

Great Words of the Gospel - Part 6

by Roy Hession

The sermon emphasizes the glory that awaits believers as a result of being justified by faith, highlighting the transformative power of this hope in their lives today.

Duration: 1:01:09

Scripture: Luke 17:26-30, Romans 5:1, Romans 8:28, Romans 8:31-39, 2 Thessalonians 1:7

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by referencing a Bible verse that talks about seeing things dimly in a mirror but eventually seeing face to face. He then shares a story about a man in America who boldly proclaimed that the day of judgment is over for him because Jesus took the judgment for his sins on the cross. The speaker emphasizes the grace of God and the assurance of salvation for believers. He also mentions the love of God and how only those who deliberately reject His love and warnings will be lost. The sermon concludes with a reference to C.S. Lewis' book, 'The Problem of Pain,' which discusses the concept of human free will and the uncertainty of redemption for all individuals.

Transcript

Will you turn to Romans chapter 5? Romans chapter 5. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, such people are quite irrepressible, we glory also in tribulations. Amen.

Now will you turn over to chapter 8? Further good news for us. Verse 28, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose, for 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, then he also called, and whom he called, then he also justified, and whom he justified, then he also glorified.

What shall we say then to these things? If God before 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 or gratuitously give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It's God that justifies. Who is he that condemneth? Nobody, because it's Christ that died. Yea, rather it is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, making 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, we have all those things. We are killed all the day long, counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors.

An overcomer is the opposite to a succumb. An overcomer is one who has not spared these troubles, but he comes over them in his spirit. And here it is, nay, in all these things we come over rather than succumb.

Through him we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, angels, principalities, or powers, unseen, angelic, or demonic creations, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Our subject, the sixth great word of the gospel, is glory, and the glorification of the believer.

Not always is heaven in the Bible, in the New Testament, called heaven. In Paul's writings at least, he usually calls it glory. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

That's his characteristic word for it. And when believers go to heaven, he doesn't say they go to heaven, you know what he says, they've been glorified. What a wonderful word.

A believer has been glorified, for he has gone into the enjoyment of what the New Testament calls glory. Now how do you define that word glory? It's a lovely word, it's all glittering and bright. Well, I'm just going to define it by one word, splendor.

Everything is full of splendor in that place which Jesus has gone to prepare for. Splendor, perhaps, and glory, that splendor is the nearest alternative word. And that's what God describes as the end he has for his saints, to dwell in everlasting stainless splendor.

And when the saint goes there, he himself is splendorized. If glory can be called splendor, then to be glorified means to be splendorized. Well, you can imagine what that's going to mean, and you and I, we're going to be splendorized one day.

Now, glory is the direct consequence of being justified by faith. It's very clearly associated, it's not associated with being sanctified, it's not associated with growth in grace, it's not associated with becoming a very fine Christian who's won a lot of souls, it's a simple thing that's promised, that the merest sinner who's come to the cross and has been justified by faith in Jesus. That is proved, of course, by the verse we've already read, that Romans 5.1, therefore, being justified by faith, two things follow.

When you know that it is well with your soul, when you know that the wrong one is counted right for Christ's sake by the only one who matters, God, you have two things. First, we have peace with God. You can look God in the face, you can stand before him without a shred of shame.

Who is he that shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? The only one that matters is the one who's justified and declared right with himself this poor old sinner. But there also follows not only peace with God, the second thing in Romans 5 is, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. The merest sinner who's become to the cross and be declared right with God for Christ's sake, not only has peace with God, but he's given the positive assurance that he's on his way to the glory land.

And he didn't have a possibility of a doubt. I know it says rejoice in hope. Some people say they hope they're saved.

When someone says that, I always feel they're the gravest doubts as to whether they are. They're only hoping. But the word hope means confident expectation.

That's the Greek word apparently here. We rejoice in confident expectation of the glory of God. Yes, we have a chorus, we sang it some years, I'm on my way to the glory land.

I'm on my way to the glory land, praise the Lord, to the glory land. We are rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. And the saints are often to think about and sing about glory.

