

The Word of Life Messenger

“Holding forth the word of life” Phil. 2:16

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No. 8

THE HOPE OF HIS CALLING

*“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of his calling”
(Ephesians 1:18a)*

The word “hope” as used in Scripture speaks of assurance. Paul here prays that the Holy Spirit would open the eyes of the Ephesians that they might have a full assurance and understanding of their calling. Notice that it is “his” calling that Paul is praying that they understand. Here Paul is talking about the great work of redemption where in II Timothy 1:9 he says “who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Paul says I want you to know that it was God who called you to salvation through the gospel of Christ - the message of how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Paul says God planned our salvation, His Son Jesus Christ purchased our salvation on Calvary’s cross, the Holy Spirit worked in our hearts to show us our sin and need of a Saviour and that Christ was that Saviour. It was

the Holy Spirit which produced faith and trust in Christ and regenerated us and made us new creatures in Christ. Paul says in Romans 8 “for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first born 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.” (vv.29-30). In God’s eyes, that work of salvation which began before the foundation of the world and included our hearing and believing the gospel of Christ in time is complete in Christ.

As one who has been saved we have been justified (declared righteous by God himself based upon the substitutionary death of Christ for us and the crediting of Christ’s righteousness to us), we have been redeemed from the guilt and penalty of the law, our sins have been completely forgiven, and we stand fully accepted before God in Christ. We are sanctified (set apart to God) and we are now growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Even though we may still sin, we are learning to love righteousness and hate iniquity. Sin no longer has

the hold on us it once had. We can live unto righteousness. We can follow and serve the Lord. We can please Him now. We have been translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of our Saviour and are kept by the power of God until the day of redemption.

One day soon we are going to be gloried. We are going to fully understand what it means to have eternal life. Five things can be seen in our glorification. First, we are going to be with Him. Jesus said, “Father I will that all those whom thou has given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou has given me (John 17:24). Paul said he had a “desire to depart and be with Christ” (Philippians 1:23) and for the believer in Christ “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8). For the believer, at death his soul goes directly into the presence of God. His body goes to an earthly grave awaiting the resurrection of the body at the return of Christ. For the believer who is alive at Christ return, he or she will be caught up in the air to meet the Lord and transformed in the twinkling of an eye and “so shall we ever be with the Lord.” What a glorious

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prospect. We shall be with Him!

Second, in our glorification we shall be like Him. The apostle John wrote "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Paul writing in the book of Philippians writes "For our conversation is in heaven from which we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (3:20-21). In Romans 8:29 Paul says we are predestined "to be conformed to the image of his Son." The Psalmists says "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." This means that we are going to have resurrection bodies like the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will not be subject to sin, decay, deterioration, disease, or death. We will be like Him! We will be suited for eternity with Him.

Third, we shall enjoy Him. Paul says in Philippians 4:4 "Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say rejoice." If we have much to rejoice and delight in Him in this life, how much more will we have to rejoice in and delight in the life to come. The Psalmists says "Let everything that hath breath, Praise ye the Lord" (150:5). If that admonition is true in this life, how much more will it be true in the life to come. When we view scenes of heaven in Scripture we find his people worshipping and praising him (Revelation 4, 5, 19). We will always love Him who "loved us and gave himself for us."

We sing the old song:

I've found a friend who is all to me, his love is ever true

I love to tell how he lifted me, and what His grace can do for you.

He saves me from every sin and harm, secures my soul each day

I'm leaning strong on his mighty arm; I know He'll guide me all the way.

When poor and needy and all alone, in love He said to me

"Come unto me and I'll lead you home, to live with Me eternally."

Saved by His power divine, Saved to a new life sublime!

Life now is sweet and my joy is complete, For I'm saved, saved, saved!

No wonder the Psalmist wrote "at thy right hand are pleasures evermore." We shall enjoy, love, and worship Him fully.

Fourth, we shall serve Him perfectly. In Revelation 22 the Scripture says "His servants shall serve Him. Our service in this life is often feeble, frail, faint, and even foolish, but our service there will be rewarding, renewing, and resplendent. It will be full, complete, and perfect. Throughout eternity we will have the opportunity to render to Him the service we so longed to render to Him here and much more. What a privilege to serve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! What a privilege to serve the one who died for our sins and purchased our redemption with His own blood. What a privilege to serve the one who lifted our feet out of the miry clay and set us on solid ground and has sustained us all the way to glory!

