

Saved In Hope

Romans 8:18-25

Jeff Solwold

We as believers, we have place within us, by God, a “living hope” at salvation, This living hope sustains the expectation of an imminent rapture that we watch and wait for. As believers, we persevere through trials and sufferings due to “living hope,” through which we “eagerly await” the redemption of our bodies. Our hope in the midst of sufferings, make known to the unsaved world there is true hope to be found, which can be their’s, too, if they receive the free gift of salvation and be reconciled unto God.

- The meaning of living hope and how it is different from worldly hope.
- Hope provided at salvation is necessary for perseverance in the life of a believer.
- The assurance a believer has regarding his glorification.
- Doctrine of hope introduced in Romans 4 and 5.
- Hope in sufferings.
- The significance of “eagerly awaiting” adoption.
- Consider how I respond to this hope.

I've entitled this message 'Saved in Hope' intending to reiterate the important role that "God given hope" plays in my life presently as a believer in Jesus Christ.

This is the apostle Paul's culminating point here in the first part of Romans, where he has laid out a thorough explanation of salvation, to which he now adds. "For we were saved unto **"this hope," literally, here in verse 24.** Using a word that speaks of much more than just "wishful thinking".

For the past five years one of the most "searched" terms on Google has been the word "hope". It's outpaced peoples search for "political" movements or for a "technological breakthroughs". It's even outpaced peoples search on "how to make money". Where do I find "hope"? As though I'm gonna google hope and there it is! how to have hope in "three easy steps".

As Paul explains here, "hope" is not something that can be found in this world or achieved by searching. Hope, it's something that must be "given" to me from outside of this world - by the source of hope Himself.

Upon receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, there is "born" within me a "supernatural expectation" that I never had before But it's been provided by God, **verse 25 says,** for the purpose of "perseverance." Something that I as a Christian, here in the United States, am gonna need more and more of this should the Lord tarry. And if I as a believer seek to rely upon anything else in his present crazy world for perseverance, a politician, a great economy, perfect physical health, anything else "apart from" the **imminent return** of Jesus Christ for his church... I will be hopeless like the rest of the world.

It is clear throughout the New Testament, especially in passages like **Ephesians 2,** that as a believer, I am **"saved by grace through faith."** Paul adds to that here in **Romans 8** the third crucial element of a believer's salvation, **that I am saved by grace through faith "unto hope."**

Peter uses the same language when he says in **1 Peter 1:3** that: **"God, according to his abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."**

When you contrast what the New Testament calls "living hope" with how the unsaved world refers to hope - it's totally different. As a pastor 28 years, I've spent many hours outside emergency rooms or waiting on somebody's lengthy surgery, when the doctor or nurse comes out and you ask "how's it going?" "Well everything's stable, we're running some tests, monitoring vital signs." As long as there are signs of life there's "hope, as long as there's physical life "hope" is "held out" as a possibility.

God in His word "turns that around," he says, where He has "awakened hope" in a person "that" is the evidence of true life, eternal life. That's living hope as the Bible calls it. It's what God has implanted within every born again believer at conversion. It's what I am to be relying upon presently in order for him to fulfill his purposes "in" me, "for" me, "through" me as His child here on earth!

Through faith in Christ I'm put on the path of eternal life, through this living hope I'm kept on that path daily.

And so, what does this "living hope" that the Bible speaks so much about consist of? Hope itself can be kind of an ambiguous spiritual concept especially when the world's definition, the definition I've grown up with, is completely opposite of what scripture teaches.

“Hope,” as defined by the unsaved world, is an intense desire for something to come to pass. “It may or may not come to pass” but I really hope that it does! I want it to! That’s not Biblical hope! Thankfully! It’s why the world is hopeless because everything that people “hope” will happen usually doesn’t. And even if it does, it’s only temporary and unfulfilling. And so most people give up “hope,” especially today in a world that promises so much but delivers very little. It’s easy to become cynical and jaded.