Thank God the saints of former days have blest of appropriate hymns. And how they cheer the drooping heart when we see beyond this veil of tears to that wonderful glory land which grace is going to lead us into. I say going to lead us into.

From God's point of view, the saints are so certain of getting to glory that he regards them as having got there already. Didn't you read that? Whom he justified, Romans 8, them he also glorified. I say, wait a minute, we haven't got there yet.

Oh, in God's mind and purpose you have, but might I not endure to the end? God's going to see about that. Whom he justified, them he also glorified. Dear child of God, God guarantees that you're going to make it.

He regards you potentially, actually, so to speak, there already in his mind of purpose, so certain is the end of the one who's been justified by faith. Now when I read Romans 5, I get an impression that those to whom Paul was writing needed to be assured of that fact. I'll tell you why in a moment.

I rather imagine there must have been some who, when they heard that the wrath of God had been revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men who hold down the truth in unrighteousness, when they heard there was a great day of reckoning coming for the world, when they heard the day would come when the great white throne would be set up, when the dead, small and great, would stand before God, and when the books of every man's life would be opened, and when they heard that the dead would be judged out of that books according to those works, I believe some of them trembled. They began to wonder where they were, how would it be with them in that great day of reckoning? And so Paul says in verse 7, we've got verse 9, we've got 8, we've got to break into his argument, God commended his love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us, and then verse 9, much more than being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Why has he got to persuade them and say that? Because they didn't realize how certain was the end for the man who'd been justified by the blood of Jesus.

So he had to say much more. If when you were away from God you were loved, now that you've repented and come and have been declared right with God through the blood of Jesus, how much more shall you be saved from wrath through him? Dear sinner that fled to the cross, who's dared to believe the great edict that by the blood you've been justified, declared right with God, that great day when the dead are going to stand before God and the books are going to be open and every man is going to be judged in utter truth by the record in that book, and every man's conscience tells him it's going to go ill with him in that day, that day's not for you. You're not going to be there.

The world, but not this precious foreknown and called and justified group, they're going to be glorified. You're going to, and those it means are right now, you may know that being justified by his blood, you will be saved from wrath. Oh it's there, wrath, you can't get away from it in the scripture.

There it is, but not for the justified one. And so it is the direct consequence of being justified by faith that we should be able to sing, I'm on my way, praise the Lord to the glory land, rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Glory, however, is not negative.

I'm not going to be judged. I'm not going to stand in that day of judgment. By the way, I should have said the reason why is because the day of judgment, as far as you're concerned, your concern has passed.

Did you know that? A man in America, he was a great one for witnessing in an unusual way, and he drove into a gas station, because they have gas rather than petrol over there, and he said to the man working the pumps, he said, did you know the day of judgment is over for me? The man didn't know what he was saying until he explained. Yes, the day of judgment for my sins took place on Calvary. It's fallen on him.

It's over for me. I'm not going to stand in that great day. I shall be saved.

I don't deserve it. I'm confused and embarrassed to think that I should be spared it when others aren't. But that's the electing, selecting grace of God, as far as you're concerned.

But as I say, it's not negative only, not being there. It's positive. As I said, the only word I can think of to go to explain glory is splendor, if that explains very much.

But trying to look into the scripture to see what glory is, well, we're not told too many details. Just enough to make us very, very happy. Just enough to give us real confidence.

Enough to enable us to walk through that last cold river with joy and with a shout of victory on our lips. Well, the first and greatest thing about glory is that we shall see Jesus at last face to face. Whom, says Peter, not having seen will love.

And you've loved him because he first loved you all your pilgrim way, but you've never seen him, at least not a face to face. There've been spiritual revelations of him. But one day, in glory, what will make glory glory will be, I shall see this dear one face to face.

I want you to look at 1 Corinthians 13. For now we see in a mirror, the authorize says through a glass, but the revised helps us there, for now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know only in part, even the most advanced Christian only knows in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.

We are seeing him these days in a mirror, somewhat dimly, it's a wonderful vision we're getting, it's making us wonderfully happy and setting us free, but it's still a vision only in the mirror. The thought, the picture that comes to me is a driving mirror. Now driving mirrors are pretty good and you can get a pretty good idea of what's behind you, but it's much better to be able to see the thing face to face.

