

Bible Basics 2015

Session 12

The hope of the
church

the hope of the church

- the word 'hope'
- hope in the New Testament
- the Lord Jesus Christ coming again
- some personal implications of Christ's return

what does the word 'hope' mean?

languages aren't static

meanings, emphases & usage change
over time

as usually used now in normal English
'hope' is:

a desire for the future

[wanting something to happen
or wanting something to be the case]

'hope' in the New Testament

In the New Testament the Greek word translated 'hope' means:

'a favourable and confident expectation' [Vine's Expository Dictionary]

English expression:

'more in hope than in expectation'

'hope' in the New Testament

in the New Testament the word was used in the same way as we might use 'expect' or 'expectation'

for example

by Paul:

'I hope to come to you shortly' [1 Tim 3:14]

by Luke:

'All hope that we would be saved was finally given up'
[Acts 27:20]

and the word is used to describe expectations of the church

general principles

the New Testament 'hopes' mentioned on the following slides are expectations for all believers

they refer to events that have not yet happened

these hopes are promised by God

therefore what is hoped for will take place - they are certainties

because "He who promised is faithful" [Heb 10:23]

1 hope of eternal life

Paul writing to Titus:

"... having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the **hope of eternal life.**"

[Titus 3:7]

We have eternal life now,

but eternal life in its fulness is ours when we are with
Christ

2 hope of righteousness

There were those in Galatia who were teaching that faith in Christ was not sufficient,
& that it was necessary to keep the Law in order to be justified (to be accounted righteous by God)

Paul was writing to these Galatians:

"You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.
For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the **hope of righteousness** by faith."

[Galatians 5:4,5]

The hope of righteousness is by faith, not by keeping the Law.
We have been justified (counted as righteous) by God,
but we are sinful creatures.
But we will be changed;
all will be righteousness when we are with the One who is perfectly righteous

3 the hope which is laid up for you in heaven

Paul thanks God for the Colossians:

"We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ,
praying always for you since we heard of your faith
in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints;
because of the **hope which is laid up for you in
heaven**"

[Colossians 1:3-5]

An expectation of being in heaven with Christ

4 hope of the glory of God

Paul writing to the Romans after explaining how we are accounted as righteous by God (justification):

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also 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]

All in heaven will be for the glory of God - to show His excellence - & we will be there

5 hope that we shall be like Him & see Him as He is

John exulting in the love that the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called children of God:

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed,

**we shall be like Him,
for we shall see Him as He is.**

And everyone who has **this hope** in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

[1 John 3:2,3]

Our expectation is that we shall see Him as He is & be like Him

Our seeing Him - this looks forward to His coming again for us

hopes with fulfilment that is certain

hope of eternal life

hope of righteousness

hope that is laid up for you in heaven

hope of the glory of God

hope that we shall be like Him & see Him as He is

these are some of our 'hopes' as presented in the
New Testament

the church's hope

none of these hopes are focused on this world

the church's hope is not that ...

- Christian influence & moral teaching will spread throughout the world to improve it
- the world will get better & better until it is a fit place for the Lord to rule

why is the church's hope directed away from this world?

The church has a heavenly origin

The church began at Pentecost

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit ...

And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved”

[Acts 2:2-4,47]

why is the church's hope directed away from this world?

The church has a heavenly calling

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.”

[Hebrews 3:1]

why is the church's hope directed away from this world?

The church has a heavenly hope

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who according to His abundant mercy
has begotten us again to a living hope through the
resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and
that does not fade away,
reserved in heaven for you,
who are kept by the power of God through faith for
salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

[1 Peter 1:3-5]

why is the church's hope
directed away from this world?

the church has:
a heavenly origin

the church has:
a heavenly calling

the church has:
a heavenly hope

we are citizens of heaven

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often,
and now tell you even weeping,
that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:
whose end is destruction,
whose god is their belly,
and whose glory is in their shame -
who set their mind on earthly things.

For our citizenship is in heaven"
[Philippians 3:20]

notice the contrast between citizens of earth & citizens
of heaven

the return of the Lord Jesus Christ

none of these hopes will have their fulfilment until
the Lord Jesus Christ returns

"Surely I am coming quickly" [Rev 22:20]

the church's certain expectation is the return of
the Lord Jesus

this is what we are awaiting

this is the next event in God's calendar

the early church were waiting

the imminent return of the Lord Jesus was on the hearts of the Macedonians in Paul's day:

"You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and **to wait for His Son from heaven**, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come."

[1 Thessalonians 1:9,10]

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which **we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ**, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."

[Philippians 3:20,21]

the Lord's coming forgotten

it was on the hearts of the Macedonians in
Paul's day

it seems to have been quickly forgotten

the Lord Jesus illustrates this with a parable:

the Lord's coming forgotten, but now declared

Parable [Matt 25:1-13]

refers to 10 virgins waiting for the Bridegroom to come

His coming was delayed:

the virgins slept

at midnight - the cry: 'the Bridegroom is coming, go & meet Him'

the virgins awake & get their lamps ready

5 have oil, are ready, meet the Bridegroom, go into the wedding

5 have no oil, try to buy some, miss the Bridegroom's arrival & are too late to enter the wedding

the Lord's coming forgotten but now declared

the virgins who should have been waiting for the
Bridegroom slept

the Lord's coming seems to have been forgotten
through the centuries

but it shouldn't have been:

it is mentioned in nearly every New Testament book

His coming is now known

'the Bridegroom is coming'

for many years the news of His
impending arrival has been taught
and is now well known

although His coming is known this truth has no good effect on some

Parable [Matt 24:45-51]

refers to servants while the Master is away:
a faithful & wise servant doing what his Master expects

an evil servant who says 'My Master is delaying His coming' - he beats fellow servants & shares with drunkards

on the Master's return:

the faithful & wise servant will be rewarded

the evil servant will be punished

2 stages

the second coming of the Lord Jesus will be in 2 stages:

- coming for the church
the 'rapture' of the church
- coming in glory
His appearing
we will come with Him



the Lord will come for His own

The Lord Jesus said:

In My Father's house are many mansions ...