“Living hope.” however, that God has given me is based upon certainty. It’s based upon the assurance of what has happened, as is taught here in **Romans 8**. “Living hope” is not just something in the future that I’m “leaning on” presently to “get me through till then.” If I am born again - I am eagerly waiting for that which I already possess! “**The first fruits of the spirit,**” Paul **calls it in verse 23**. All I’m waiting for is a “change in body” that will take place at the **rapture** or at death. “**Not only that, but we also who have the first fruit of the spirit even we ourselves groan within ourselves eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body,**” **verse 23 says**. I can’t wait!

But here in Romans, after explaining ‘the need’ for salvation to begin with in the first couple chapters, Paul then develops the doctrine of justification that which took place when I repented of my sins and received God’s forgiveness and acceptance into his eternal righteous all through Christ’s willing sacrifice.

That took place for me on January 4, 1993, when my wife and I were listening to a live broadcast on the radio of an evangelist sharing the gospel. We had achieved a lot of things we had “hoped” for in this life - but it had all come up empty. We had no hope left and were trying to find relief from our hopelessness through drugs and alcohol. The person speaking on the radio was holding out an offer to be “saved” from our emptiness. An offer that seemed “too good to be true.” But being broken and lost - in hindsight, I can see how God had been pursuing us and we received His free gift and ‘true hope,’ living hope was ‘born’ within us.

Growing up Catholic, I’d never read the book of Romans, never read the Bible. I had no clue what justification was so I didn’t understand what had happened. But I did have a “supernatural hope” all of a sudden that I’d never experienced before that has only continued to grow as I’ve grown in the Lord.

It’s interesting that since doctors began doing heart transplants, there’s been a multitude of cases reported where the person after receiving a new heart they take on unique personality changes. All of a sudden they start liking classical music when they didn’t before - or they develop some new taste in food or in a different fashion they never had before.

That’s not what God changes in me at conversion. But I’m given a new spiritual heart. What God places in me is a desire for eternity. All of a sudden I long for that, I long to be with God.

I understand now that it is what God instilled in me as his child to help me persevere through what the Bible calls sanctification. Speaking of my present relationship of God in which I learn “to access His grace” as I battle the flesh, the world and the devil... all through the power of the Holy Spirit, Who lives within me. It’s an intense battle so often, but thankfully, I’ve been “**saved unto hope**” as it says in **verse 24**. Anytime, the Lord is gonna deliver me out of this! Speaking of the third and final aspect of salvation that Paul speaks of here at the end of **Romans 8** - also known as “**glorification.**”

“The hope of glory” as he puts it in **Colossians 1:27**.

“**When this corruptible body will put on incorruption and this immortal will put on immortality**” **1 Corinthians 15:53 says**.

An event that is emphasized three times in this passage as being 'eagerly awaited for' by every born again believer. A phrase that speaks of something I already possess like items I purchase on Amazon - they're already mine, it's just a matter of arrival. That's the assurance that I am given by God at conversion in order to overcome the present trials and attacks. An assurance that the world doesn't have and will never know.

In ancient times, when people traveled mainly by ship, if someone would die at sea they would attach heavy weights to their corpse and lower them into the sea. All the while their lifeless body was being carried to the bottom of the ocean, it had no awareness of it's sinking state due to it being dead.

It's the same "spiritually," when I'm "dead in trespasses and sins" as Ephesians 2:1 describes the unsaved person. In that state, I have no awareness that I am continually sinking downwards nor could I since I'm already dead. It's actually very merciful of God to not even "awaken" 'living hope' within a person until that hope is assured at salvation, until I'm saved in other words. People in hell, as awful as that will be, they will never have even known such a thing as a living hope. Pretty merciful actually that people destined to an eternity apart from God will never have known "life" with God to begin with like those who serve Him do and cherish.

Those in that state will have no concept of what they're missing. Just as I had no clue what it meant to be born again until I was born again. And then to all my unsaved friends and family I was a complete stranger all of a sudden while at the same time I could "relate to" and have instant koinonia with born again strangers! And they were the only ones who could "relate to" this desire I had all of a sudden to go to heaven.