There are different sorts of mirrors, some can be very cheap ones and they give you a distorted view, but there are the good ones which give you a wide angle and make the traffic seem a long way away, and others which make the traffic look nearer. In the car, in my old Ford, it was a bit confusing. My inside mirror made the traffic look near, but my wing mirrors made it look far, and of course I would think I can safely draw out in front, behind this car in front of me, but the fellow behind me was much nearer to me than my

wing mirrors indicated, so I realised for safety's sake I ought to use the inside one as far as possible.

Now we are seeing Jesus in a mirror, not face to face. Praise the Lord for the mirror in which we see Jesus by the spirits anointing the Word of God. But it's also, the mirror is also somewhat associated with our own understandings, and there are, as I say, different mirrors.

It's lovely, I'm so glad there are. Some people, as they share Jesus, they sort of give us a wider perspective of him. Others, a narrower, more detailed one.

That's as it should be. It needs a whole lot of mirrors to give us any sort of understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ and his love for us. And of course, our mirror can be distorted.

Oh, the Bible isn't distorted, but our understanding of it may be distorted for a number of reasons. But oh, the day is coming when we're not going to see him in a mirror. We're going to see him face to face.

There was a young woman who'd had a very many sad experiences. She lost her husband and then her child, and then later she herself lay dying. She was one who loved the Lord and a believer.

And someone who was attending her said, it won't be long now, dear, and you'll see Harry and the little baby boy. Do you know what she said? Jesus first. And you know, I believe we can be a bit sentimental.

I'm going to meet all my lost, but my loved ones. What a reunion that will be. Jesus first.

Indeed, the scripture doesn't make a lot about the reunion of believer with believers. It's implied. You can take comfort.

But Jesus first. Will you be looking around glory to see that happy of yours? First of all, that's not very honoring to the one who brought you to glory at such great cost. And I dear, dear friend, I believe in that day, other things will fall away.

It'll be Jesus first you'll want to see. And so will that husband. He'd be much more concerned to see Jesus than to see even you.

Oh, there'll be a reunion, but oh, let's not make too much of that. It isn't really the emphasis we get in scripture. Well, I don't know, I can't go into any more details as to what seeing Jesus face to face is going to mean.

Except this interesting thing. Now I know in part, then shall I know as also I am known. He knows me.

All along, Jesus has known me in my sin. And I feebly known him in his grace, but only partly. But in that day, I shall know him in his grace as fully as he has known me in my sin.

And those two knowledges will be equalized. Now he's known me in my sin and had mercy on me. I've only feebly tasted that grace, but one day I'll know.

Even as all along, he's known this poor old sinner. The fullness of love and grace will be really known and experienced. A second thing we can say about glory is we're going to be given transformed bodies.

Yes, glory is going to affect our bodies. Can you believe it? Philippians 3 verse 20, for our citizenship is in heaven. From whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come again.

And when he does, he will change, the authorize says, our vile body, but the revised version helps us here, who shall change the body of our humiliation. Yes, these are the days of our humiliation, brethren. I mean, it's very humiliating not to get out of that chair because of rheumatism and have to depend on other people.

But the day is going to come when he, when he comes, is going to change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the body of his glory according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. And the simple truth is, don't reject it as being too sort of literal. Be grateful you're going to have a new body.

Oh, it's not going to be the same sort of body, it's going to be a spiritual body, but apparently it's going to be a body. Jesus had a body after he rose from the dead. He said, hand on me and see, a spirit hath not flesh and blood as you see me have, but you know all traces of age and sickness and worry will have gone.

And I want to tell you, dear one, you'll be more, you'll be better looking then than you've ever looked before. I tell you the saints of God are going to be a fine looking crowd, possessed of eternal youth, with resurrection bodies that shall never know sorrow, disease or death. I don't know why God isn't content for us just to be spirits in heaven, but apparently he said, no, I'm going to give you a bonus, you're going to have a real lovely body and so on.

