

The Hope of Glory

An Exposition of Colossians

Sermon One: An Introduction to the Hope of Glory

May 24, 2020

Opening Point: I love the Bible. That might seem like an obvious statement. I hope that it is. What I mean, though, is that there really are few things in my life more thrilling than studying, preaching and seeking to obey the word of God.

As I stand here, at the beginning of the study of this great book, I do so with genuine trepidation and concern. My goal and my hope in this study is to teach you to love the book of Colossians in loving what the book of Colossians contains...what it says. I understand that to a certain extent, if I am not careful, I can teach you to hate the book of Colossians. If I fail in my attempts to teach the book of Colossians with clarity and with power...If I am unclear or boring...I may actually take away from the joy and profit that the word of God has for you.

ILL: “Anything but Zechariah.” This is what a lady said one Sunday evening in my former church after I had spent months teaching Zechariah. Zechariah is a difficult book. I did my best, but it was like drinking from a fire hose. Because of that, this lady hated (and probably still hates) Zechariah.

In order to prevent this, I want to take this first sermon and talk a little bit about the grand theme of Colossians and give you a big picture before we begin to handle the details. By God’s grace, I want to show the beauty of this book as a whole in the hope that you would be excited to dive deeper into Paul’s flow of thought and his message.

I. Why call this study, “The Hope of Glory”?

- A. It is based on **Colossians 1:26-27**, which says, “*that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,²⁷ to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
- B. What does “The hope of glory” mean?
 1. Stating its meaning:
 - a) The technical/long-winded answer: The hope of glory is the absolute assurance on the part of the believer, by virtue of the person and work of Jesus Christ, that his eager anticipation of inheriting eternal life in Heaven will be truly and definitely realized.
 - b) The simplified answer: Being absolutely sure that because of Jesus I will go to Heaven when I die.
 2. Expanding on this:
 - a) The word “hope” here can connote one of two things:
 - (1) A desire or wish- “It’s my hope that they are serving ice cream in the cafeteria.”
 - (2) A prospect or chance- “Help me, Obi Wan Kenobi! You’re my only hope.”
 - (3) A confidence or expectation- “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.”
 - b) The word “glory” here refers to the beauty and greatness that is the final result of our salvation.
 - (1) The resurrection from the dead:
 - (a) **1 Corinthians 15:42-43** So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable *body*, it is raised an imperishable *body*; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power;
 - (b) **2 Timothy 2:10** For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and* with *it* eternal glory.
 - (2) The return of Christ
 - (a) **Colossians 3:4** When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Quote: “Christ in you” is glory begun, a sure pledge and earnest of a glory greater than you can yet conceive. If Christ be in you, you have the beginnings of heaven; you have, in fact, the excellence and flower of heaven, for there is no heaven but the glory of Christ.¹

II. What is the original setting for the book of Colossians?

A. Who wrote the book of Colossians?

1. The obvious answer

- a) Paul
- b) How do we know this?
 - (1) Because the book of Colossians claims to be written by Paul.
 - (2) Because there is no real reason to think otherwise.

Quote: “Until the nineteenth century no serious question about Pauline authorship seems to have been raised. Even then questions were raised only by a minority of scholars.”²

B. When was the book of Colossians written?

1. When Paul was in prison
 - a) Colossians 4:3, 10, 18

C. What was the problem?

1. The Colossians were well taught and correctly introduced to the hope of glory.
2. Then enemies of the truth began to undermine their hope of glory.
 - a) What are we talking about?
 - (1) **Colossians 2:8** See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.
 - b) This took these forms:
 - (1) Jewish opposition
 - (a) Circumcision
 - i) Colossians 2:11
 - ii) Colossians 3:11
 - (b) Legalism
 - i) Colossians 2:20-23
 - (c) Angel worship
 - i) Colossians 2:18
 - (d) The Sabbath
 - i) Colossians 2:16
 - (2) Greek opposition
 - (a) Proto-Gnosticism—We will get into the specifics of this more in the coming weeks/months.
 - i) What is Gnosticism?
 - ii) Why do you say “Proto-Gnosticism”?
 - iii) “real knowledge”
 - iv) “The elemental things of the world”
 - (3) Greek or Jewish problems
 - (a) Asceticism
 - i) **Colossians 2:20-23**

¹ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Our Omnipotent Leader.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 42 (1896), 240.

² Carson, D. A.; Moo, Douglas J. (2009-05-12). *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Kindle Locations 13227-13228). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Quote: Our best understanding of the false teaching, then, is that it was a blend of Jewish and Hellenistic teachings.³

III. What is the book of Colossians all about? (Main Themes)

A. The conversion of Sinners drives us to pray for those who have the hope of glory (Colossians 1:1-12)

1. The conversion of sinners spurs us on to pray more eagerly.

B. The supremacy of Christ is the guarantee of the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:13-29)

1. The supremacy of Who Christ is.
2. The supremacy of what Christ accomplished for us in His death.
3. The supremacy of what Christ does in our lives
4. The supremacy of the message that leads us to Christ.

C. The schemes of the world try to plunder the hope of glory. (Colossians 2:1-23)

1. Legalism robs you of the hope of glory.
2. Formalism robs you of the hope of glory.
3. Ceremonialism robs you of the hope of glory.
4. Heresy robs you of the hope of glory.

D. The Focus of our lives reveals our hope of glory. (Colossians 3:1-17)

1. Our Heavenly perspective is the expression of our hope of glory. (Colossians 3:1-3)
2. Our expectation of Christ's return is the expression of our hope of glory (Colossians 3:4)
3. Our spiritual growth is the expression of our hope of glory. (Colossians 3:5-17)

E. The Relationships of our lives express our conviction for the hope of glory. (Colossians 3:18-4:18)

1. How you work shows how you hope for glory.
2. How you submit to authority shows how you hope for glory.

IV. How can I best benefit from the study of Colossians?

A. Read and reread the text.

B. Be here (in person or online).

C. What if I am not yet a believer?

1. Let this sermon and all that will follow it define what it looks like to hope in glory.
2. Let this sermon and all that will follow it delineate who truly does have the hope of glory.
3. Let this sermon and all that will follow it drive you to desire the hope of glory.
4. Let this sermon and all that will follow it drive you to desperation for the hope of glory.
5. Let this sermon and all that will follow accurately describe the hope of glory.
 - a) It is not just a vague wish.
 - b) It is not just "pie in the sky"

³ Carson, D. A.; Moo, Douglas J. (2009-05-12). An Introduction to the New Testament (Kindle Location 13360). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.