I remember watching an interview with a big successful CEO of a famous corporation. Out of the blue they asked him, "Do you think you'll go to heaven?" You could tell it caught him off guard. "Well...ah...gee... I guess if being a good person counts... I haven't done everything right, but I think I have a shot. But I'm in no hurry to get there and find out anytime soon." He joked.

Personally, I never remember "desiring" to go to heaven before I got saved like I do now. That's where my citizenship is as Philippians 3 says. Not that's where it will be one day but that's where it is already! Heaven is my home now and it's from there, as Philippians says, "that I am awaiting my Lord to transform this lowly body, that it may be conformed to His glorious body." Philippians 3:21.

That certainty is emphasized by Paul here in Romans chapter 8 in the fact that Paul refers to a believers glorification in past tense.

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover who He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom made justified, these He also glorified." (Past tense) Romans 8:29-30

When I think of glorification, it's easy to be hoping in something that takes place "after I die" which removes the sense of imminency that I have been given at conversion and need to be walking in.

According to this, I am “positionally” glorified, a glorified soul awaiting my new body in an **imminent rapture, imminent glorification**, something that can happen “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.” 1 Corinthians 15:45 Paul says.

Paul introduces the doctrine of hope here in **Romans back in chapter 4** (if you're following along turn there). This “divine hope” will never appear rational to the unbelieving world who have no hope. They will never understand it because it is given by God from outside this world. That is illustrated through the life of Abraham here in the Bible where it is described as a paradox. In **verse 18 of chapter 4**, it speaks of Abraham as someone, who, “**contrary to hope... hoped**” it says.

“So that, he became the father of many nations according to what was spoken, ‘So shall your descendants be.’” Romans 4:18b

This is referring, of course, to the promise that Abraham was given that he would be “**father of many nations**” “after” he and his wife, Sarah, were “beyond” the age of producing children. “Way beyond!” Impossible! So Abraham is presented as “the figurehead” so to speak of all those who, even when it is impossible from any earthly perspective for there to be any hope, he is representative of all those who choose to hope “in Him” Who “**gives life from the dead**” (Romans 4:17 says) “**and calls those things which do not exist**” (it says) “**as though they do exist.**” Such as calling born again believers “glorified” while we remain in earthly bodies.

What Abraham and Sarah placed their hope in would've sounded crazy to anyone else. That's because “Divine hope” is not just “different” than earthly hope it is contrary to it. This is the thing you learn, the thing Paul points out in his epistle. It will not make sense on the earthly level. And yet contrary to all the things that people put their hope in here on earth, that are uncertain and temporary, the living hope that God gives believers, implants in believers, is so “assured” that it is always spoken of in “past tense” as already fulfilled. (That is why I need to walk in that confidence, that is why I need to walk in that assurance as I am moving forward especially in these days. I am looking at it with God given assurance that I am going to be taken out of here.) Such as here, it's not “I will make you a father of many nations”, but “**I have made you a father of many nations.**”

All earthly evidence left no hope for Abraham to believe that such a thing was even possible. But, “**contrary to earthly hope,**” verse 18, Abraham set his hope on what God had promised.

Now, as a born again believer, “I’m” given an even “greater” advantage than Abraham had living “this side” of Christ’s incarnation, resurrection, and ascension back into heaven. Through the Lord's substitutionary death on the cross, God is able to now “instill” that living hope of glory “within me.” “**I am sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**” Ephesians 1 says. “**The “guarantee” of the redemption of the purchased possession.**” It is not something outside that I am looking for, God puts it within me, in my heart. That's what comes alive when I get saved. And it is in that living hope of glory” within me that I will find my greatest source of rejoicing, no matter “what” my present earthly situation.

