

The Hope of His Calling

by Alan Martin

This sermon delves into Ephesians 1:17-18, exploring the concept of understanding as the convergence of God's thoughts and our thoughts, leading to a deeper connection with Scripture. It emphasizes the hope of Christ's calling, the inheritance among the saints, and the exceeding greatness of His power for those who believe. The sermon highlights the importance of seeking wisdom and revelation to know God intimately and to prepare for the future hope of a new heaven and earth.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:17, Acts 20:32, Revelation 21:6, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 1:13, Hebrews 6:19, Matthew 25:34, John 16:33

Topics: "Understanding God's Thoughts", "Hope and Inheritance in Christ"

Description

This sermon delves into Ephesians 1:17-18, exploring the concept of understanding as the convergence of God's thoughts and our thoughts, leading to a deeper connection with Scripture. It emphasizes the hope of Christ's calling, the inheritance among the saints, and the exceeding greatness of His power for those who believe. The sermon highlights the importance of seeking wisdom and revelation to know God intimately and to prepare for the future hope of a new heaven and earth.

Transcript

I've sent you your pre-questions. Let's read Ephesians 1, 17, and 18 together. In order that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, might give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation, uncovering it is, unto your own full, personal, accurate, intimate knowledge of Him.

Having the eyes of your heart enlightened, in order that you may know what is the hope of His calling, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power, us were to believe. That's 17 through 19. When the Lord gives understanding, here's what happens.

The Greek word for understanding is a form of ephraim. It means it's the place where two things come together. It was originally used to describe the place where two different rivers became one.

Where they come together is the place of understanding, or they're joined together. So understanding in that sense is when God's thoughts and our thoughts are brought together, and He shows us how the scriptures are connected, and we begin to see how things flow together. That's the Lord giving us understanding, and that's what we want to experience as a people this morning in our discussion.

So we're going to look at the first part of verse 18, that the eyes of our heart would be enlightened, in order that we may know the what is the hope of His calling. Now when you come to the word hope, what does it mean to you? And just so you know, if you're not sure, what goes in my mind is immediately, there's this built-in concordance in my mind. Well this verse has hope, and I'm thinking of this verse, and this verse, and this verse.

But if you don't have that in your mind, you can get Bible Gateway, you can get Blue Letter Bible, you can get other Bible apps, logos, and you can type in the word hope, and it'll bring every single scripture with the word hope there. So you can search the scriptures and see what does hope mean. So let's have our own little university park concordance here.

What is hope? Someone tell me a verse that has hope that comes to your mind about hope. Right, there was a time before we knew Christ, we were without hope. What another, another thought of hope, with the hope.

Rachel says, Christ in us is the hope of glory. Right, what's another? Faith is the substance of faith. Right, faith is the substance, Hebrews chapter 11.

Yes, yeah, Brother Rudy. When Jesus told Peter, I hope that your faith is restored, you come and strengthen your brothers. Yes, yes he did.

There's, there's many verses with hope. One, one important verse for us is, is, is that the helmet of salvation is hope. Having hope is the helmet of salvation.

The hope of salvation is a helmet that we wear. Now, think about the word hope. There's another scripture that we need to understand about hope.

When you think of hope, the word itself, not necessarily a scripture, what comes to your mind? What is hope? If you're hoping for something, what does it mean? It means you don't have it. It's not in your possession. You don't, you're not hoping for something you've already received.

And that's what Paul says in Romans chapter eight, who hopes for what he already has. But if we are hoping for something, we're waiting for it expectantly. So let's, let's consider what Paul's talking about.

So he must be talking about something that we're waiting for still. We have forgiveness of sins, don't we? We have access with our heavenly father. We are his sons and daughters.

Now we have that. Now we've been given his Holy spirit as a deposit guaranteeing that future inheritance, but there are things we don't have now. And evidently this is what is in Paul's mind.

What is the hope of his calling? So what is it that we're still hoping for in Romans? One of the things that says that we don't have yet, and all of us can relate to this, especially if those of us are already having to get medical treatments and dialysis, or you're on certain kinds of medications, you're dealing with pain and great limitations. One of the things the Bible says we're waiting for, we don't have now is the redemption of our bodies. We're still in these old bodies and outwardly we waste away.

We wait for the redemption of our bodies. We look forward to it someday when we don't have to deal with the corruption in these physical bodies. And it says in this hope we were saved.

And that's where he has that birth but hope that is seen. So we're waiting the redemption of our bodies. What else are we waiting for? What are we hoping for? The Lord's return.

All right. The Lord, the return of the Lord for Christ himself to return. What else are we waiting for? What are we hoping for? I couldn't, what's that? The resurrection.

Okay. Eternal life, the resurrection. We have eternal life, the promise of eternal life now, but we're still, most of us are on the way.

It is appointed unto man once to die. We're going to die physically. And after that, we have the hope of the resurrection.

Well, let's look and see. Let's make sure we understand what Paul is saying. It's the hope of his calling.

Let's get this down for sure. Our hope is not just in an event and it's not just in a place. It's in a person.

And Paul wants to make that very clear. Jesus Christ is the hope of what we have been called to. Let's just take one of the things that have been mentioned.

We're hoping for his return. Yes. What do we know about that? If it's the hope of it, if it's what we're hoping for, what do we know about his return? Have we been given an idea of what his return is going to be like? Yes.

Or do you, when you read a scripture like that, does your mind just go blank? See, when you think of Christ's return, we're given a description, right? We're told what that return is going to be like. Where can we find that? In the book of Revelation. John was given a vision of what the return of the Lord would be like.

Why don't we look at some of those verses? Look and turn with me to Revelation chapter 19. Revelation chapter 19. Let's look at some verses together.

And it's, we're going to underscore the importance of Jesus Christ being the reason for this hope. Revelation chapter 19. And this introduces us, Revelation chapter 19 follows the great fall of Babylon.

The great, the world system that dominates the world and wickedness has just been fallen. She's been judged by God. And chapter 19 of Revelation opens up with a celebration of hallelujahs and glories to God.

And then the marriage supper of the lamb, Jesus Christ is, is representing when he's going to meet his bride. And we are that bride of Christ that invited to the marriage supper. And right after the introduction of that in verse 11, right after the marriage supper of the lamb, look, follow with me.

Revelation chapter 19, 11. Then I saw heaven open and behold a white horse. And he who sits on it is called faithful and true.

And in righteousness, he does two things. What is he going to do? He judges and he makes war. This is, this is the hope of our calling.

Now, how are we to hope in his judgment and his making war? Well, let's, let's, let's read on his eyes are a flame of fire and on his head are many diadems. That's where we get that song crown him with many

crowns, having a name written on him, which no one knows except himself and being clothed with a garment dipped in blood. His name is also called the word of God and the armies, which are in heaven are clothed in fine linen and clean white and clean.

We're following him on white horses and from his mouth comes a sharp sword so that with it, he may strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron. And he treads the wine press of the wrath of the anger of God. We sing that song.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored. That's it's right from the book of revelation where they got that he is in his garments or, or dipped in, in blood.

And it says verse 16, and he has on his garment and on his thigh, a name written king of Kings and Lord of Lords. And then I saw an angel standing in the sun and he cried out with a loud voice saying to all the birds, which fly in the mid heaven, come assemble for the great supper of God so that you may eat the flesh of Kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of strong men and the flesh of horses and those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slaves and small and great. Then I saw the beast and the Kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war with him who sits on the horse and with his army and the beast was seized and with him, the false prophet who did the signs in his presence by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast.

You've heard about that. Haven't you received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. And these two were thrown into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone and the rest were killed with the mouth with a sword, which came from the mouth of him who sits on the horse and all the birds were filled with their own flesh.

Now, why should we hope in this? This is his coming. What's he doing? What's right. There can be no hope for a heaven with no sorrow and no pain and no morning, unless there's no evil.

Do you understand in order for there to be paradise and perfect and eternal life? Because eternal life means there's nothing that causes death, no sin, no evil. And so when Christ returns in order to usher in righteousness, he will judge and make war in righteousness. What he's doing is he's annihilating evil so that he can usher in the something we're hoping for.

You know what we're hoping for? We're hoping for a new heaven and a new earth. When a lot of people think of heaven, they think of the loved ones that have gone before them, their mother and their father. They think maybe a child they've lost, a brother or sister or someone close, another close family member that they've lost.

And they look forward to the reunion. That's not wrong. But the main hope of heaven is the person who makes heaven possible.

The person who takes his power and wipes out evil so we don't have to deal with it anymore. So there's no more pain and suffering in the earth. That's part of the hope of our calling.

But we're given, remember, that's the first thing. He makes war. That's one of the things.

But what else does it say he does? He judges and makes war. And we're actually given a glimpse of that judgment in the next chapter, chapter 20, Revelation chapter 20. Look with me again in verse 11.

We started in chapter 19. We're going to start in verse 11 and chapter 20 as well. Then I saw a great white throne and him who sits on it.

So not only is the Lord Jesus commander in chief, he's supreme court justice. He is the judge of heaven and earth. Then I saw a great white horse and a great white throne and him who sits on it from whose presence earth and heaven fled away and no place was found for them.

Then I saw the dead, the great and the small standing before the throne and books were opened and another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books according to their deeds and the sea gave up the dead which were in it and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them and they were judged every one of them according to their deeds that death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire and this is the second death. Physical death is the first death. The second death is eternal death separation from God in the lake of fire and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire.

So what are we what are we hoping for when our Lord Jesus returns that he will lead the armies of heaven and that the armies of heaven will annihilate the evil that is fighting God in the earth and that only the people that are waiting for him and his servants will be spared that and he will set up and judge the heavens and earth and everyone who's died is going to be judged according to the deeds that they have done and if anyone's name is not found written in the lamb's book of life he's thrown into the lake of fire he experiences the second death. So it's the Lord Jesus who gives eternal life. I have I do funerals being a pastor.

I've been to many funerals and sadly nearly everyone goes to heaven at a funeral. They're all in a better place but according to our hope we must have our names written in the lamb's book of life and if your name is not written in the lamb's book of life you're not going to heaven. It's only for those who are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and this is the place that we're looking forward to and we are given a glimpse and a description of it aren't we what are some of the things we've been told about heaven we mentioned some of them you you you can tell me what what are some of the things that we do know about heaven streets of gold hmm that there's it's like a sea of glass what are some of the conditions like that's some of the description all right there's no more sorrow there's no more pain no mourning there's no need for the sun there it's never night there God himself is the light of heaven so in this in the scripture says that the gates of the city are kept open all the time it we're actually given a description of it it's in chapter 21 just look from the very first verse of chapter 21 revelation then i saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth passed away and there's no longer any seed and i saw the holy city the new jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God made ready as a bride adorned for her husband and i heard a loud voice from the throne saying behold the tabernacle of God is among men and he will dwell among them and they shall be his people and God himself will be among them and he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and there will be no longer any death there will no longer be any mourner mourning or crying or pain for the first order of things are passed away and he who sits on the throne who is that that's our lord Jesus Christ that's why it's the hope of his calling he's the one that calls us to this he's the one that's going to bring it about because he's the one that's empowered to do it he's sitting on the throne and he says behold i am making all things new and he said right for these words are faithful and true then he said to me they are done i am the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end and i will give to the ones who thirst from the spring of the water of life without cost and then he says this he who overcomes will inherit these things and i will be his god and he will be my son but let's don't stop there listen to this verse verse eight but but for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers

and sexually immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars their part will be in the lake that burned with fire and brimstone which is the second death yes so heaven is not for everyone heaven is for those whose names are written in the lamb's book of life because they are followers of the lord Jesus Christ and i'll say at a funeral the only people that will be in heaven are the faithful followers of the lord Jesus Christ it's going to be a reunion for believers that's what it is there's everyone else will be excluded and the one who sits on the throne he's not only the commander in chief of the armies of heaven he's not only the supreme court justice of heaven he is the king sitting on the throne in heaven that prevents anything from ever entering that will cause sorrow or pain so he will literally make sure heaven stays pure because the presence of evil means the problem of pain and suffering and if you're going to eliminate all pain and suffering there cannot be evil so god in his goodness must eventually annihilate evil and if you had this if you if you if this is what you understand and if this is what you're hoping for if if you're hoping for a place with no pain and no sorrow and no mourning a place where there's no evil no sin no devil no temptation then you better be glad that the lord Jesus is going to do what he's going to do amen and if you understand it this verse may make more sense to you than it may have ever had before it in first john all right if you want to turn there with me first john chapter i'm not sure where the reference is everyone who has this hope in him we'll find the reference in a minute here's the verse in first john so we don't lose our train of thought everyone who has this hope in him if your hope is for a place of no sorrow and no pain everyone who has this hope in him is purifying himself even as he is pure you see it you understand evil can exist because evil brings pain and sorrow and suffering and if you understand that you're not partaking of evil now and hoping going to heaven no no no it doesn't work that way if you understand evil causes suffering you're purifying yourself even now as he is pure because you understand the hope we're waiting for is a place that only he can bring about because right now there's evil present in the world and because evil is present in the world we suffer still there's pain and sorrow and injustice and we groan with that that's why our bodies have been affected outwardly we waste away and we we long for the day when our lord returns to do what he's going to do this is the hope of his calling that's what we're waiting for now what's the next thing back to uh ephesians chapter 2 the first thing we looked at was what is the hope of his calling what is the next statement what is the hope of his calling and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance and do you notice what it says finish that for me his inheritance what in the saints now we just said remember we just said the only people who are going to be in heaven are who those whose names are written in the lamb's book of life here there's an inheritance but his inheritance is limited to a certain people his inheritance among the saints now what's another word for saint somebody don't know what's another word for saint huh a believer yes but more particularly separated one another word is holy ones his inheritance is among the holy ones we just said didn't we the only people who are going to be in heaven are going to be saints you better hope you're a saint don't look at me and say i ain't no saint pastor well then you're not going to heaven you're not a part of the inheritance because his inheritance is among the saints it's among the holy ones have you ever heard anyone say follow after peace with all men and holiness because without holiness no one will see the lord yes jesus christ inheritance is among the people that have been set apart under god and his calling because the word inheritance actually means is that what you've been called to inherit his calling is to come out of the world and the church literally means those have been called out of the world to assemble together so our lord's inheritance is among just the holy ones and i was looking for this to confirmation of this now i'm going to give you an example of how i study the scripture holy ones or saints you can pull up a bible app on your phone or you can get the old-fashioned way and get a concordance and you can put in the word saint or holy and it'll bring up for you all kind of verses that you can look at to give you an idea of all the things that god says about living a holy life and who the saints are and how they are his people and he dwells amid in the midst someone turn

if you would to acts chapter 20 verse 32 i'm going to get some one of you to read acts chapter 20 verse 32 this is paul and this is because we've been reading uh paul's letter to ephesus this is when he was uh actually i think chapter 20 he's in ephesus in the book of acts so someone read acts 20 verse 32 nice and loud right now i commend you to god and the word of his grace which is able to build you and to give you the inheritance among those who have been sanctified so if you have not been sanctified you're not in this group if you've not been made holy you're not in this group only those who've been called out of the world and been set apart to god are in this particular group they are going to share in the inheritance of the lord jesus now what are we talking about inheriting let's go back to revelation we were there just a minute ago go back to revelations chapter 21 let's remind ourselves so let's read six and seven if someone's there read it for me nice and loud revelations 21 verse six and seven and he said to me they are going to pass i am the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end i will give unto him that is a third of the fountain of the water of life freely verse seven two brother he that overcomes shall inherit these things and i will be his god and he shall be my son i had read this verse before and so when i heard the word inherit it brought it to mind but that's a certain class of people what does it say who will inherit in 7 who who's going to inherit only those who overcome didn't jesus say he who endures to the end shall be saved and aren't we told in the new testament there's going to be a great falling away aren't we told that because of the love the increase of of wickedness the love of many is going to wax cold yes aren't we going to tell that many will abandon we've been told many will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits but those who overcome those who endure to the end those who are in the sanctified the ones who overcome in other words through the power of the lord jesus greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world then what affects us is christ in us our hope of glory we do what we do because of jesus christ in us the world doesn't have control of us christ jesus has control of us and we overcome the world we're not overcome by the world yes and those who are overcome through the grace of christ they inherit this beautiful new jerusalem this place of perfect light of perfect peace perfect rest perfect joy perfect freedom god in our midst no sorrow no pain no sorrow no i mean no suffering no mourning it's an inheritance for those who overcome now when uh when you think of inheritance there's another verse that came to my mind that jesus used about come and enjoy the inheritance something it's part of our inherit that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world do you remember when jesus said said that or who he was talking to it was in a parable anybody remember a parable in matthew for sure it's a parable describing two different kinds of animals but they're similar sheep and goats matthew 25 turn with me there okay matthew chapter 25 the parable of the sheep and goats now they run together you know in one flock until it's time to do some separating it's not taught it's not called the goat's book of life you know it's called the lamb's book of life all right okay matthew chapter 25 look uh with me um what was that right yeah verse 34 okay we'll start with verse 31 and read there but when the son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him and he will sit on his glorious throne you see how this coincide we we read about this in revelation and here jesus is himself is talking about it about what he's going to be doing that he gave john a glimpse of it in the book of revelation but it's talking about the same event verse 32 and all the nations will be gathered before him and he will separate them from one another as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and he will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left then the king will say to those on his right come you who are blessed by my father inherit the kingdom that's what we've been talking about the kingdom of heaven the new heaven and earth the kingdom of righteousness where the king of righteousness sits on the throne in complete control having annihilated evil rewarding those whose names have been written in the lamb's book of life the king will say to those on his right come you who are blessed by my father inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world and why why is he telling him that because you were members of a baptist church no i didn't say oh oh i'm sorry i switched books by

accident no it it's because why it's because of how you lived your life i was hungry and you gave me something to eat i was thirsty you gave me something to drink i was a stranger you invited me in i was naked and you clothed me i was sick and you visited me i was in prison and you came to me and then the righteous that they so lived their life this way they don't even get it like when did this happen i never saw you i mean you would think if we saw jesus we would recognize him but the righteous will answer him saying lord when do we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you something to drink when do we see you a stranger invite you in or naked and clothe you when do we see you sick or in prison and come to you and the king will answer and say to them truly i say to the extent that you have done these to the least of these what my my brothers my brothers see when you have become a follower of the lord jesus christ his people become important to you you take when you love jesus you love his saints remember we read that ephesians already i heard about your your faith in the truth and your love for all the saints all the holy ones when you the way you treat the followers of christ the way you treat other people what you've done to the least of these you've done unto me and what's the reward come you blessed of my father inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the earth now um and this is something that the when you think of inheritance i i this verse also came to mind turn with me to first peter first peter chapter three i'm sorry first peter chapter one i don't we don't have to go to chapter three not yet first peter chapter one somebody read verses three through five first peter larry you are you there read chapter first peter one three two five for me okay you see it here here's an inheritance but where is it kept we don't have it now do we no it's kept in heaven for us so if we don't have it now what are we doing we are hoping for it we've been born into a living hope because our lord was raised from the dead we know he has power over death and we know he's gone to prepare a place for us and he's going to come again and take us to him so that where he is we can be with him and this is our living hope and it's kept in heaven for us and it's imperishable it's uncorruptible and and so he so he tells us something because we're hoping for it but we're still living in this world same chapter first peter okay first peter chapter one verse 13 who's got verse 13 can read it for me nice and loud therefore preparing your minds for action and being sober-minded set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you the revelation of jesus christ okay so you see what we're to do we don't have that full salvation we're ready we're waiting for we don't have the new heaven and new new new earth yet we don't have the new body that we're going to get someday so what do we need to do now get ready get your mind in gear prepare for action there's some suffering to go on in this life in the present time but we're shielded by by through faith by god's power until the coming of the salvation that will be revealed when our lord comes back to do what's necessary and why is he not come back now because some people aren't ready and he's simply waiting to give more time for people to come to know him so we know but but our inheritance is guaranteed it's kept in heaven for us it's incorruptible it will it will perish spoil or fade so in the meantime get your mind in gear prepare your mind for action and set your hope fully on the grace to be brought to you when the lord jesus comes until then we're going to get to share in his glory but you know paul reminded us of something you know what we're going to share in his glory if we also share in his sufferings okay that's what we need to prepare our mind for actions in this world you will have tribulation but take heart i've overcome the world what i promised you is guaranteed you have the spirit you have the holy spirit it's an earnest payment it's a down payment guaranteeing that the rest of what god has promised us will come when our lord brings it until then we wait don't wait we wait and we hope and we don't give up our hope and we don't lose our hope and one other verse that comes to my mind as i closed as we closed today you know what this hope is if you understand it fully the book of hebrews describes this hope as something and it's it's used in a nautical sense it's important to ships what does the bible say this hope is for a believer it's an anchor we have this hope as an anchor for the soul now why do ships use an anchor to hold them in place right to

hold them in place because there were strong currents that can drift them against the rocks or pull them to shipwreck or there are storms when there is a severe storm sometimes what a ship does it drops anchor it grabs something solid and it rides out the storm and our hope in christ is like an anchor for our soul and yeah we got us we got some storms to ride out in this life we're to prepare our mind for action we are to fully hope upon the grace that's coming when our lord brings it and does what it what is necessary to do to bring the new heaven and earth with him where that day that day for us the day we get to enjoy no more sorrow no more pain no more mourning no more needles no more medicine no more dialysis new heaven new earth that's our hope yes that's our hope and it's a hope only to be realized in the holy ones yeah brother larry right his holy ones yeah when when one who is been set apart under the lord dies physically that person is finished with the struggle aren't they yes their struggle's over that's why it's precious to god they don't have to suffer anymore they've made it they're coming home to him if we're if we're holy all right we got it yes all right so we're going to start next week on the latter part of the 18 and verse 19 where it says and what is the exceeding grace

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