

Christ in You, the Hope of Glory

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[0:00] Chapter 1. And we can read again at verse 26.

! The hope of glory.

We proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. When I was looking at this, I thought this particular, these verses, I thought we could look at it under three headings.

The first one was Christ in you, Christ in his people. And the second heading, his people in Christ, and then Christ and his people in glory.

Just to look at some things, some thoughts under these heads. Now, Colossae was quite a bit inland from Ephesus.

[1:35] And Paul had been a number of years in Ephesus, and he hadn't been to Colossae. But Epaphras was in Colossae, and he had been in Ephesus, and learned under the apostle, and then went to Colossae.

But there were things happening in Colossae. It's difficult to figure it all out in terms of the book. But there were certainly issues that had arisen. And it does look as if some of these issues related to people who were harping back to Judaism, and trying to take people with them, going back into rituals.

And there were others, it would appear, that were looking to angels, and appealing to angels. And Paul was very keen, although he didn't himself go to Colossae, he was keen to write to them, to clarify that Epaphras was a proper man of God and teacher, and that they should take on board what he was saying, because it was the truth.

So that was the thrust of it. But then he makes this point, when he's Thanksgiving and prayer section, where he, So from the day we heard it, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom, in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

[3:26] He's making these three points. First of all, that they would be filled with the Spirit. Then that they would be walking in a manner worthy of the Lord, bearing fruit.

And may you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might. So there's these three, almost dimensions to what he's asking for them.

That they would be filled with the knowledge of his will. And we heard last week about the need for knowledge. And Paul was looking for them to get the knowledge that they needed.

So that they would be enabled to walk as they ought. And in walking, that they would then also be filled with knowledge and wisdom.

And that they would be able to be ready for whatever came their way. Whether that was in persecution, as was the case with Paul himself, or whatever would come in the Lord's providence for them.

[4:31] He then moves on to the pre-eminence of Christ. Because when Paul is preaching the gospel, the focus of the gospel is Christ.

And he goes through that section, which is probably in the whole Bible, one of the most eminent sections that relate to the pre-eminence of Christ.

It's a wonderful section. And then he goes on talking about his ministry to the church. And that section that's talking about the pre-eminence of Christ, it's interesting the way that it talks, first of all, about Christ's relationship with the Father.

So there's an aspect of it that relates to, as it were, something which is outside of the world. It is from eternity.

And it's Christ's relationship with his Father, who sent him and he came willingly into the world. And of course, there is also the Spirit working through Christ and working in his people.

[5:42] So there's that dimension to it. Christ and his Father. Then there's the other aspect that relates to Christ and the creation, the whole of creation.

Christ was over it all. He was the co-creator of the universe. He was the one for whom it was made, in whom it was made because he was the one that was the creator of it, and he will be the final judge of it all.

So it talks about his relationship with everything that he has made. And it's always heartening to think that, although the devil has power, yet Christ is all-powerful, and he is over everything.

And I think in situations where we come across tragedy, it is always difficult to think of these things in relation to the knowledge of Christ and the fact that he is over all things and supreme.

But I think what we have to remember is that what we see, even in tragedy, is but a small part of a picture that he has and that we cannot really understand.

[7:07] There will come a time when we will understand the things that are hard for us in Providence today, but yet, right now, that is so difficult.

But he has woven the golden threads, and it is the big picture that reveals what he has done and what he will reveal one day. He then goes on to talk about Christ in relation to his body, the church, and he gives us these things that relate to that relationship, where he is the one who is over all things and is making peace by the blood of his cross.

But just going back to the verse that we were looking at, this mystery which is Christ in you. Now, it doesn't look as if it's a mystery in the sense that we would think of it a mystery.

It's a mystery in the sense that it has taken time to unravel or unveil because this was initiated, and we see it even in Genesis, where God is talking there about what's going to unfold in terms of salvation history.

But yet, it's not so manifest. I mean, there are all the regulations that go along with the Jews and the Jewish religion and Judaism that have gone along for centuries.

[8:40] But there came a point at which it all became clear. The pivot of all of history was when Christ came into this world. So, in his coming into the world, in his suffering in the world, in his death on the cross, in his resurrection from the dead, in his ascension to heaven, all of that is now revealed.

And that is what the gospel gives us. It gives us an understanding of the reality of what Christ has done.

And what a privilege we have that we have the gospel and we have Christ as its center. And what it talks about here is that it's Christ in you.

And that's the wonderful thing about it all. The fact that he has come into our experience. That we have the living Christ through his spirit coming into our hearts, changing us from aliens and from those who were against the Commonwealth of Israel, against the Church of God and of Christ, and now brought in and Christ in us.