Look at chapter 5. “**Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**” (Romans 5:1-2)

When I'm saved, “**justified by faith,**” “**having peace with God**” through my Lord Jesus Christ, it is due to all that my Lord has provided for me, “**that I have access,**” it says in vs 2, into the only place where I will find my present joy and rejoicing, as it says, through “standing in the

expectation of **imminent glorification** **"in the hope of the glory of God."** Standing in the "assurance" that, at any moment, I'm gonna be with the Lord and glory.

Now if everything in "this" life we're perfect, then "my hope of glory" of leaving here and going to be with the Lord Who saved me, "that" wouldn't produce much rejoicing if I had some perfect life. It would be too easy and for many Christians today it is. It's too easy to revert "back" to thinking that "I'm gonna find my 'joy' and 'rejoicing' back in the things of this hopeless world."

You ever see pictures of George Soros? Now there's a "joy filled" man. Somebody who supposedly has attained everything in this world. It looks like the most painful thing for him to do is smile. Someone once said, "You wanna know what God thinks of money look at the people He gives it to." Their miserable.

This world, and all it has to offer will never satisfy. It can never give me the joy and rejoicing only found in the presence of God's glory and grace... "the hope of glory"... "into which" I've been given access by faith, **Romans 5:2** says. And God, knowing that, and knowing my propensity to fail to access my hope of glory, He has deemed it necessary, ironically, for me as His child, to be subjected many times to even greater "hostility" and "opposition" from this fallen world, now that I am his child then I did before I was his child.

Instead of "preserving" me from this world's evil and allowing me to get a false impression of this place, God allows me to experience more of it's adverse effects, now that I am a Christian, because the more I hate this world the more I'm gonna be "anticipating" and "rejoicing" in an **imminent rapture** as I should be. "Oh Lord, that's right, You said Your coming!" When I understand this, he says in **verse 3 of chapter 5**, **"Not only will I be rejoicing in the 'hope of glory' in imminent rapture,** but I will also **"rejoice in" or "glory in" (the same Greek verb in verse 3 as in verse 2), I "rejoice in" tribulation, verse 3 says, "knowing that tribulation produces perseverance and perseverance, character, and character, hope." Romans 5:3b-4**

It's been said that, "Hope cannot arise from a heart that's "never" been broken" nor "can hope arise from a heart that's "only" been broken." "Hope can only arise from a heart that's been 'broken and mended,' 'broken and mended,' 'broken and mended' "over and over." That's the "progression" outlined here in **verses 3 and 4 Romans 5.**

I can "glory" or rejoice in tribulations, in trials and hardships, not because they're pleasant and I enjoy pain and suffering. I don't! But, I rejoice in them knowing that it's by being "broken and mended," being allowed to be "broken and mended," over and over. I rejoice knowing "that's" where my spiritual "perseverance" is being produced. This is where I am growing. God is maturing me unto a purpose. Not just for no purpose at all.

A spiritual perseverance that is building my "spiritual character." Building a life in which I am "rejoicing continually" in an imminent rapture. That's where I live. It's what "carries me through" every present trial and opposition. Rejoicing in the fact that "this is only temporary" and at any moment my glorification will be complete. And it's not just some wishful thinking like the world's version of hope but as **verse 5** goes on to say...

"Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." Romans 5:5

The indwelling Holy Spirit makes it possible for me to receive God's love 'now,' presently, in that ever increasing relationship. Love that's being "poured out in my heart in full measure."

The problem is with “me” and this flesh I dwell in. It severely “hinders” my ability to experience all that God has “poured out.” That’s why I’m “longing for” the “upgrade,” the permanent, glorified model. I’m already rejoicing in what “that” is gonna be like. And if the “hope” itself doesn’t “disappoint” as **verse 5** says, “what will the ‘fulfillment’ of the hope” bring? That’s where my thinking is “drawn to,” things above not things on earth.

And it is with regards to understanding the “present role” that earthly hardships are playing in my new life in Christ. It’s with regards to my “understanding” that, that the apostle Paul employs great “reasoning.”

