

Future Glory

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[0:00] Good morning. My name is Matthew Capone and I'm one of the pastors here at Cheyenne Mountain Presbyterian Church. And it's my joy to bring God's word to you this morning.

We're continuing together our series in the book of Romans. And you'll remember that Romans is a letter written by the Apostle Paul in the 50s AD.

And it's called Romans because it is written to the churches in the city of Rome. And it is about the gospel. It's about the good news of Jesus' life and death and resurrection.

And we're continuing along in chapter 8, which is about life in the Spirit. That is the Holy Spirit. Last week, verses 14 through 17, we began to look at all the benefits that come to us from the Holy Spirit.

And we saw that we are adopted as God's children, God's heirs. But then we ended with a little bit of a catch. Verse 17 said this. So that's great that we experience glory, but first, suffering.

[1:16] So our question this week, and this is what Paul sets out to answer in verse 18. Okay, there is glory coming. How do we make it through the suffering in the meantime?

We do have glory to look forward to. How do we walk through suffering now? So with that, I invite you to turn with me to Romans chapter 8, verse 18.

And you can find that on page 7 of your worship guide. Remember as we come to this that this is God's word. Proverbs chapter 30 tells us every word of God proves true.

It's a shield to those who take refuge in him. So that's why we read now Romans chapter 8, verse 18. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

I invite you to pray with me as we come to this portion of God's word. Our Father in heaven, we do again thank you and praise you for gathering us together as your people.

[2:29] We thank you for giving us your word that you instruct us and guide us. And we ask for your help, the help of your Holy Spirit this morning, that we would be able to understand and believe your words.

I am certainly not powerful enough to fix our eyes on heaven. And so I ask that you would do that by your Holy Spirit. I ask that you would give ordinary words that provide us with extraordinary vision. A vision of the future that you were preparing for us, your people. We ask all of these things in the mighty name of Jesus Christ. Amen. I, as some of you know, bought the house that I'm in back in 2019.

And when I walked into the house with my realtor for the first time, what she really wanted to point out to me right away is how terrible the kitchen floors were. It's kind of this laminate thing and some of the corners on the different laminate strips are peeling up a little bit.

And she said, well, that's because the current homeowners have used too much water to clean the kitchen floor. Later had a handyman who came in and said, no, actually the problem is these are the wrong kind of floors for a kitchen.

[3:43] They're actually not supposed to have contact with water. But the flooring worked, right? It's functional. It's not urgent. No one's going to die. And so it took me six years. Last year, I finally replaced the flooring with LVP.

So I have this nice vinyl in there. And every time I make an investment like that in my house, I think, well, I guess I'm not selling anytime soon.

I actually replaced a couple toilets last year. Not that I had to. Again, it wasn't urgent. They had not failed. They were just really annoying me and I wanted to get rid of them. I thought, well, I guess I'm not moving.

If I want to get my money out of these toilets, I got to stick around. I got to hang on. The previous owner of my house actually made a mistake in that area less than a year before he sold it to me. He said yes to a door-to-door salesman and installed solar panels. And I did not pay anything extra for the house because of the solar panels. I got them basically for free. Thank you, seller.

[4:46] The point that I'm driving home here is this. Whatever we believe about the future determines our actions in the present.

Whatever we believe about the future, that is almost the most important thing. That is what Paul is banking on here in verse 18.

I've already pointed out we're coming off of verse 17 where he says suffering, then glory. Okay, that's great. The glory is coming, but the suffering is first. How do we make it?

How do we hang on? How do we hold on till the glory comes? And Paul is simply telling us we hang on, we hold on by remembering the greatness of the future glory.

It is what we believe about the future that allows us to persevere in the present.

[5:49] That's what he's saying here in verse 18. The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. So this morning we're going to look at two questions very simply to structure our time together.

Question one, what is the glory? Question two, why is it so much better? What is the glory? Why is it so much better?

First, what is the glory? What in the world is Paul talking about? Paul here is referring to the end of the story of this world.

When Paul talks about glory, he is telling us what the last chapter of life on this earth will be. This is something the Bible explains for us in places like Matthew chapter 25, John chapter 5, Revelation chapters 21 and 22.

It says, hey, here's the last chapter, here's what it's going to look like. And I'm going to tell you kind of very briefly what that story is. In the last chapter, Jesus, in his physical body, returns to the earth.

[7:03] So we refer to it as Jesus' second coming. His first coming, we celebrate at Christmas. His second coming, we look forward to now. So Jesus is going to return to the earth in his second coming.