Fifth, we shall be with all the saints of all the ages (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). What a wonderful

time to see and enjoy departed loved ones, faithful friends, and to meet and enjoy a whole host of believers we never met before. What a time of rejoicing that will be. How sad it will be for those who will not be there because of sin and unbelief!

And yet we don't have to wait until glory to begin enjoying our relationship with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We can be with Him through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit right now; we can be with Him as we have daily fellowship and prayer and meditation in the Word. Like Enoch of old we can walk with God. We can be like Him (though not perfectly) as the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to change us into the image of Christ day by day (II Corinthians 3:18). We can enjoy Him now by loving Him, praising Him, rejoicing Him, trusting Him, and worshipping Him. And we can serve Him now through His church of which he is the head and through which He receives glory by witnessing to others of Him, supporting the proclamation of the gospel to others through missions and preaching, standing for the truth, praying for the work of the Lord, and by being a loving brother or sister to others. Moreover, we can enjoy the fellowship of other believers through the church and in our day to day lives. Jesus said "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one to the other." Do you have this hope of His calling? Are you preparing now for glory land? What a difference it makes to believe the gospel of Christ!

— Larry Windham

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS

I know that in preaching the cross, we must preach to the unconverted the simple message of salvation. We must proclaim to them that Jesus died on the cross for their sins and was buried and raised again from the grave. We must present it as a propitiation, as an expiation, as a vicarious and substitutionary atonement, as a ransom, a redemption, a reconciliation, and in all these aspects it must be shown as the means through which Divine forgiveness of sins comes. We must preach the cross in a worthy manner. Much that goes by the name

gospel preaching is not gospel. There is a great need today to set forth what the cross means to God, and the kind of God it reveals.

Many today need to start all over again and preach the wondrous cross. We need to preach it again and again until believers marvel at the grace of God and see what Isaiah said in Isaiah 53:10-11. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his

hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied..." We need to preach the cross so men can see the Lord's holiness and His justice was satisfied at Calvary. We should preach the cross so the people can see that God is a God of grace. We should preach the cross because Paul said in 1 Cor. 1:21: For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

~Charles Ellis

JESUS, OUR SAVIOUR

Everything Jesus did, everything He said, everything said about Him by the Father and by the Holy Spirit, by angels, by men or by devils is interesting and a blessing to every one of the human race that hears and heeds. All there is to know about Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God is found in the Bible and no where else. This source of information is open to everyone. He can read and know this wonderful person and His redemptive work for the children of men. There is a great deal revealed about Jesus that is good wholesome moral teaching, good for both saint and sinner here

in this world, that comes short of presenting Him as our Saviour from hell. There is little opposition to preaching about Jesus if the saving truth is left out. That was true in Paul's day, that is true today, that was true while Jesus walked and talked among men. Read John 6:4-56, Jesus said in v. 54, "Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Jesus was telling them that to have eternal life they must learn the meaning of His death and resurrection. When this became truth to them they had eaten His flesh and drunk His

blood. In other words, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Paul tells what the gospel is in 1 Cor. 15:3,4, "How that Christ DIED for our sins according to the scriptures, And that He was buried and rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Certainly learn everything to be learned about Jesus, but don't fail to learn Him as Saviour and Lord. There is every inducement to learn about Jesus, a blessedness here and our eternal joy and peace forever.

~E. R. Henderson

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

~St. John 3:16

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Notice

The North Central and
Northeast MS Baptist Bible
Conferences will meet with
Friendship Baptist Church,
County Rd. 39, Houston, MS
on Tuesday, December 9,
2008. The North Central Con-
ference will begin at 9:55 a.m.
and conclude at 3:00 p.m.
Lunch will be served at 12:00
noon.

The program for the North-
east Conference is:

5:30 p.m. - Supper, host
church
6:25 p.m. - Song
6:30 p.m. - John Gray
6:55 p.m. - Billy Little
7:20 p.m. - Song
7:25 p.m. - Chris Duncan
7:50 p.m. - Offering for
"The Word of Life Messenger"
8:00 p.m. - Benediction

Bro. Gladwin Carpenter,
pastor, and the church invite
you to this time of Bible study
and worship.

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Tuesday, 9:30 p.m.
First Baptist Church
Belmont, MS
Bro. Trent Jaudon

Wednesday, 8:30 p.m.
Bro. Chris Duncan
Bro. Bobby Joe Poss

Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Bro. Lloyd Minor

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