Turning back to chapter 8, “**For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Romans 8:18**

“I consider” (logizomai), where we get the word logic. He is just using common logic, he is saying. He’s speaking of dealing with “reality” not just “speculation.” “Calculating” the facts realistically, not just on the level of emotion. It’s very important! He returns to the topic he had introduced there in chapter 5, in thinking things through logically, he’s saying, “**the suffering of this present time**”... they have “no basis of comparison.” If I were to try and compare them somehow, there’s no basis of comparison between earthly trials, “and the eternal glory that is to be revealed in those of us who are born again.”

You read the book of **Acts** and the “lists” of Paul’s “sufferings” in **2 Corinthians 6** and **2 Corinthians 11**, all the things Paul went through, and all the things he gave up in **Philippians 3**. Paul thankfully risked these things for us. It’s not as though he had an easy time of it as a Christian here on earth. “Yeah, easy for you to say Paul. You don’t know what I’m going through.” No, Paul was especially equipped to speak on this most important topic we have yet to face persecution in our country on levels that many Christians face worldwide. That, of course, could change at any time and passages of scripture like this will take on much greater significance. The sufferings that I’m going through, they are not worthy to be compared.

Paul develops this thought in **versus 19 through 21**, which I’ll read from King James version where the Greek word “Kateesis” is translated creature instead of “creation.”

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who have subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. Romans 8:19-21

I read from the King James version because it seems as though it captures Paul’s “line of reasoning” here better of how “as a new ‘**creature**’ in Christ, having been born again, “it is my ‘**earnest expectation**’” **verse 19**, of my Lord’s any minute return to glorify his redeemed saints. It is only “that,” that will not just “hold me up” through present sufferings, but that is what will allow the Holy Spirit to be creating in me an ever increasing “joy” that I will not experience any other way as Christ’s follower.

“For the earnest expectation of the creature...” is how the King James version translates **verse 19** using the Greek word “Kateesis” in the same way that Paul uses it in **Galatians 6:15**: **“For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”** Same word speaking of a born again believer as a new “creature” in Christ.

Or in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone be in Christ, they are a brand new creature all things have passed away behold all things have become new." That is the way the same word is used here according to King James version translators.

Carrying on the point started in **verse 18** and as he has been developing it throughout the epistle that... I as a new creature, a "glorified soul" presently living in a fallen physical body, I am... "**earnestly expecting**" and "**eagerly awaiting**," **verse 19**, the "manifestation" or the "bodily glorification" of the "sons of God."

"For the creature," **verse 20**, "me" as a born again, new creature in Christ, I have been "**subjected**" **verse 20** says, presently, "**to futility**" or "**vanity**" King James version. Speaking of the "**present sufferings**" **verse 18** is talking about, that cannot be "compared" to what awaits. Even though I'm God's child, I am "subjected" to a present state of trials and failures: a "subjection" Paul says, again at the end of **verse 20**, that is allowed by God in order to produce "hope," or "unto hope." Unto a "greater and greater desire" to be taken out of this evil world of trials and opposition.

"Because the creature," **verse 21**, "itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

I am subjected to present suffering by God's design so as to "manifest" the only true hope that is gonna be found in this world. To manifest that "to" this world, **verse 20** is saying. As a "new creature" in Christ, **verse 21**, I alone have had "awakened" in me this "assured deliverance," something the unsaved world is "looking for" and "cannot find." But I live in the "certainty" of being "delivered" from the bondage of corruption, **verse 21** is saying. A certainty that an unbelieving neighbor or unbelieving coworker, unsaved family member doesn't have. It's why they're terrified to die, just as I had no hope before I was saved.

The unsaved world also has no hope of any future freedom, as referred to as: "**the glorious liberty of the children of God**," **verse 21**. Speaking of the freedom we have that awaits me in a glorified state. Freedom from sin and evil and from death and from pain and suffering. What a glorious day that will be! But, the unsaved world is "hopeless" and would have no concept even of anything hopeful "apart from" genuine followers of Jesus Christ. Not just being saved, but "rejoicing while being subjected to the same futility of this fallen world." God subjected us "**Not willingly**," **verse 20** says, but by God's design.

