

Colossians 1:23-24

23 **If indeed you CONTINUE in the FAITH, GROUNDED and STEADFAST**, and are not moved away from the **HOPE of the GOSPEL which you HEARD**, which was **preached to every creature under heaven**, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

• **Ephesians 3:17-19** “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through _____, that you, being _____ and _____ in _____, may be able to comprehend with _____ the _____ what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the _____ of _____ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

• **II Thessalonians 2:16-17** “Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has _____ us and _____ us everlasting consolation and _____ by _____, _____ your _____ and _____ you in every good word and work.”

• **Titus 1:2** “In _____ of _____ which God, who cannot lie, _____ before time began.”

• **Romans 8:24-25** “For we were saved in this _____, but _____ that is seen is not _____; for why does one _____ for what he sees? But if we _____ for what we do _____, then we _____ for it with perseverance.”

• **Galatians 5:5** “For we through the Spirit _____ for the _____ of righteousness by _____.”

• **II Corinthians 5:7** “For we walk by _____, not by _____.”

• **Hebrews 11:1** “Now _____ is the substance of things _____ for, the _____ of things _____.”

Definition: “SAVED in this HOPE” — Part of our SALVATION is the promise of being with God in HEAVEN and having a perfect RESURRECTION BODY, but **we have NOT received it or SEEN it yet**. The Rapture of the Church, or the catching up of all Believers in Christ, is also called **“The Blessed Hope.”**

• **Titus 2:13** “Looking for the _____ and glorious _____ of our great God and _____ Jesus Christ.”

• **John 14:2-3** “In My Father’s house are many _____; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to _____ a _____ for you. And if I go and _____ a _____ for you, I will _____ again and _____ you to Myself, that where I am, there _____ may be also.”

• **I Thessalonians 4:17** “Then _____ who are alive and remain shall be _____ up together with them in the _____ to meet the _____ in the air. And thus we shall _____ be with the Lord.”

Definition: “If indeed you CONTINUE in the FAITH, GROUNDED and STEADFAST” – Does this mean there is a possibility of someone losing their salvation because they didn’t “continue in the faith”? **No, it’s not that kind of “if” in the sentence. It’s like Jesus, where He said “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”** Our continuing in the faith and being grounded and steadfast is PROOF that we ARE SAVED, rather than a condition in order to keep from becoming unsaved. **The person who does NOT continue in the faith, and somehow walks away from their faith in Christ, was probably not even really saved in the first place.** They might have had an intellectual belief in Christ (see James 2:19), or

had joined a church and were trying to live the Christian life in their own strength, and when that failed, they gave up. Paul mentions this in I Corinthians 15:1, and says, “unless you believed in vain.” **To believe “in vain” would mean someone who SEEMED to make a decision for Christ, but it was really shallow, or based on emotions rather than true faith.** That shallow, emotionally-based “belief” is not enough to get you through the tough times. A true Christian, one who has received Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, may stumble and fall at times, and even if they fall into sin, they will feel miserable, and it will only be temporary until they repent and come back to the Lord. **The true Christian is not perfect, but they do truly LOVE Jesus, and have a DESIRE to obey Him, even when they sometimes fail.** Remember King David? The Bible says he was a man after God’s own heart, even though we know he committed some terrible sins. However, David was always quick to repent, and he really loved the Lord, in spite of his own weakness.

• **Acts 13:22** “And when He had removed him, He (God) raised up for them _____ as _____, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘I have found _____ the son of Jesse, a man _____ My own _____, who will do all My will.’”

• **I Corinthians 15:1-4** “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the _____ which I _____ to you, which also you _____ and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that _____ which I _____ to you – unless you _____ in _____. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also _____: that Christ _____ for our _____ according to the Scriptures, and that He was _____, and that He _____ again the third day according to the _____.”

• **James 2:18-19** “But someone will say, ‘You have _____, and I have works. Show me your _____ without your works, and I will _____ you my _____ by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the _____ – and tremble!’”

• **Mark 3:11** “And the unclean spirits (demons), whenever they saw _____, fell down before _____ and cried out, saying, ‘You are the _____ of _____.’”

Definition: “Even the DEMONS BELIEVE – and TREMBLE!” – James is a warning against just having “intellectual assent” rather than FAITH. James 2:19 says, “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble!” You see, just believing in the existence of God is not enough. **The demons believe that Jesus is the Christ, and they know who He is.** In Mark 1:23-26 and Matthew 8:28-29, **the demons cried out to Jesus, “I know who You are, the Holy One of God!”** Intellectual BELIEF would also be like saying, “I believe George Washington was the first president of the United States.” **That would be a true statement,** but it isn’t Biblical FAITH. Bible faith, the kind of faith necessary for salvation, means **to PUT your WHOLE LIFE in GOD’S HANDS, and to TRUST in JESUS with your WHOLE HEART.** It also means believing that Jesus died on the cross and shed His precious BLOOD to PAY for your sins. **The demons have NOT put their faith and trust in Jesus - they just have knowledge of who He is.** They also “tremble” in fear of Him, because they know it is Jesus who will throw them into the Lake of Fire at the great Judgment Day.

• **Matthew 8:28-29** “When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two _____ - _____ men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. And suddenly they cried out, ‘What have we to do with You, _____, You _____ of _____? Have you come here to _____ us before the time?’”

