

Sunday, September 22, 2019—Titus 2:13: Our Blessed Hope

Titus 2:13

- ***“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”***
- *“Looking For”*—means to await with confidence and patience. When something fun or important is coming up in our lives we often say something like “I can’t wait,” or “I’m really looking forward to,” or “it can’t get here soon enough.”
- Paul says that we are to have that same attitude of excited anticipation for what he calls our blessed hope.
- According to *Strong’s Concordance* the Greek word translated “blessed” means happy. The word is translated “blessed” 44 times, “happy” 5 times, and “happier” 1 time in the King James Bible
- *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defines “blessed” as follows: 1) Made happy or prosperous; extolled; pronounced happy 2) Happy; prosperous in worldly affairs; enjoying spiritual happiness and the favor of God; enjoying heavenly felicity
- *“Hope”*—one of the meanings of hope is expectation of good, or joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation according to *Strong’s Concordance*.
- The concept of hope encapsulates this truth; **it is for the future, not the present that man exists**. The English word Hope carries the following meanings according to Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*:
 - A desire of some good, accompanied with at least a slight expectation of obtaining it, or a belief that it is obtainable. Hope differs from wish and desire in this, that it implies some expectation of obtaining the good desired, or the possibility of possessing it. Hope therefore always gives pleasure or joy; whereas wish and desire may produce or be accompanied with pain and anxiety.
 - Confidence in a future event; the highest degree of well-founded expectation of good; as a hope founded on God’s gracious promises; a scriptural sense.
- The definitions of the Greek and English words prove that hope is what moves human beings from the present to the future. It is hope that drives us forward through the peril and uncertainty of this present evil world.
- Consider these words from the pen of William Trotter found in *Plain Papers on Prophetic and Other Subjects*:
 - “The present was never designed to satisfy man. That it does not, as matter of fact, is attested by the consciousness of all. Let the character of the present and

the extent of the future be what they may, the present fails to satisfy, and it is for the future the heart sighs and yearns. How the child of two or three aspires to the school-boy's lot; the school-boy pants to be a youth, the youth to be a man; and the man, be his circumstances what they may, finds not in those circumstances what satisfies and fills his heart, but reaches after that which the future holds out to view. It is not in man to be satisfied with the present. True, indeed, his aspirings may be limited to the present state of being. But his present portion in this state of existence is not that which contents him: it is the future which he expects to do so, even if it be a future here — a future within the precincts of this narrow world and this short life. *It is for the future, not the present, that man actually lives;* just as we have seen that it is for the future, not the present, man was made.”

- Romans 8:24-25—it is with the future that hope has to do. This is true of all hope: it is of the Christian's hope that it is affirmed; but it is true of hope, whatever be its character or its object. At least thus much is true, that what we hope for is that which we possess not at present. And it is thus that hope becomes such a stimulus to exertion, such a solace in affliction, such a light amid surrounding darkness, such a stay when no other stay remains. Extinguish hope, and happiness is gone. Let the faintest glimmering of hope remain, and man's misery is not complete.
 - “And what more powerful in its influence than hope? It is the hope of harvest that cheers the husbandman in his toil. The exile is sustained in his wanderings by the hope of once more beholding his beloved country. It is in the hope of revisiting his native shores that the mariner ploughs the deep and braves the storm. The merchant is stimulated by the hope of gain — the student by the prospect of success — the warrior by the hope of conquest, and perhaps of spoil. Take away from these the hope of securing the objects they severally pursue, and all motive to exertion or endurance is withdrawn. Rob that mother of the hope if seeing her children happy and esteemed, or at least the hope of their being so, whether she should live to see it or not, and what do you leave to support her amid her daily and nightly anxiety and toll? Ah! it is thus that, even in this world, hope goes beyond the limits of the individual's life, and leads men to live and to act for a future in the well-being of their offspring, when their own career on earth shall have come to a close. And hope, even in respect to things of this life, sweetens the bitterest cup, and sustains under the heaviest load of present calamity and grief.”
- “But if the present thus invariably fail to satisfy, and if hope, on which the heart lives and feeds, be bounded by the, present state of existence, it follows that, as those things which have been hoped for come to be possessed, they are found to be as unsatisfying as all else; and thus the history of human life is the history of disappointed hopes. Either the object of hope is never attained, or, when attainment has transformed the future, into the present, that which has been bright to hope becomes dull and insipid in possession; and the heart still sighs and longs for something which it possesses not. It is, of course, of the

natural heart we speak thus. The sum of all that it seeks, as well as of all that it possesses, is vanity and vexation of spirit.”