At that time, there will be a resurrection from the dead. Everyone who has ever died will be raised to life. John chapter 5, Jesus tells this to us explicitly.

He says there's actually going to be two resurrections. There will be the resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgment. Okay? Resurrection of life is for those who have followed Jesus in faith. They're going to have life with God forever. Those who have not followed Jesus are going to experience the resurrection of judgment. They will live forever apart from God in hell.

So there will be eternal separation and everlasting torment. That's the end of the story. Jesus returns, second coming, resurrection of life, resurrection of judgment.

[8:08] Those are the events. However, we also want to know, we need to know about the place. What is heaven? What exactly are we talking about? Many people, of course, think about angels playing harps.

Whether they will or will not is probably neither here nor there. Some people refer to it as heaven. Revelation chapter 21 calls it a new heaven and a new earth.

Very briefly, the new heaven and the new earth is a real physical place. It is like this earth, but surprise, new and better, even better than Eden.

So whatever good thing you have loved, experienced here on earth in heaven, it will be greater and better. All sin, sickness, disease, pain, sorrow, suffering will be done away with.

Most importantly, we will finally be in God's presence. By the way, that's how some people define heaven.

[9:12] What is heaven? Heaven is when we are fully in God's presence. That's why we read from Psalm 16 this morning. This is on page three of your worship guide. Near the end of the psalm, the psalmist says, In your presence, there is fullness of joy.

It's the psalmist's way of saying, the greatest things are with God. So two questions. What is the glory? The glory is the physical world made new with all who have followed Christ in God's presence.

There's no more sin. There's no more suffering. There's no more suffering. And there is full joy. That's our first question. Second question.

Why is it so much better? We might ask it a different way. What does that full joy actually look like? Now, I slowed us down for an entire sermon on one verse so we would not be rushed as we're talking about heaven.

And I can still only say something, not everything. In fact, coming up against heaven, even with a full sermon, I feel inadequate. We're just going to scratch the surface a little bit.

[10:31] I'm going to give you a few things to meditate on about our heavenly future. Why it is that this is a future that allows us to persevere in the present.

Okay. First, we've talked about this many, many times. The heavenly future includes a new body. So much of our trouble in this life, so much of our pain and suffering comes from the problems of our physical bodies.

Right? Bodies aren't working right. As we get old, they start to fall apart on us. We're told that in heaven, and Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, by the way, if you want to read more about it.

We are going to have a new body that has no disease, no sickness, no decay, no pain, no suffering. So the future glory that you're looking forward to will include no cancer, no allergies. You will not have a deviated septum.

[11:38] You will not break your hips. Your body will not fall apart. And by the way, it better not, because forever is a really long time. So I'm hoping the body works.

I know it will. So that's the new body. I'm not going to spend a ton of time talking about that, because we have discussed that many times over the last number of years.

The other thing we're going to have is what I would call perfect connection. You might call this perfect love, and I'll explain what I mean by that.

In fact, we're going to spend the most amount of time this morning talking about this aspect of it, and there's a reason that I'll explain to you. So there's a famous quote by a man named Bruce Marshall, and he says this, The young man who rings the bell at the brothel is unconsciously looking for God.

And when I heard that quote as a much younger person, I thought, you know, that doesn't really make sense. That sounds to me like we're really over-spiritualizing things. You know, someone's knocking on the door of a brothel. What are they looking for? They're looking for sex.

[12:46] They're not looking for God. As I've gotten older, a bit older, I kind of understand what he means by this quote. And what he means is this. That young man is looking for deep and intense connection.

He's looking for love. He's looking for belonging. He's looking to know and to be known. He's looking to be accepted. He's looking for the end of shame.

He's looking for true joy. In other words, that man at the door is looking for things that he can only fully have in God's presence.

He is looking for what only God can provide. Remember Psalm 16. In your presence, there is fullness of joy.

When we talk about heaven, people often like to think about the things or the experiences that they will get in heaven. And that is good and right. But if we only think about things and experiences, we have lost the plot.

[13:59] The most important thing about heaven is that God is there. The most glorious thing about heaven is God's presence fully and finally.

Remember the covenant in the Old Testament, God's promise. He says, I will be your God. You will be mine. The fact that we're heirs of God, and that includes, it means God himself is part of our inheritance.

Being with him is what it is that we look forward to. In the Old Testament, as God's people were traveling around, they had the tabernacle, and the placement of the tabernacle was extremely

important.

It was in the middle. And all the tribes were camped out on the sides of it, which is God's way of teaching his people in the Old Testament that he and his presence would be in the midst of them. That was the greatest thing he could give them. The giver is the source of all the gifts.

[15:15] The giver is greater than all the gifts. Heaven, glory, is great because God, the giver of all the gifts, is there.

Whatever beauty you love, God is the one who made it. And so whatever beauty you long for and chase after, God's beauty is greater still.

Whatever love and acceptance and connection and belonging that you long for, it will never be as great as the acceptance and belonging and connection that you have with God.

In heaven. Whatever healing it is that you are looking for and working towards, it will never be complete in this life.

You will not be fully healed in your body, your heart, or your mind until you are in God's presence in heaven.

[16:42] We will be like him, the Bible tells us, because we will see him as he is. It is God's presence that makes heaven heaven.

And so that's why I spend the most time on this as we think about the future glory, because this is the biggest piece of the plot.

This is the most important thing that we're going to be with God himself. We said earlier, what we believe about the future determines how we live in the present, and it is our future experience of God and his love, what theologians would say is unmediated love, that gives us hope in the midst of our suffering now.

You can have hope in the face of devastating loss. If you experience divorce or the death of a spouse, and I don't mean to minimize that in any way.

Those are the sorts of things that in the wake of them, it can feel hard even to breathe, right? The grief is so great. But the connection, the intimacy, and the relationship that you will experience with God in heaven is not even worth comparing.

[18:23] If you are following God in obedience, living out the Christian sexual ethic, you might think, oh man, I'm missing out. No, you're not missing out.

You will experience something far better in the world to come. Something so much better that it is not even worth experiencing, comparing.

Something that no one in this world has yet to know. All those other things in life, all the good pleasures and gifts that come from God, those are all appetizers of what is to come.

There is something better than anything that you have given up in this world to follow after Jesus Christ. If you give something up, you are saying no to a tiny, tiny appetizer.

You will not miss the meal. You will not miss the feast that it points forward to.

[19:39] If you remain single, because you are committed only to marrying another Christian, you have a greater and larger hope than marriage.

There is something bigger than marriage to look forward to. Something far greater to replace it. Something that it is not worth comparing anything on this earth with.

It's not just relational loss that will be eclipsed in the world to come, but also relational problems of this life done away with.

I want you to think of whoever it is in this church that you get along with the least. And if you're honest, right, we all have different personalities.

Some of us get on each other's nerves. Maybe you're in a conflict with them right now. When you are in heaven, the two of you will be little buddies.

[20:48] All the problems that get in our way now, those things will be swept away, right? All our sin will be removed.

If your friend is a Christian, you will have a future with them without friction. By the way, we can say the same thing about your marriage. If you're a Christian and your spouse is a Christian, when will every conflict end?

It will end in glory. You will enjoy one another without sin, every relational problem removed.

Whatever happens in this life, that's the future you're headed towards. Heaven will be perfect connection.

It will be perfect love. And it will be that way because God himself will be there. So we talked briefly about the new body.

[22:01] Talked extensively about perfect connection or perfect love. I'm gonna talk for a little bit about one more thing, which is real treasure. Remember, Paul in verse 17 is focusing in on suffering that comes because you are a follower of Jesus.

Last week, we looked at 2 Timothy 3, which says, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. And as you follow Christ in this life, you will lose all sorts of things. Maybe you'll lose money. You'll almost certainly lose social status or connections. Might be a hit to your reputation.

You might miss out on opportunities that you would have if you weren't a Christian. And you know what? You know what? In heaven, none of that will matter.

Not a single bit of it. And you can't take it with you anyway. None of those things are things you can drag with you into the next world.

[23:18] And all of those things are susceptible to theft and loss and decay. That's why Jesus says, you know, don't store up treasure on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.

But there is a place where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. And that place is called heaven.

Peter, in his letter, 1 Peter, tells us that we have an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

Kept in heaven for you. In other words, no matter what losses you experience on this earth or in this life, it has no effect on your inheritance in heaven.

There are things that no lawsuit, no breakup, no surprise, no health crisis can touch.

[24:35] There are things in heaven for you that are secure no matter what. No matter what happens now, your inheritance, what is waiting for you in heaven, cannot be touched.

No matter what is shaken in this world, it cannot be reduced. Whatever you lose now pales in comparison to what you cannot lose.

In fact, we could say, as Paul does, it's not even worth comparing. It's often said that a regular person living today in 2026 is better off than the most powerful person in the world 500 years ago.

Most powerful person in the world 500 years ago had no running water. They did not have antibiotics. They had no indoor plumbing. That person cannot imagine the life you live now.

They cannot imagine the benefits that we experience. We might say it's not even worth comparing. Heaven will be like that.