The days on earth are going to be remembered, but gloriously transformed. Then too, in glory, that is going to be experienced by us, which is going to utterly compensate and more than compensate for every tear, every sorrow, every ache or pain, or even every injustice done to you. Look at that wonderful verse in Romans 8, 18.

Dear old Paul, he was in a bad state sometimes. He wasn't a very well man, and he had to spend a night and a day in the deep sometimes. That didn't help his rheumatism either.

And then he was in a Roman prison. But listen to what he says, he's got his eye on glory, the light is shining on his face, for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed among us, in us. And that helped him to stick it up.

And I tell you, there's going to be marvellous compensations, and in glory you'll have no cause to complain. As an old chorus says, it will be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life's trials will seem so small when we see him.

One glimpse of his dear face, all sorrow will erase, so let us run the race till we see him. And then also we are told that we saints of God ultimately are going to be manifested to the universe as God's aristocracy. Romans 8, 19, it goes on after verse 18, for the earnest expectation of creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

This poor old world has been made subject to vanity, we're told. Weeds grow much more readily than the fruit we want. We're cursed with all sorts of droughts and famines.

And even this earth has been affected by man's sin, but it's waiting. It's waiting for its emancipation to be a new earth. And it's going to happen when the sons of God are manifested.

I tell you, that'll be a great parade, when one day the saints are manifested to a wandering creation as his aristocracy. Turn to 1 John 3, 1 John 3, verse 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, we should be called the sons of God. It occurred to me only the other day why it says that.

Because, you see, we being prodigals have had to go back to the Father and say, Lord, I'm not worthy to be called thy son. He never said a truer word, neither do you. I'm not worthy to be called a Christian, the way I behaved.

I'm not worthy to be called thy son. Oh, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, even in spite of the fact we aren't worthy to be called Christians. We aren't worthy to be called the sons of God, we are thus called.

But the world knoweth this not, because it knew him not, it doesn't know who's among them. It doesn't know that that humble Christian is one day going to shine as the stars in heaven. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.

But there's been to be a great glorious parade when the sons of God are going to be manifested, and they're going to rule with Christ over his creation. Of course, I can't tell you in detail what that's going to mean, but there's enough to see something of the dignity God has decreed for the merest child of his. And so we could go on.

That is a little bit, a few thoughts, a few scriptures as to what glory is that's going to be. Now the next thing I want to ask is this question, when will this glory be revealed to us? When will we enter glory and experience all this? And the answer is, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes again the second time. Now hold it.

Oh, you thought, you said, I thought that happened to me when I died. No, no, wait a minute. Just put that to the back of your mind, that objection.

Let me say clearly, the saints enter into glory. They see him face to face. They have their glorified bodies, and they're manifested to all creation in that culminating day when the sun descends from heaven with a shout, and he comes again to rule the earth.

Will you please turn to 1 Thessalonians, 1 Thessalonians chapter 4, verse 13, and here's dear Paul writing to his beloved Thessalonian Christians. Had some bereavements, and some of them were a bit sad about those that had gone, and he comforts them in this way. But I would not have you to be ignorant, 1 Thessalonians 4 13, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent, old-fashioned English, shall not, for the word proceed, but we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep. Those that have slept and gone before are going to suffer no disadvantage when Jesus comes.

Those that are alive at the moment when he comes, they're going to have no advantage. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ what a company, stretching right back to Abel's day, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. You know there are far more people underground than on the ground? Of course there are,

and every single believer among them is going to rise.

It says so, and it isn't a spirit that's going to rise, they're going to rise with their glorified bodies, and that's going to happen first. So that, you see, they were expecting the coming of the Lord so near that when people, when a man knew he was dying, oh he said I'm going to miss it. No you're not brother, no you're not, you're going to rise first.

But the others aren't going to be disadvantaged either. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the cloud, yes there's your reunion together with them in the cloud, but the main purpose is to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we ever be with the Lord, that him forever with the Lord.

When is that fulfilled? When we're caught up to meet him in the clouds. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Till that time, till that time, those that have died in Christ are said to be asleep in Jesus, or they're with him, but not in the enjoyment of the full glory yet.