Now in **verse 22**, he does refer to creation as a whole in making a contrast "between" those of us who are new creatures in Christ and the rest of fallen creation.

"For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit even we ourselves groan within ourselves eagerly waiting for the adoption that is the redemption of our body." Romans 8:22-23

The "**whole creation**" refers to the entire physical creation within which born again saints, such as ourselves, are **eagerly awaiting** the fulfillment of our glorification. We are a brand new creature. A glorified soul in a fallen body. Out of this whole fallen creation we presently live in, "only" we have a guaranteed "future hope" "implanted" within us already so as to be put on display. "All of physical creation," including unsaved human beings, "groan in labor," **verse 22**, "with birth pains together until now."

The idea in these two verses (**22-23**) is that "all" of creation is subject to natural degeneration as well as man made forms of destruction as a result of the curse that came in the garden of Eden causing a "groaning." "When is it gonna end?" "is it ever gonna end?"

Earthquakes, floods, droughts, tornadoes, hurricanes, on and on. All the destructive forces that people are subjected to. Not “original” to God's original design, but all introduced at the fall in **Genesis 3** to where that's what's normal. That's just the world we live in. Along with wars, terrorism, poverty, famine, disease, death itself! None of which were a part of the original creation, but because of the “curse” of sin, they only increase over time

“And the world continues to groan together,” **verse 22**, collectively, “looking for some kind of hope.” But as we know, there is no hope apart from Jesus Christ. “We” alone, born again Christians, carry “within” us, the “assured deliverance,” the only true “hope” there is. But even we “**who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,**” even we ourselves, **verse 23** says, “**groan within ourselves.**” Because we are in physical bodies in a physical world.

I groan as I eagerly await my “adoption,” it says, “the redemption of this mortal body.” The world groans. “When is this gonna end?” I groan. “When is it gonna begin?” “**When will my glorified spirit receive my glorified body?**” I groan for the day when I will be “**fully translated**” into a **glorified state**. For me personally, it can't come soon enough!

Paul sums up his line of reasoning here in **versus 24-25**, “**For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.**”

Thus this “earnestly expected,” “eagerly awaited for” hope is portrayed as an integral part of my present salvation. Essential for “preservation” through the various trials I face as a believer. The only manifestation of “living hope” in the world presently. Once I'm taken into glory, once what I hope for is seen, “hope” will no longer be a part of my relationship with the Lord. But right now, it is, it is the key aspect of my relationship with Jesus Christ so as to be a reflection for the world around me. “**I've been saved “unto” this hope.**”

So what am I doing with it? Is a question.
Is it producing the expected perseverance spiritually?
Is it producing the expected perseverance through various trials?
Am I rejoicing in it? Cause this is what Paul is talking about.
Is that being manifest to the unsaved world around me?
Or will Jesus come unto me as a thief in the night?

“Sanctify the Lord God in your heart,” Peter says, **1Peter 3:15**, “**be ready always to give a defense to everyone who asked a reason for the hope that is in me with gentleness and with respect.**” Thank you!

Saved In Hope

Romans 8:18-25

Jeff Solwold

We as believers, we have place within us, by God, a “living hope” at salvation, This living hope sustains the expectation of an imminent rapture that we watch and wait for. All believers, we persevere through trials and sufferings due to living hope, through which we “eagerly await” the redemption of our bodies. Our hope in the midst of sufferings, make known to the unsaved world there is true hope to be found, which can be their's, too, if they receive the free gift of salvation and be reconciled unto God.

- The meaning of living hope and how it is different from worldly hope.
- Hope provided at salvation is necessary for perseverance in the life of a believer.
- The assurance a believer has regarding his glorification.
- Doctrine of hope introduced in Romans 4 and 5.
- Hope in sufferings.
- The significance of “eagerly awaiting” adoption.
- Consider how I respond to this hope.