I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you,

I will come again and receive you to Myself;

that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:2,3

The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout,
with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God.
And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together
with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

1 Thes 4:16,17

At the rapture we will meet the Lord in the air

when?

the Lord Jesus Christ could return
for His church at any time ...

the Lord will return in glory - later (His appearing)

While they watched, He was taken up ... This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.

Acts 1:11

And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives

Zech 14:4

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together;
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.
Is 40:5

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Rev 1:7

The Lord will personally return to the earth

when?

His appearing will be after much suffering on earth - the Tribulation period



some Christians are confused and put these 2 stages of the Lord's coming together

but there can be no doubt that they are separate

You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thes 1:9-10

Paul doesn't write "well done, but you're wrong - you've got years of suffering first"

A prophetic word spoken to the church at Philadelphia:

Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Behold, I am coming quickly!

Rev 3:10,11

the Bride of Christ

the church is described as the 'Bride' of Christ indicating a place of love, intimacy & privilege.

The Book of Revelation tells us about the marriage supper of the Lamb after He has taken the church to be with Him:

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

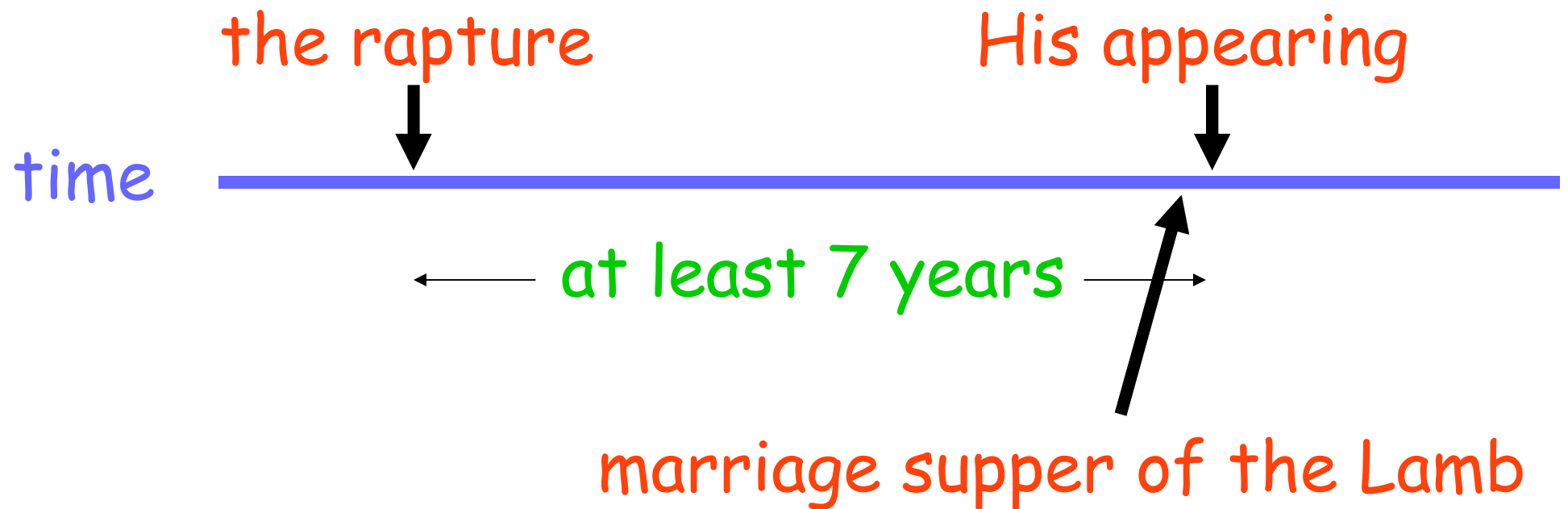
And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'"

[Rev 19:7-9]

when?

the marriage supper of the Lamb will take place before His appearing



why are we told about the return of the Lord Jesus?

to warn unbelievers [2 Peter 3:3-9]

to untrouble our hearts [John 14:1-3]

to give comfort [1 Thes 4:16-18]

so we will watch [Matt 24:42]

so we will use our gifts to serve Him [Luke 19:11-27]

so we will live soberly, righteously, godly [Titus 2:11-14]

to check or change our behaviour with respect to:

purity [1 John 3:2,3]

holiness [1 Peter 1:13-16]

fleshly behaviour [Col 3:3-5]

to encourage in sufferings & trials [1 Peter 4:12,13]

to patiently accept unfairness [James 5:7,8]

therefore

Let us hold fast to the profession
of our hope without wavering for
He who promised is faithful.

[Hebrews 10:23]

When God promises He fulfils, therefore our hope
is a certain hope

"Surely I am coming quickly."

Amen.

Even so, come,

Lord Jesus!

[Revelation 22:20]