Paul said I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better, but that's not the full glory. That awaits the coming of the Lord. But from this side of things, they are spoken of as being asleep, waiting.

Now someone may say, and I feel like saying it myself, well I don't want to wait. I mean the Thessalonian Christians thought the coming of the Lord was right round the corner, they're still waiting. And although the signs of the times are being multiplied, there's no doubt that the coming of the Lord is very much nearer than it was then.

I mean it's 1900 years nearer at least. Nobody be quite sure how much longer we'll have to wait till the Lord Jesus himself descends from heaven with us out. And I think that rather takes away the joy that I've got to wait for the full enjoyment.

Yes, to be with Christ is wonderful, but what you said has really whetted my appetite. But wait a minute. The thing that characterises life on earth is time.

Beyond earth, it's eternity. And eternity is not elongated time. Eternity is simply non-time.

In eternity, with God, there's no past and there's no future. Everything, the whole history of the world is present. That's why he can talk about his beloved son as the lamb slaying from the foundation of the world.

There's no time with God. Calvary was accomplished all the time. It actually did happen on earth in time, but with God there's no such thing as time.

And for those who are said from this side to be asleep in Jesus, they've passed out of time into eternity when there's no such thing. And although as I say, we talk about them sleeping and waiting, not for them. The next thing they are aware of, the trumpet sounding.

The Lord's descending with heaven from the shout. I'm rising. I've entered into glory.

I know it's a difficult conception, but in actual fact, you won't have to wait. It is only an accommodation for human language in earth. In eternity, you're there.

And you'll hear that trumpet sound. You'll see him coming. He'll welcome you and you'll enter into all the things we've spoken of as being glory.

Now what about those that know not the Lord and obey not his gospel? Because not all have been justified by faith. Not all have come to the cross of Jesus as the sinners. Not all have made that humbling confession, oh God, I'm wrong.

Not all have heard him saying, now you're right with me through the blood of Jesus. And they haven't enjoyed it, not because they haven't heard, but it says here, they not only know not the Lord, but they obey not. They haven't submitted themselves to the gospel.

Well now, what is the future for such people? Will you turn to the second epistle of Thessalonians, verse 7, breaking into one of Paul's sentences? And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire. I can't water it down. I know it's hard to say it.

Some I know in this conference have cringed at these scriptures. But there it is in the Bible, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Go, he piles it on.

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. And this isn't only one place. Everywhere the Bible speaks of the fact that God hath appointed a day when he will judge the world in righteousness through that man whom he has appointed, but whom they would refuse.

And you know, you mustn't ever fall into the trap of trying to put Paul against Jesus or Jesus against Paul. You mustn't say this is some old antiquated idea. Do you know, Jesus himself spoke more about Gehenna and about hell and eternal banishment from God than anybody else.

He did so with tears. He did it in a way that perhaps no earthly preacher does, but he was faithful if ever one was with his hearers. There was the narrow road that led to life and the broad road that led to destruction.

And the sorrow in the heart of deity is that there are only few that go through the narrow gate and many who go through the broad, but he cannot alter it. It leads to destruction. Now why should the scripture speak so much of coming judgment? And I want to repeat what I said the other day.

We've got to understand that the message of judgment from this great loving God of ours is really only an offer of mercy. Oh, it's not an empty thing. It will surely come if that mercy is not embraced.

But the purpose of telling us all about it beforehand is that hearing we should turn and find salvation and peace with God. If God is going to send unsafe sinners to hell, why doesn't he just do it and say nothing about it? Let them fall there. Why does he speak so often? Why does the gospel preacher have to speak about these things? I want to hear the man who speaks most about these things is probably the one who's most concerned that people shouldn't go there.

It ought to be love and concern that leads us to speak of what God reveals is there. Because really he's offering people mercy, an opportunity to embrace it. I turned and I want to turn again to that verse in Jeremiah 36.

And this is the explanation why Jeremiah had to pronounce such woes upon Israel. Coming disasters because they turned away from the Lord. Jeremiah 36, and here it is God talking to Jeremiah, write it all down and tell it to them again.

