

INTRODUCTION

1. To be declared righteous before the Holy God is the present possession of all who have believed in Christ as the true and only Sacrifice for sin (v. 1). This results in peace with God. That too is a present possession! *US 1. US 2. US 3. Peace, access, rejoicing. Sincerity does not make reality!*
2. Along with peace is "access." This is the right of entry into grace, a position which we have at the moment of salvation and retain forever (perfect tense). All glory to God.
3. Paul continues his list of blessed results from a position of being justified before God. The verb "rejoicing" is a present indicative (some claim subjunctive or hortatory) which adds a third dimension, namely, we keep on rejoicing. That's wonderful! In what is the believer's continual rejoicing? Study it:-

1. HOPE OF GLORY--ULTIMATEa. A priority

When Scripture is read, it becomes clear that the issue of heaven is a true priority. An illustration of this is given regarding the Ephesian believers. The account is given in Acts 19. Later Paul wrote to them and of all the doctrines of the Word, the idea of the Word, the idea of "the hope of his calling" was first (cf. Eph. 1:15-19).

b. A place

Thank God, true believers have the hope of an eternity with the Lord (Jn 14:1-3). Heaven is our ultimate goal. This is what it means to be an "heir of salvation" (Heb. 1:14), to enjoy one's inheritance (1 Pet. 1:4). While a book of symbols, Revelation, nonetheless describes the eternal state (chapt. 21, 22). This is our "hope of glory." We sing about it (e.g. Blessed Assurance, Face to Face, In the Sweet Bye and Bye) and sense the reality of it all. Hallelujah, freedom from sin at last! *Sheel is never hell. Cat.*

2. HOPE OF GLORY--INTERMEDIATEa. Contrasted

False systems of religion and the pagan world only has fear for its devotees. A visit to peoples who have not submitted to the Gospel of God's grace is to observe the dread of death. The Devil's systems have the Christian doctrine of hope in death.

b. Confessed

The Bible teaches a believer's taken from darkness into light, from Satan's kingdom into God's Son's kingdom at conversion (Col. 1:3). Christ alone is the means by which this transfer takes place (Jn 10:9). Christ's blood cleanses from all sin (1 Jn 1:7). On this basis, when a believer dies he goes immediately to the Lord's presence (2 Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:20-23).

NOTE: In the O.T. the place for the departed dead is called sheol. The word occurs 65 times. It does not mean the grave. The N.T. uses hades for the same place, but with the idea of two compartments—a place for wicked and one for righteous (Abraham's bosom, paradise). After the resurrection of Christ, the wicked remain in hades, but the righteous go immediately to be with Christ (now where paradise is, 2 Cor. 12:2-4). Nowhere in Scripture is there any idea that departure from this life is without consciousness.

3. HOPE OF GLORY--PRESENT

a. Defined

A well known proverb states, "If it were not for hope, the heart would break." That is an explanation for our text. For the worlding, hope is little more than "desire" (e.g. I hope I see you). Nietzsche said "Hope is the worst evil for it provides the torment of man." A proverb says, "Hope is a good breakfast, but a bad supper." For the believer, hope, like salvation, is a present possession.

b. Desired

Admittedly, no country is perfect. Human governments all fail. But wherever the true Gospel of Christ has been preached, social, economic, and well being has been its fruit. Follow the missionary and you follow hospitals, human dignity, etc. In essence: HOPE.

CONCLUSION

Paul wrote the Colossian believers--1:27. That is future and present. A possessing believer is one who knows the truth of John 7:38. A child of God is among the children of hope. Amen.

Phil 2:13