

“Hope Eternal”



Introduction

Future, divine judgement is sure to happen. What will the verdict be regarding the things you've done? Life is fragile and the meaning of death can be fearful. Keep your focus on things eternal, and have a confident hope in your salvation.

Today's Lesson Objectives

- **Acknowledge** the hope Paul, faced with death, manifested in God's eternal promise
- **Experience** awe in the faith of family and friends who are facing their mortality
- **Develop** a growing trust in God's promise of eternal life through faith

Scripture

2 Corinthians 4:16 - 5:10 (KJV)

Devotional Reading:

Romans 7:14 - 25

About Today's Lesson...

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21, KJV). These words, written by the apostle Paul, are indicative of life - both on earth and in heaven. Paul dedicated his life and ministry to spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Life on earth for him was a life led by Christ. But Paul also acknowledged that death would be even better because he longed to go and be with Christ (though he was likely not in a hurry to physically die). Paul further recognized that our longing for the future should encourage us in the present. While life on earth provides us the opportunity to be examples for Christ, we should always look forward to the day when we can put on our new heavenly bodies.

In the book of 2 Corinthians, Paul finds himself defending his authority as an apostle and denouncing leaders and teachers who were espousing false truths. In chapter 4 of today's lesson, Paul reminds the believers in Corinth of the extreme troubles and dangers he and others had faced because of their ministry (see 2 Corinthians 4:8-9). But despite the dangers, including death, Paul continued to exercise his faith and to preach the gospel. His demonstration of faith was used to encourage the believers to never give up. The glory that was to come far outweighed their current afflictions. The problems they currently had were to be viewed as only temporary. Their hope should be focused on the heavenly house, where they will be clothed with new, heavenly bodies.

Hope eternal is guided by the fact that we walk by faith and not by sight. We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ and it is our confident hope that we are accepted by him.

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