Definition: “The HOPE of the GOSPEL which you HEARD” – What exactly is the gospel message which Paul preached? **Can we know EXACTLY what that GOSPEL is? Yes, Paul gives us “the gospel in a nutshell” in I Corinthians 15:1-4,** and he gives us the mechanics of **receiving the gospel message for salvation by faith** in Romans 10:8-12. But what is meant by **“The HOPE of the**

GOSPEL”? The Greek word for “hope” is **not like our English word for hope**, which tends to mean we aren’t sure about something, but we WISH it were true. **The Bible word for HOPE means “expectation, an attitude of CONFIDENTLY looking forward to what is good and beneficial; TRUST.** In other words, the **Bible word for HOPE means CONFIDENCE in a SURE THING.**

• **Romans 10:8-10** “But what does it say? ‘The _____ is near you, even in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the _____ of _____ which we _____): that if you _____ with your _____ the Lord _____ and _____ in your _____ that God has _____ Him from the dead, _____ will be _____. For with the heart one _____ to righteousness, and with the mouth _____ is made to salvation.”

• **I Peter 1:3** “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant _____ has begotten us again to a living _____ through the resurrection of _____ from the _____.”

• **I Peter 3:15** “But sanctify the Lord God in your _____, and _____ be _____ to give a defense (answer) to everyone who _____ you a _____ for the _____ that is in you, with meekness and fear (reverence).”

Definition: “PREACHED to EVERY creature under HEAVEN” – This is the same as **“The free gift CAME TO ALL MEN”** (Romans 5:18). In Paul’s day, the gospel was indeed **PREACHED to the entire known world (the Roman Empire and beyond)**, but it also means that the invitation to receive eternal life through Jesus Christ is **AVAILABLE to ALL people in EVERY NATION UNDER HEAVEN.** No, many DO NOT RECEIVE Him, but ALL PEOPLE EVERYWHERE have had an opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is not saying that **all HAVE HEARD about Jesus**, but that all people have the **OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR, if they WANT to hear.** God is absolutely **FAIR and JUST**, and does not condemn anyone to hell without **giving them a chance to HEAR the truth about Jesus.**

• **Romans 5:18** “Therefore, as through one man’s offense _____ came to _____ men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the _____ came to _____, resulting in justification of life.”

• **Colossians 1:5-6** “Because of the _____ which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the _____ of the _____ of the _____, which has come to you, as it has also in _____ the _____, and is _____ forth _____, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the _____ of God in truth.”

24 I now rejoice in **my SUFFERINGS for you, and fill up in my flesh what is LACKING in the AFFLICTIONS of Christ**, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

• **Ephesians 3:13** “Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my _____ for you, which is your glory.”

• **II Corinthians 11:24-27** “From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one (a severe whipping). Three times I was _____ with rods; once I was _____; three times I was _____; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils (danger) of waters, in perils of _____, in perils of my own countrymen (the Jews), in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in _____ and _____, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.....“

• **II Corinthians 12:10** “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities (physical weakness), in reproaches, in _____, in _____, in _____, for _____ sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong [*in the Lord*].”

• **Romans 5:3-4** “And not only that, but we also _____ in _____, knowing that _____ produces _____; and perseverance [*produces*] character; and character [*produces*] hope.”

• **James 1:2-3** “My brethren, count it all _____ when you fall into various trials (tribulations), knowing that the _____ of your _____ produces _____.”

Definition: “Tribulation” — Distress or suffering resulting from oppression or persecution. Paul **suffered** many things for the sake of Christ and His church.

Definition: “Fill up in my FLESH what is LACKING in the AFFLICTIONS of Christ” – Is Paul saying that there was somehow **something “lacking” in Christ’s death on the cross? No, of course not! Jesus Himself said, “It is finished!”** and completely paid for our sins on the cross, and bought our salvation. What Paul is saying here is that **the enemies of Christ, those who hate God and Jesus Christ, would like to continue to crucify Him and inflict pain and suffering on Him**, because they hate Him so much. Paul looks at his own sufferings and wounds at the hands of the enemies of Christ as just being a part of their hatred for Him, and since they cannot get to Jesus Himself, **Paul was “taking a few hits” for his Lord and Savior.**

• **John 16:33** “These things I have spoken to you, that in _____ you may have _____. In the world you will have _____ (suffering); but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

• **Philippians 3:10** “That I may _____ and the power of His _____, and the fellowship of His _____, being conformed to His death.”

• **I Peter 4:13 & 19** “But rejoice to the extent that you partake (share) of Christ’s _____, that when His _____ is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding _____.” “Therefore, let those who _____ according to the _____ of _____ commit their _____ to Him in doing good, as to a faithful _____.”

• **Galatians 6:17** “From now on let no one trouble me, for I _____ in my _____ the _____ of the Lord Jesus.”

Definition: “For I BEAR in my BODY the MARKS of the Lord Jesus” – Paul claims that the many **WOUNDS and SCARS (from persecution as a Christian) that he bears in his physical body** are evidence that he belongs to Jesus Christ. He calls them **“the MARKS of the Lord Jesus” - those SCARS he received from beatings and persecution because of his belief in Christ.**

• **Acts 21:11-13** “.....he took Paul’s belt, bound (tied up) his own hands and feet, and said, ‘Thus says the _____, ‘So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’ (Verse 13) “Then _____ answered, ‘What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am _____ not only to be bound [*in prison*], but also to _____ at Jerusalem for the _____ of the _____.’”

• **Acts 9:15-16** “But the _____ said to him, ‘Go, for he (Paul) is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My _____ before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him (Paul) how _____ things he must _____ for My name’s _____.’”