

# ***HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION: OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF DEATH***

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***“And they overcame him (Antichrist) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” (Revelation 12:11)***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- a. Why study the end-times portion of the gospel? There are over 150 chapters in the Bible about the events surrounding Jesus’ return, which indicate their importance. This study fills us with hope, urgency, clarity, and fascination. See previous sessions for more explanation.
- b. There is much fear in the Church concerning suffering and martyrdom as it’s related to current suffering and suffering in the Great Tribulation. I have found that many believers do not want to hear about the end-times because they have a wrong view of the end times and because the fear of death is overwhelming. The fear of death hinders our hearts from connecting to the glorious truths of the end-time scriptures.
- c. Usually the first response to the end-time message is, “How will I survive?” This first response indicates that we are mostly thinking about self-preservation. Every person in the earth struggles with the fear of death.
- d. Anxiety and worry are rooted in the fear of death. When somebody loses a job, they worry about not having money to provide for themselves in order to stay alive. We are most connected to our fear of death in desperate moments during our life.
- e. The hope of the resurrection is a unique hope to those that follow Jesus and it is what will cause the Church to flourish in the end-time crisis. The hope of the resurrection was one of the main elements of the gospel that the apostles preached. There is a supernatural hope in the resurrection that can fill our thoughts and emotions on a regular basis, removing the fear of death and the negative fruits it brings.

### **II. PERSECUTION AND MARTYRDOM IN THE END TIMES**

- a. Most, if not all, people will be confronted with the reality of death and suffering in the last few years before Jesus’ return. The fear of death will be manifested in billions of people at the same time on the earth.
- b. The various systems of the Antichrist will be built assuming people fear death. His economic system will only be available to those that worship him, otherwise they will be killed. Many will take his mark because they will want to provide for their families. He will demand people worship Him or be killed. He will wage war on the nations and bring the threat of death all over the globe.

***“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimonies of Jesus Christ.” (Revelation 12:17)***

***“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...These are the ones who come out of the Great Tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:9, 14)***

**“Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.” (Revelation 13:6-7)**

**“He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship to image of the beast to be killed.” (Revelation 13:15)**

- c. These will be real issues every believer will face as they continue to say yes to Jesus in the Great Tribulation. Believers in many nations are already experiencing these pressures. The pressures of suffering and martyrdom will

### **III. HOPE OF THE RESURRECTION**

- a. The resurrection of the dead is the hope of the Christian faith. The apostles in the early church emphasized the resurrection when they preached the gospel.

**“I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.” (Acts 24:15)**

**“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.” (1 Peter 1:3)**

**“But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16)**

**“We ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope...” (Romans 8:23-24)**

- b. The hope of the resurrection is multifaceted. We will never die, we will receive glorified bodies that experience the fullness of God’s paradise, we will experience physical nearness to God, all of our small movements of love for God and people will be fully rewarded for eternity, the family of God will be together forever, pain, sickness, and brokenness will never be experienced again.
- c. The hope of the resurrection will supernaturally strengthen the Church in the Great Tribulation. Many will joyfully give their lives in allegiance to Jesus and overcome the Antichrist’s intimidations. Love for Jesus displayed through martyrdom will cause many unbelievers to turn radically to Jesus. The hope displayed through the Church in the midst of pressure and death will amaze unbelievers and point them to the truth of eternity and the resurrection hope in Jesus. The most prominent message in that time frame will be the hope of eternal life and new bodies that will live on a renewed earth with God.

### **IV. OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF DEATH**

- a. The revelation of Jesus’ resurrection and our future resurrection shatters the fear of death. Jesus came to destroy the bondage of the fear of death. Jesus’ death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven brings us a guaranteed hope that we will experience the same. He came to reverse the power of sin and Satan, which is death.

**“He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” (Hebrews 2:14-15)**

**“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, ...but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God.” (2 Timothy 1:7-8)**

- b. Paul gives us insight into overcoming the fear of death through the revelation of eternal glory. Paul persevered through sufferings with a godly perspective. He knew that they were “working” for him an eternal weight of glory, which is eternally connected to his resurrected body. The primary definition of walking by faith in this passage is having a vision for a resurrected body and living according to that truth in this age.

**“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 4:16-5:8)**

- b. There is a reality in God that we can touch as believers where we actually groan in the hope and expectation of our resurrected bodies. We must pursue a deeper experience the hope of the resurrection until a groan is awakened in us for fullness, which is the resurrection of the dead. When is the last time you groaned for your resurrected body? Romans 8 also talks about groaning for our resurrected bodies. “We were saved in this hope,” the hope of a resurrected body. Again, Paul says that that present sufferings are not even worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in our new bodies. God wants to conform us into the image of His Son, which means He wants us to have new bodies like His Son.

**“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God...Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope, for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance...And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Romans 8:16-19, 23-25, 28-29)**

- c. The Church will be victorious and faithful through martyrdom in the Great Tribulation. The threats of the enemy will mean nothing in comparison to the treasures and pleasures we will experience the moment we die, let alone the moment we receive our new bodies at Jesus’ coming.

- d. Even Jesus was strengthened by the hope of His resurrection (Psalm 16:9-11).
- e. The goal of our faith is not to physically survive; the goal is to be faithful to the end.

***“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.” (Revelation 15:1-2)***

## **V. HOPE IN BELIEVING IN THE RESURRECTION**

***“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 5:13)***

- a. The Spirit wants to impart hope, joy, and peace to our thoughts and emotions by the revelation of Jesus’ 2<sup>nd</sup> coming and the resurrection from the dead.
- b. The context of this prayer in Romans is the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus and Millennial Kingdom, which includes the resurrection of the dead.
- c. We can believe God for supernatural hope to change our lives now and we can believe Him for greater measures of hope during seasons of suffering and martyrdom that are coming to the Church globally.
- d. Break your agreement with the fear of death