

Theme: The Saving Work of Christ culminates with the glorification of believers.

Title: The Glorification of Believers; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58

We've looked at our Lord Jesus from His eternal glory to His incarnation, His humiliation (the things suffered on our behalf while He was on earth), and His exaltation. I thought it fitting to conclude this short series on the eternal benefit that was gained for believers because of His saving work on our behalf.

In the weeks before the Christmas season we talked about justification (a one-time event), sanctification (a progressive work by the Spirit), and we've mentioned glorification mentioning that it, too, is a one-time event.

But we haven't spent much time in this pulpit every expounding on the glory of... our future glorification! It is important to know that when Christ redeemed us He did not only redeem our souls, but He redeemed our whole being, including our bodies! Now get this, Christ's work of redemption toward us will not be complete until our bodies are liberated completely and entirely from the effects of the fall and brought into the state of pure goodness—the way humanity was originally created. The redemption of our bodies will happen only when Christ returns and raises our bodies from the dead. Until then, while we live in these earthly bodies, we wait for that day. That is our blessed hope as Romans 8:23-24 reminds us! That is the day when our glorification is complete! That is the day that we will shout in one voice, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1 Cor.15:54-55).

Glorification is the final step of the application of redemption. It will happen when Christ returns and raises from the dead the bodies of all believers who have ever died throughout history, reuniting those bodies with their souls. But first, let understand something about how Christ's death affected the death of a believer.

I) Why do Christians die?

- A) We (Christians) live in a fallen world, which is subject to decay, suffering, illness, the tragic effects of natural disasters, the corruption caused by our own sin and the sin of others, etc.
 - 1) The effects of sin that harm our bodies have not been removed.
 - 2) And death is the last enemy to be destroyed. 1 Cor. 15:26, "The last enemy to be destroyed is death."
 - (a) After the Great White Throne judgement "Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire." (Rev.20:14a)
- B) The death of a believer is different from that of an unbeliever.
 - 1) Death is not punishment for a believer. Jesus paid the penalty of death for our sins! NOT A PENALTY.
 - (a) Romans 8:1, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."
 - 2) An unbeliever's death is a wage they pay for their sins. (Rom. 6:23)
- C) Death is the end of sin for the believer.
 - 1) Suffering is God's implement to sanctify the believer. The death of a believer is the final suffering in this body it is the last work of sanctification for the believer by the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) 1 Peter 4:1, "Therefore since Christ suffered in His body (even unto death) arm yourselves with the same attitude, because he who has suffered (even unto death) in the body is finished with sin."
- D) Believers should face death not with a "live at all costs" mentality but with a "please God mentality."
 - 1) The believer's highest goal must be to please God at all costs. (**2 Cor. 5:9**)
 - 2) To honor God in our bodies whether by life or by death. (**Philippians 1:20**)

II) Death for believers. What part does fear, joy, hope and sorrow play in the death of believers?

- A) Fear. No place for fear because of the certainty of immediate presence with Christ upon our passing!
 - 1) **Heb. 2:14-15**: "Now since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity, so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery to their fear of death."
 - 2) Joy and hope: **2 Corinthians 5:8**: "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."
 - (a) **Phil. 1:21-23**. Something to look forward to—the hope of Presence! "Better to be with Christ!"

III) Death for Unbelievers

- A) The unbeliever goes directly to eternal punishment upon physical death.
 - 1) **Luke 16:24-26.** The Rich man and Lazarus. Rich man went directly to eternal torment.
 - 2) **Heb. 9:27** teaches that there is no holding cell. "Once to die then the judgment."
 - 3) At the final judgment there will be a reuniting of the unbeliever's soul and the body as Jesus said in John 5:28-30 that the evil doers will rise to be condemned. Paul, in Acts 24:15, "...there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just (righteous in Christ) and the unjust (those who stand on their own merit). And **Revelation 20:11-15** is graphic as to the final judgment of those who without Christ.

B) So, let's talk about the resurrection of believers.

IV) Glorification is the eternal destiny of every person who has ever been saved by Jesus Christ in history!

- A) It is the final step in the application of the work of redemption by Christ Jesus for us.
 - 1) There will be a final transformation of our bodies when He appears (at the rapture): **Phi. 3:20-21**
 - 2) 1 Cor. 15:51-52: "Listen, I tell you a mystery: we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed.
 - 3) **READ 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17** This is the moment when we are caught up in the sky and receive our new resurrected, glorified bodies.
- B) What will our resurrected, glorified bodies be like?
 - 1) **1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 49**
 - (a) "imperishable"—no expiration date; no corruption, no aging, no sickness, etc.
 - (b) It's humanity as God originally intended in its created goodness.
 - (i) Mark 13:43: Jesus described these like this: "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." Radiant, beautiful, flawless, brilliant in countenance and soul.
 - (c) Raised in Power (**1 Cor. 15:43**)
 - (i) Optimum physical, mental, spiritual health, willing and desirous to conform to the will of God.
 - (ii) Free of disease, infirmities, guilt, etc. **CHRIST BORE OUR SINS, INFIRMITIES AND AILMENTS.**
 - (d) Raised a "spiritual body" (**1 Cor. 15:44**)
 - (i) Not meaning that we are floating spiritual ghosts. NO! We already know that we have bodies.
 - (ii) It does mean that this new glorified body will be perfectly suited for willing subjection to the Holy Spirit, and perfectly responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - (iii) A body that corresponds to the very goodness of the original creation to be like Christ in every way.
- C) Conclusion:
 - 1) What a blessed hope we have in Christ. He suffered extreme humiliation before God and man on our behalf ending in His death on the cross. He was raised from the dead and God exalted Him above every name in heaven and on earth and under the earth. And He did it for us.
 - 2) His saving work meant our redemption. We were without God and without hope in the world. But God brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves. And one day we will be glorified, given new resurrection bodies perfectly suitable to inhabit the new heavens and the new earth, in perfect unity with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit!