

Theme: Despite the struggles of this life, Christians live in the hope of eternal glory, when we and creation will will experience the glorious freedom of full redemption and will radiate the glory of God.

I. The End of the Story

- A. Linda hates movies, books with no clear ending
- B. Monty Python - "What was the plot?"
- C. Scripture has a clear plot & resolution!
- D. Today - Glory Bound! - where we are going!

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... 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 8:18, 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. Yet 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 - present struggles are not worthy of comparing with it!
 - 2. The man who said this suffered - rejection, beating, prison, stoned to death - and eventually martyred
 - 3. Yet all of that does not compare - our future must be glorious!
- D. Our future - glory
- ¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with **the glory** that will be revealed in us... ²¹ that 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 key word 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. Not really in this text - but central to glorification
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

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

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 fulness of the salvation Christ brought to us

2. Glorification - our bodies are raised from the dead and changed

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed — ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:51–54

- a. Some will have their bodies changed by resurrection.
 - b. Some will have their bodies changed directly by God at the return of Christ.
 - c. But all of us will receive immortal, imperishable, glory-filled bodies!
3. 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!
 4. The Christian hope has always been not just life after death, but specifically the resurrection of the body!
 5. Friends that will be glory!

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

1. Creation itself needs to be renewed and purified

¹⁹ 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

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. 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. Some heretics tried to separate these out - they thought that matter was evil or unimportant
3. These heretics tried to separate creation and redemption
4. But the universal Christian church said "NO!"
5. What was created was affected by the fall
6. What was affected by the fall is in view in redemption
7. What was created, affected by the fall, will be restored at the consummation
8. God has not abandoned His creation to destruction - it will be restored and brought into glory!
9. We are glory bound!

IV. Applying the Word

A. If you do not know Jesus - look to Him

1. You do not want to miss the glory that awaits us!
2. The only door to that glory is found in Christ
3. I urge you with everything I have, look to Christ
4. There is a new world coming - and it is glorious!

B. If you are a believer - stir up hope in our future!

1. We should be the ultimate optimists!

2. God's will is going to be done - the future is assured
3. We will see Him as He is - glorious!
4. We will know Him as fully as created beings can - glorious!
5. Our entire being will radiate with His glory!
6. Our bodies will be raised - and all will be fixed!
7. Creation will be renewed - glorious!
8. For the first time, all will be as it should be - for eternity!

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!
5. Confession of faith (1 Corinthians 15 summary)

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy —²⁵ to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Your future is secure - you are fully blessed; so go forth and be a blessing! Amen. Jude 1:24–25

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Glory Bound!

Romans 8:18-25
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