[26:00] it will blow away the experience of the greatest, most powerful person in this world. Some people think that Elon Musk is going to be the world's first trillionaire within the next number of years.

The things that are waiting for you in heaven are greater than anything Elon Musk can imagine. It's like comparing someone 500 years ago to someone today except even more stark, even greater, even more exponential.

Being in heaven is like that. There are things about it that we cannot right now imagine. I've given you these tasty samples of what heaven includes.

You'll notice though that Paul actually doesn't do that. Verse 18, he just says, look, it's going to be so great it won't even be worth comparing. There's things right now that your mind can't comprehend, that your head would explode if you heard about how glorious heaven will be.

That's what it is, Christian, that you have to look forward to. No matter the sufferings you experience in this world, don't trade anything for it.

[27:32] No matter what trouble you come up against, do not give up your faith in Christ because nothing is worth trading for that.

A few years ago, I was meeting with a Christian counselor and I had made a breakthrough about how to manage some of the suffering that I had experienced in my own life and I said to him, man, I wish that I had discovered this 10 to 15 years ago.

I could have skipped the last 10 to 15 years of pain over this issue if I had known this so much earlier. And he looked at me and he said, Matthew, you're still young.

Which is his way of saying, yeah, that's great. You would have loved to know this 10 or 15 years ago. And you know what? You now know it for the rest of your life. And you have hopefully more than 10 to 15 years ahead of you, right?

You have so much time to now put this to work in your life. If you are a Christian, no matter your age, you are still young.

[28:54] The life that is ahead of you, with God forever in heaven, is so much greater and longer and farther than anything you've experienced now.

every loss in this life pales in comparison and it is a small dot. It's a small dot on the page of everything that's ahead.

No matter what suffering you have walked through, if you're 95 years old, you are still young. if you're in Christ.

You might think of this or that loss or mistake and think, man, it's all over. Don't lose heart. Don't give up. Your inheritance is coming.

It cannot be touched. It's undefiled, imperishable, unfading, kept in heaven for you.

[30:10] There's an important prepositional phrase here, verse 18. Paul says, the glory that is to be revealed to us. Paul's telling us there's a limit, right?

He's not saying the glory that will be revealed to everyone in the world. No, he's saying the glory that's going to be revealed to those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

In other words, I'll state it negatively. If you are not a Christian, if you are not following after Jesus in faith, this promise is not for you.

Remember, resurrection of life, resurrection of judgment. Last week, we talked about how we're adopted, we're heirs of Christ, heirs of God, co-heirs of Christ, because of what Jesus did for us. Of course, if you're not following after Jesus in faith, you're still alive. It's not too late. It's not too late to repent of your sins, to admit, hey, I actually live a life that has separated me from God, that I deserve his punishment and his judgment, and it's not too late to turn to Christ, to accept the perfect life that he lived on your behalf, to trust in the death he took that you deserved.

[31:33] Heaven can also be your inheritance. You can be adopted, you can be a son and heir of God, because of what Jesus did, what Jesus did in his life, and his death, and his resurrection.

You know, sometimes when you read a movie review, and especially if it's a recent release, there will be a warning at the top, and what does it say? spoiler alert, right?

Which is to say, we're going to give away some really important plot points. So if you don't want to know how the movie ends, if you want to be surprised, do not read this article. Now, some people would, you know, close the review immediately, right?

Other people would say, yes, this is what I want. I've told you before, my mom likes to know spoilers, in fact, so much so that there's times when she cannot enjoy a book unless she has already read the last chapter.

Like, so know what's happening in the last chapter so she can enjoy the rest of the book, right? She knows how it ends, and so all stress and tension is dissolved, and she can just kind of follow along and know that it's all going to be okay.

[32:45] When I was growing up, sometimes we'd be watching a movie, my mom would run over to the computer while we're watching it to look up how the movie ends, okay? that's the Christian life.

God has told us the last chapter. He has given us the spoiler. He has explained to us how it all ends so that we can follow him in faith, persevering no matter what comes.

all the tension has been removed, right? You can enjoy the story. You know how it ends. Come ye disconsolate, where ye languish.

Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel. Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish. Earth has no sorrows that heaven cannot heal.

Let's pray. Our Father in heaven, we do praise you and thank you again for the hope of glory, the hope of heaven. We ask that you would keep our eyes fixed on the right horizon line, that you would pull us away from the many distractions and trinkets that tempt us, and instead you would set our eyes on Jesus Christ, that we would live our life looking forward to our future with him.

[34:24] We ask all of these things in his mighty name. Amen. Amen. Thank you.