The beauty about that is that it is a reality. We sometimes don't appreciate it. We perhaps don't think in terms of, oh, Christ and me.

[10:15] But that's the reality. He has come to live in our hearts. And he is the one that can now direct us.

But we have to acquiesce. And that's where we move on to us in Christ. It's maybe a strange way of putting it, but there's a sense in which Christ is in us because he has come and he has changed us so that he is now living in us.

We are a new creation in Christ Jesus. But we have to walk, we have to walk with him and in him in this world.

And Paul was praying for the people there that they would know, that they would have the knowledge of his presence of Christ in them, but that they would also walk so that they were walking in the way that they ought to walk.

And it's interesting, I came across this a couple of weeks ago, I was looking at a verse in Galatians where it was talking about walking in the Spirit. and there was two, two dimensions to the walking in the Spirit.

[11:39] The word apparently in Greek is different, so there was two Greek words, but one of them was relating to, as it were, the change in life that comes about when Christ comes in.

But the second one was talking about walking in the Spirit in the sense of walking behind the Spirit, as if you were marching, marching to the tune of the Holy Spirit working in your life.

And that's something that we ought to be conscious of as well as we think about our need for us, for Christ to be in us, but us to be in Christ.

Just to be recognizing that we have to be so careful, we have to be continually applying to the Holy Spirit to guide us in our walk, to keep us from going off the path, to keep us from going to the precipices where we are liable to go over.

Because the evil one is there, he is powerful, he will try to take us away from the truth, and we need to be in step with the Spirit as we walk along life's road.

[13:06] So there is Christ in us and us in Christ as we walk through this Christian life that is now ours. And it's so important in terms of the witness that we have that we are indeed walking in and with the Holy Spirit, that he will guide us and keep us because the last dimension we are talking about here is the one where he mentions there that they would be mature in Christ.

So he is wanting the maturity, he is wanting them to grow and there is almost a cyclical thing here. you begin with the knowledge as Colm was talking about before last week.

You begin with the knowledge and it goes on to the influence that it has on your life and you have to acquiesce, you have to participate in it, you have to try and do your best in the recognition that it is the Spirit alone that can keep you.

But that itself brings maturity and the maturity brings more knowledge and godliness into your life and it is a wonderful privilege to think along these lines but one of the things that it does as well is it brings a consciousness of self.

Self is such a devastating, devastating part of us and while we are in this world we will always have it.

[14:45] it seeks its own glory when what we really need to be doing is looking to the glory of the preeminent one, the glory of Christ so that in everything that we do we do it with a view to his glory and not our own.

the last point that I was wanting to refer to was the fact that it goes on because we have a hope we have a hope of glory it's not a hope like we might have a hope well I hope it's better tomorrow than it is today in terms of the weather that's a hope that's just a vain hope but the hope that's being referred to here is founded on the reality of what Christ is in his relationship with God it's founded on the reality of who he is as the co-creator of the universe and it's founded on the hope that we have because he is the head of the church and over the whole church and he will take it to himself he will take his bride to be with him where he will be because he has gone to prepare a place for his own that is the hope that we have the hope that we have in Christ of glory and what a wonderful hope it is and in a sense that should guide us that should lead us as we look to that glorious hope and expanse beyond our lives we should be looking at everything that we do in the light of the glory that awaits us and the glory that is his and ought to be at least is in part given to us here

I remember my mother she was a herring girl at one time and they used to go to the herring to the various places from Lairwick down to Lowstuff and Yarmouth and when they would go they would get a shilling tea and they would get that and it would keep them it would pay for the digs for this week and they would get that just to keep them going but there was at the end of the time at the end of the season they would get the bounty they would get what was kept for them and it's just a reminder to us of what this is we can see now through a glass darkly but yet we know that in this hope of glory that we have in Christ that there is a guarantee that there is a hope of glory which goes beyond anything that we can even understand or imagine and how thankful we ought to be that that is our reality may God bless to us these thoughts there was one thing that I came across today that I thought

I might just mention there was our lady Anita Meston and she's a teacher down in north of England and this is in relation to the suffering side of the walk Paul talked about it there but it can be a reality in everyone's life this lady was asked by one of the pupils if she was pro-abortion and she gave the truth she said she was pro-life she has lost her job and that can be the reality for people even in our country today you speak the truth you lose your job so it's something that we have to be aware of it's not just these persecution issues are not just pertinent to the Saudi Arabias or the North Koreans or whatever it is in the world where there is persecution it's coming to our country big time as well and we have to be aware of that but we have to be prepared to stand even as the apostle was asking that these people would do so but it's based on our understanding of the truth of God's word

we'll close singing in
Psalm 25 away