Verse 3, it may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and sin. That's as it was as I've said the other day with regard to Nineveh. If they were so wicked, why did God just didn't destroy them? Why did he send Jonah and say in six weeks time it's going to happen? To give them the chance to do what they actually did do.

They believed the word and they humbled themselves. And when the Lord saw that they turned from their evil ways, in the hope that there might be mercy, God repented of the evil that he thought to do unto them, and he did it not. So it's the love of God.

Only those will be lost who have deliberately turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of love and the warnings of coming judgment. C.S. Lewis says in his book *The Problem of Pain*, and he has there a lovely chapter, it's a very deep chapter on health. Oh, a beautifully reasoned and helpful chapter, which honors God and his love as well as warns men.

He says, because of human free will, the divine labor to redeem the world may not be certain of succeeding in every case. Some will not be redeemed, and no one is sad at that prospect that God. He says, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live.

Now I agree with you, it is a difficult conception of this eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, whatever that may mean in detail. But just a few thoughts that may help us to receive the revelation of God. Some have stumbled over it, it's understandable that they should.

I don't think we really understand the extent of the catastrophe that Satan accomplished in God's world. He wrecked everything. He defaced the divine image in man.

It was a bigger catastrophe than we've ever thought. C.S. Lewis again in his book *Out of the Silent Planet*, imagines Dr. Ransom, who's been taken on a spaceship to Mars, and he's being interviewed by the angels. Each planet in his myth has an elder, an angel, and they've got him to Mars because they want to know what on earth has happened on earth.

There was an elder there. They had communication, these elder one with another, but he's become the silent planet. What's happened? Has the bent one done something there? And if he has, what's Malaldeel done? That's God.

And I tell you, that gives me a little picture of the tremendous catastrophe that's happened to this earth of ours. And then I begin to understand what God is doing. He is saving something out of the wreckage.

That's what he's doing. That's a terrific wreck, but God's not defeated. He's saving something out of the wreckage, which is going to be a new humanity in which is one day going to dwell in new heavens and a new earth.

But when you save something out of the wreckage, there may be some wreckage left which is unsalvable. Only unsalvable in our case because we choose to be unsalvable. That's one consideration that may help.

Then another thing, glory for us, is just going to consist of Jesus, seeing him face to face. The lamb is all the glory in Emmanuel's land. Are the unbelievers so anxious to have a heaven that is made up of an intensified fellowship with the one they've neglected and left outside their lives all these days? I'm not sure that would be altogether acceptable to them.

And therefore they're not denied something which they want so very much. They've had their chance, but their free will has been set against them. That's a consideration that may possibly help us.

But you say, but what about the people who've never had an opportunity? What about the little children who've died without having been able to put their faith in Christ? What about nations who've never heard this gospel of redemption? What about them? And to that I say, shall not the God of all the earth do right? And I leave that there. I do remind myself that he, Jesus himself, said that if Sodom and Gomorrah had had his preaching, they would have repented, whereas Capernaum didn't with Jesus. I remind myself he knows ahead of time what would have been the response of some.

And it may well be he covers those people with the redemptive work of his son. But there's no final answer. But those are just a few suggestions that may help.

And now for the last practical considerations. First of all, dear one, that day of judgment, when the small and great stand before God, when the sins of a lifetime are remembered against them, is not for you, if you've been justified by his blood? If you haven't, make sure, dear one. And you can be sure, because you haven't got to feel a big emotion.

You can know that if you've come to Jesus for the cleansing power, he has not cast you out. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. And you don't have to wait for feelings to know it.

If Jesus promises, he means it. And the justification from all things, and the glory that surely follows, is promised the merest sinner who turns to that Jesus who's borne everything for him. And you may know.

And you may really rejoice in hope of the glory of God. If you've any doubts, you must get them settled. Have I come to Christ, haven't I? Do what I did in Southwold in 1926.

Having heard the gospel, and having sat under it, I didn't know had I responded or hadn't I? And I walked up and down that seafront, after meeting in the house where this boy's house body was, and I said, oh Lord Jesus, if I've never taken thee into my heart and life before, I do it now. Get that man settled. That's the way to do it.

