like when He found His disciples sleeping in the garden.
2. I marvel at Paul's attitude when he was repeatedly beaten and imprisoned.
3. Church leaders today get enormously frustrated.
 - a. The average preacher quits by age 47.
 - b. Many elders quit but more give up and just keep house.

C. When frustrated Christians look around at worldly people enjoying life and ask, "Is being a Christian really worth it?"

1. They see worldly people enjoying many pleasures.
2. They see people who have no faith prospering more than them.

*** The wicked appear to have everything they want and more.**
3. The Christian knows the pleasures of sin are only for a season (**Heb. 11:25**), but the season is going on all around them and lasts all their life.

D. If this world was all the Christian had to look forward to, there might be some foundation for regret.

1. This is what the Apostle Paul told our brethren in Corinth.

I Cor. 15:19- If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.
2. The Christians endures this brief life in anticipation of what comes next.

From text : Rom. 8:18- 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.
3. The Christian perspective is unlike that of the people of the world, because we realize we are but temporary residents on the earth.
 - a. We are but sojourners passing through. **I Pet. 2: 11 , 1: 17**
 - b. Christians have applied for citizenship in Heaven. .. **Phil. 3:18-21 (immigrants)**
 - c. While Christians live on the earth, they do so anticipating going home to Heaven.

This hope sets Christians apart from the rest of those who live on planet earth and gives us an inner peace the world cannot comprehend, only envy.

I. Sadly, many Christians don't claim their peace.

A. They don't claim it because they don't know it is available to them.

1. Jesus wants for His followers to live in peace.

John 14: 27- Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

2. Faith in Jesus fosters confidence. When one truly learns to trust God, there is no cause for fear ... not reason to worry.

Phil. 4: 6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

B. When Christians are fearful it is because they don't realize what they have.

1. Some read our text (Rom. 8) and misunderstand it.

- a. They think “**saved in hope**” means they can never be certain they are saved.

- b. **Rom. 8: 24-25** For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

- c. “**Saved in hope**” does not mean “*I hope I'm saved.*”

2. It's a mistake for a Christian to believe “**hope**” means there is a desire to be saved, one can only hope, wish, desire that he will make it.

- a. The biblical word “**hope**” does not communicate uncertainty.

- b. It does not involve the element of chance.

* **Roll the dice and hope they come up seven.**

3. The English word “**hope**” translates the Greek word “Elpece.”

- a. It comes from the root word “Elpo” meaning “*to anticipate.*”

- b. “In the Christian sense, joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation.”

(Strong's Enhanced Lexicon)

C. Christians ARE saved people, not just those who desire to be so.

1. **Eph. 2: 8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (**Salvation does not depend on us.**)

2. **Jude 24-** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

3. **Col. 2: 13-** When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, **Forgiveness = Salvation.** (Cf. - **Eph. 2: 1-7**)

D. God wants the Christian to know that He has saved him.

I John 5: 13- These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

II. What does it mean to be saved ?

A. Many people are lost and don't even know it.

ILL. - When a frantic mother was called into the security office to claim her child who had been lost in the store, the child said, "Well there you are. I was starting to think you really had gotten lost this time."

1. Religiously, the term "**lost**" refers to one's relationship with God being broken.
 - a. Jesus illustrated what HE meant by the term "**lost**."
 - 1) Lost possessions ... coin & sheep
 - 2) Rebellious son who left his father
 - * **When God gives life to a person, it's with a view toward an ongoing relationship. Thus, when the relationship is destroyed, God has "lost" that which was His.**
2. Those who have never experienced a relationship with God, don't realize when that relationship is destroyed ... when they become lost to God.
3. **Luke 19: 10** ... Jesus defines His mission on earth as seeking out those whom God has lost and restoring them to Him .. **i.e.** .. saving them.

B. People who are saved have their relationship with God restored.

1. REMEMBER : It was not God who pulled away, man left God.
 2. It was God who lost that which had been His.
 3. Thus, when the wandering child is returned to God, there is great rejoicing in God's house.
- Luke 15: 10-** In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

C. People who are saved have been rescued from God's just punishment.

1. Those who return to accept God's reign over their lives, escape God's punishment.
 - a. **Rom. 5: 9-** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

- b. **I Thes. 1: 9-10** For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.
- 2. God's "**wrath**" will result in those who rebel against Him being driven away from Him.
 - a. God's punishment includes isolating the rebels from Himself.
 - II Thes. 1: 7b-9** ... when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, ⁸ dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, (**Contrast .. John 14: 2-3** .. wants w/ Him)
 - b. Why is being separated from God such a bad thing ?
 - c. To be separated from God is to be separated from all one receives from God.
- 3. God gives blessing to all mankind, even those who rebel against Him.
 - a. **Matt. 5: 45** ... He shines the sun and gives the rain to evil and good alike.
 - b. **Acts 17: 26** ... In God we live and move and have our very being.
 - c. To be separated eternally from God is to be where His blessing do not go.
 - 1) Light
 - 2) Love
 - 3) Goodness

* **All the evil we see on the news will be all there is without God. ETERNALLY**

D. People who are saved live in anticipation of Heaven.

- 1. No matter how blessed your life on earth, it's the worse you'll ever experience.
- 2. Jesus promised to prepare a place for all of His followers. (**For all in Christ**)
 - John 14: 2-3** In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.
- 3. The Apostle Peter promised our place was ready, waiting, and reserved.
 - I Pet. 1: 3-5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a

salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

III. Saved people should have an attitude that is different from anyone else.

A. Saved people live in anticipation of the Lord's return ... never in fear.

1. The whole creation looks forward to His coming.
 - a. **Rom. 8: 18-19** 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. ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. (**revealed at His coming**)
 - b. **I Pet. 1: 13-** Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
2. Anyone who cannot sincerely plead for the Lord to return needs to carefully examine their faith to see if they are saved. (cf.- **Rev. 22: 20**)

B. The saved person lives in total confidence.

1. Once one has turned over his eternal destiny to Jesus, he can trust **Him**.
II Tim. 1: 12- For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.
2. This is the basis of the Christian's incomprehensible peace.
Phil. 4: 7- And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

C. The saved person goes to meet God with no fear.

1. He knows there is no sin charged against him.
 - a. **Rom. 8: 1-** ... there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - b. **Jude 24-** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,
2. The saved person can stand before God with confidence.
 - a. **Read ... I John 4: 14-19**
 - b. When one is secure in his relationship with God, he feels no fear.
3. **I Thes. 4: 13-18** ... Even death cannot separate one from his Heavenly reward.

CONCLUSION :

A. Summarize

B. Salvation is only IN Christ Jesus ... **I Tim. 2: 10** , **3: 15** ... Are you in Christ ?

INVITATION : What would your reaction be if you heard the trumpet sounding ?