- Something minus hope equals nothing. Paul is telling us that we should confidently (hope) look with childlike anticipation for a happy (blessed) future that awaits us as believers.
- Christ is our hope.
 - I Corinthians 15:19— if the hope of Christ pertains to this life only, we truly are of all men most miserable because we have placed our trust and hope in something that is not true.
 - I Corinthians 15:20-23—those who have placed faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are not perished or made miserable because Christ has risen from the dead. Just as sin came into the world by one man so also came the resurrection of the dead. The believers hope is not extinguished upon death it waits for resurrection.
 - I Thessalonians 1:10—the hope and future longing of our souls is the Lord Jesus Christ. Our hope his inseparably tied to the one who rose again from the dead.
 - I Timothy 1:1—Christ is the believers hope not only in this life but also for the life to come.
- The heavenly places are our destination.
 - *Heaven*—should the question be put to almost any Christian — what is it that is the object of your individual hope? The answer, in most cases, would be — Heaven. And this, surely, is according to the word of God.
 - Colossians 1:5—THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH IS A HEAVENLY, NOT AN EARTHLY HOPE. Heaven, not earth, is our future dwelling-place. Whatever links of connection there may be in that day between heaven and earth — whatever benign influences the Church may be employed of God to exert on the earth and its inhabitants — heaven, not earth, is our distinctive place and portion.
 - Philippians 3:20
- In conclusion please consider the following from the pen of William Trotter:
 - Earthly hope is such that we cannot even make ourselves happy why then do people insist that they can make God happy with them. And as to how God's favour is to be secured, you understand fully, that it is not by your repentance or reformation, your obedience or devotion, your fastings or prayers or tears — "not by works of righteousness which you have done," or hope to do — much less by

any priestly influence, that your fellow-sinners can use on your behalf. No, you read your title to forgiveness and acceptance, in the glorious person, the perfect obedience, the atoning blood, of God's holy Lamb. The assurance of God's infinite satisfaction with Him, and with all who believe in Him, you see in God raising Him from the dead, and placing Him at His own right hand in heaven. . . You have found the true, the everlasting good. . . The secret of happiness — true, satisfying, unfailing enjoyment — has been disclosed to you.

- It is true that you have tasted of real happiness, of eternal life, in the knowledge of the Father, and of Jesus whom He has sent. But this is not to say that you have the full, perfect, unhindered enjoyment of this happiness, this life. This is still before you as the object of your hope. "Then the Christian is not satisfied, any more than others?" It may seem so to the worldling; and it is quite true that in one sense the Christian is not satisfied; but it is in a widely different sense from that in which the worldling is not, and for widely different reasons. The worldling is not satisfied because he knows nothing, is possessed of nothing, which — can either now, or at any time, satisfy him. The Christian knows One who can, and is possessed of One who can satisfy him. He knows Christ — he possesses Christ — he enjoys Christ. Christ is his life — Christ is his peace — Christ is his joy — Christ is his portion; but, as yet, he has never seen Christ. It is by faith he knows, by faith he possesses, by faith he enjoys Him; but the more he knows and enjoys Him thus, the more he longs to behold Him. . . believing in Christ, whom we have not seen, we love Him; we rejoice in Him with unspeakable joy; we receive the salvation of our souls But to see Christ — to have the salvation which He wrought out on the cross applied to our bodies as well as to our souls — to have it perfected in our experience even as it respects our souls — to have it consummated thus in all who are fellow-partakers with us of Christ — to be with Him, and with them, in our Father's house — to behold His glory which the Father has given Him — to appear with Him in glory when He appears — to reign with Him over a ransomed and redeemed and happy creation — to fulfil our part in the universal harmony of all in heaven, and all in earth, when all shall bow the knee to Jesus, when every tongue shall own Him Lord, and all voices shall join to celebrate His praise; this, and far more than this — far more than heart can conceive or tongue explain, is what we wait for; and, above all, we wait for Him whose return shall introduce us to all this perfect blessedness — we "wait for God's Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." HE IS OUR HOPE. We know Him now by faith as our Saviour, our Lord, our life, our peace, our joy, our all..