Well, have I, haven't I? Well, if I haven't, I'm doing it now. You can even make a little note in your Bible of the day. If not before, now.

Put the date. And then go further. And now I'm going to credit Jesus with being a faithful saviour who doesn't break his word.

He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, John 5 24, hath everlasting life, has it right now. Not in the future, it's something bubbling up inside you. You have eternal life.

You will not, thou shalt not come into condemnation, it says. That's pretty clear, isn't it? If Jesus says it, that's enough for me. But thou pass from death unto life.

Now, these are words. And dear one, glory's for you. And you want to enter into the joy of it and all its blessed compensations.

And as you have your eye on glory and the Lord of glory, you will be able to endure and stick out things that other people can't. For the sufferings of this blessed time, of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. So there's one practical thing.

I don't think, or wouldn't we, John, all of us likely that there's not one who goes home from Southport on this hour last week, who hasn't got the blessed assurance that Jesus is theirs, and who is not rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. The way to Jesus is open and the promises are sure. Put in your claim, dear one, and park this nebulous condition.

Now, another practical consideration to finish with. Would you look to Luke 17. Now, here the Lord Jesus, in this part of this chapter, we're looking at verse 26, is talking about his coming again.

And how it will be unexpected. Verse 26, As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. Verse 28, Likewise, as it was in the days of Lot, it will be so.

And the days of Noah and the days of Lot had this in common, that they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, not knowing of the portentous, tenuous event of judgment that was coming on the world through the flood and on Gomorrah through the fire. And that state of unconcern continued until, it says, the day Noah entered into the ark, in the one case, and in the other until the day that Lot went out of Sodom. It was only when Lot, Noah went into the ark that the flood came, and it was only when Noah went out of Sodom that the fire fell.

Now, that seems to me to be two contrasted attitudes to the coming of the Lord Jesus and the prospect of glory. For some, it will be like Noah and entering in. This is what we've longed for.

We've been holding loosely to the things of earth. We're ready. We can't be any more ready for glory than what the blood of Jesus makes you.

And though there are lovely things on earth, he's given you glimpses of the lovelier things before. And for you, those last moments will be an entering in to glory. But Lot, it wasn't an entering in, it was a going out.

For him it meant leaving Sodom, leaving what he liked so much. Oh, he was so reluctant to leave. The angel had to get hold of his hand and that of his wife and pull him out.

And even she turned back to give a loving look at the old life there, and she was covered with the lava. And for some Christians, we must search our hearts. We may be loving the things of earth so much, so obsessed with things down here, the things of earth, the things of our own personal gain, that when Jesus calls us, it won't be an entering in, it'll be a sad leaving.

Because our hearts have been with the world. We've been associated with the world and its ways. We're really part of them.

Perhaps we haven't been all together very separate from their ways. Largely indistinguishable to the eyes of the world from the world, and it will be a leaving. That's what John means when he says being ashamed before him at his coming.

Oh, he's coming. And dear one, if you're justified by the blood of Jesus, you'll be in glory. But do you know there's a verse in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 which talks about those whose works in glory will be burnt up, they won't be burnt, yet they themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

They're getting, they're going to be in glory. But what could have meant something to lay down at the feet of Jesus, years of service and loving service for other people, not always prominent, which have been the product of his life within us, we'll lay it down there. But for some, it's been self-inspired work, self-inspired life, and that's going to be burnt with fire, yet we ourselves, saved, yes, yet so as by fire.

And so dear one, what is your entering into glory going to be for you? Either when you go through, across the narrow river, or when he comes, is it going to be an entry in, as in the case of Noah, or a sad reluctance of leaving. And dear one, you may be sad to leave loved ones, you can trust them with the Lord. You can say that funny little chorus as you're going, or they can say it to you, if you get there.

Before I do, just wait to me, I'm coming too, it's only be a moment or two before we're all there together. An entering in, or sad to see the empty things of a worldly life go. So God help us to see which we're in, and settle things with him on that score, as well as on the other score about which we've spoken, forever with the Lord.

So it is, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Amen and Amen.

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