

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Today is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Easter, and so, as we think back on the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord, we cannot help but continue to genuinely appreciate the fact that Jesus “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” (Romans 4:25) Furthermore, we rejoice in the truth that Jesus promises those who believe on Him, “because I live, ye shall live also.” (John 14:19) Indeed, fellow Christians, we look forward to the time when Jesus returns in glory, for on that great day, “the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” (1 Corinthians 15:52-54) Oh, we now dwell in a sin-sick world which is growing worse each day; consequently, we surely look forward to Jesus’ second coming, which Revelation 21:4 describes as a wonderful time for Christians since “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

Fellow believers in Jesus, our text is addressed “to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,” as we learn from Romans 8:1. Therefore, as we ponder our Scripture selection, let us learn about and take comfort in:

**“THE CHRISTIANS’ HOPE”**

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) What the Christians’ hope is
- 2) Who helps us to continue in the Christians’ hope
- 3) Why the Christians’ hope is certain

Verses 24 & 25, ----- (Romans 8:24-25)

Prior to our text, the Apostle Paul writes in Romans 8:12-18, “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Thus, the Apostle Paul is addressing his fellow Christians throughout the eighth chapter of the book of Romans.

Furthermore, we read in Romans 8:22-23, just prior to our text, “we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Hence, we Christians look forward to the time when our bodies will be glorified, rid of all sin and the effects of sin, “when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, [for] then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory,” as 1 Corinthians 15:54 relates. Accordingly, the Christians’ hope is the hope of eternal life according to soul AND body.

Yes, we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Therefore, our Scripture selection opens by informing us that *we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we*

*see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

Fellow Christians, while we now dwell on earth we do not yet see our hope of eternal life in heaven, for we still dwell in our sinful flesh. Nevertheless, we have hope because we have faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, for Hebrews 11:1 states, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Therefore, take it to heart there is no hope of eternal life according to soul and body without faith in Jesus Christ, who says in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Thus, the Christians' hope is based upon the Christians' faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, for Acts 4:12 declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Hence, it's not surprising that the Apostle Paul and his coworker Timothy prayed for their fellow Christians in Colosse, saying, "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel." (Colossians 1:3-5) Indeed, we again see that it is faith in Jesus which supplies folks with the hope of eternal life in heaven according to soul and body— that is the Christians' hope.

Realize that because we Christians on earth do not yet experience the wonderful eternal life we will enjoy in heaven according to soul and body, we therefore with patience wait for it as we have hope for that which we by faith in Jesus know we will have at His appearing in glory at the end of days. Therefore, 1 Peter 1:3-5 says to all sincere Christians, "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, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." What a wonderfully amazing future life awaits us Christians according to soul and body! Hence, James 5:7-8 instructs us, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Such is the Christians' hope, the hope of eternal life according to soul and body, the hope we have by God-given faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord.

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As we ponder the next two verses of our text, let us see who helps us to continue in the Christians' hope.

Verses 26 & 27, ----- (Romans 8:26-27)

If we would continue in the Christians' hope – the hope of eternal life according to soul and body – then we need to persist in true faith in God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as our personal Savior and Lord, for John 3:36 states, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

My friends, we cannot continue in the faith of Jesus Christ without God's gracious help, since Ephesians 2:8-9 reports, "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Additionally, we must never forget that we all dwell in sinful flesh, and Galatians 5:17 informs us, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Hence, a spiritual battle rages within each and every one of us Christians. Consequently, we need divine assistance if we would persist in the faith of Jesus Christ and grow in the same. Thankfully, our text assures us:

*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

Think about it. We know not what to pray for as we should, for our flesh is inclined to sin and evil. But thankfully, Christ's Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings which cannot even be framed in words of human speech. Fellow Christians, it's as we learn from Galatians 4:4-7, where we read, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Indeed, the Holy Spirit cries to God the Father for us, interceding for us, praying for what is right for us. Praise be to God the Holy Ghost!

Thus, the Holy Spirit surely intercedes for us and moves us to daily repent of our sins; the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, pleading for what is necessary to keep us in the faith of Jesus Christ and to grow us in the same, despite our many weaknesses. Yes, the Holy Spirit intercedes for all believers in Jesus according to the will of God. Realize that all sincere believers are saints in the true Biblical sense of the term, for Psalm 97:10 declares, "Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked." Thus, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in accord with God's will, pleading to the Lord for what is truly most important for us: that no matter what temptations we face we persevere in repentance and the true faith unto life everlasting, being delivered out of the hand of the wicked.

Hence, it's as Philippians 2:13 reports concerning all Christians: "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Therefore,

take it to heart we are abundantly helped by God Himself to continue in the faith of Jesus Christ and thereby in the Christians' hope— the hope of eternal life according to soul and body.

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As we ponder the remaining verse of our text, let us see why the Christians' hope is certain.

Verse 28, ----- (Romans 8:28)

We believers in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord have a very comforting knowledge given to us by God who has gifted us with faith in Christ and works by His Holy Spirit to keep us in the faith, for *we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Now, I'm sure that we will all admit that when things are going well for us in life it's fairly easy to confess that *all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* However, when we are suffering physically or mentally or financially it's more difficult to honestly confess that *all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* Nevertheless, no matter what our circumstances, it remains absolutely true that *all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* WE KNOW it's true because the Holy Ghost moves us to know it's true and assures us in His Word: *all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Consider the fact that in addressing Christians 1 Peter 1:6-9 says, "for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 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: 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: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Thus, God tries us, God tests our faith, in order to strengthen us in the faith that we cling more firmly to Christ Jesus and receive salvation. Accordingly, even the tough times we endure in this world are for our ultimate good; so, we can and should in honesty confess: *we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Oh beloved, the Christians' hope is certain because we know that God will accomplish His plan for our good; we know that God's purpose will prevail for His elect since subsequent to our text we read: "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. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29-30) It's a done-deal as far as the Lord is concerned.

Therefore, we can and should confess, as did the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:31-39, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our

Lord."

My friends, no matter what we must endure in this present evil world, we believers in Jesus have the Christians' hope! We are certain that eternal life according to soul and body awaits us on the Last Day when Jesus will visibly return in glory and say to each and every one of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." (Matthew 25:21)

We Christians know that eternal life in heavenly bliss awaits us because John 3:16-18 declares in no uncertain terms: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." And, 1 John 4:19 states: "We love him, because he first loved us." And, our text closes by informing us: *we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Let us therefore daily and sincerely repent of our sins, for "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Let us cling to Christ Jesus in heart-deep faith as our personal Savior and Lord, for "he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2) And, let us go forward in the Christians' hope, looking forward to enjoying never-ending heavenly bliss according to soul and body in joy with our Lord. Amen.

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