

A person stands on a dark, silhouetted hill in the foreground, looking up at a vast night sky. The Milky Way galaxy is visible as a bright, colorful band of stars stretching from the bottom center towards the top right. The sky is filled with numerous stars, and the horizon is a dark line separating the land from the sky.

BEYOND

Living for What Lasts

Heaven Ahead of Me.
The Spirit Within Me.

TAMPA LIFE / PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

TAMPA LIFE LIVE 101

Living for What Lasts

Heaven Ahead of Me. The Spirit Within Me.

A personal Bible study based on Tampa Life Live 101

There is a difference between believing that eternity exists and allowing eternity to shape the way we live. We can affirm that heaven is real, that Jesus is coming, and that this world will pass away, yet still organize our thoughts as though the present moment contains our entire future. Our schedules, conversations, disappointments, and desires can become so crowded with temporary concerns that the promises of God remain true in our doctrine but distant from our daily awareness.

This message continues the BEYOND series by asking us to look past the circumstances surrounding us and remember the future God has prepared. Earlier studies called us to trust beyond what we could see, reach, or resolve. Here, the question becomes more personal: What are we living for? What future is directing our choices? What promise receives our attention when the present becomes difficult?

The sermon does not suggest that earthly responsibilities are unimportant. We still work, care for our families, make decisions, maintain our homes, and respond to real needs. Faithfulness includes those responsibilities. But they cannot carry the entire weight of our hope. A career can provide useful work without becoming our ultimate purpose. A home can shelter our family without becoming our permanent security. A breakthrough can bring relief without becoming the final fulfillment of everything God has promised.

Abraham lived in tents while looking for a city. Paul carried suffering while expecting resurrection. John saw a future in which God dwells with His people and death is gone. The believers addressed in Ephesians had not yet received the fullness of their inheritance, but they had received the Holy Spirit of promise. These passages teach us how to live faithfully between what God has already given and what He will bring to completion.

As you study, read the assigned passages in their entirety. Give the teaching time to settle before moving into reflection. The purpose is to recover an awareness of eternity that changes how you think, pray, love, and obey.

PART 01

Living in a Tent, Looking for a City

Hebrews 11:8-16, Hebrews 10:32-39, and Hebrews 13:14

01

Living in a Tent, Looking for a City

Read Hebrews 11:8-16, Hebrews 10:32-39, and Hebrews 13:14.

“For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:10, KJV).

Abraham’s faith first appears in this passage as obedience. God called him to leave, and he responded without possessing the complete route ahead of him. He knew enough about the One who called him to take a step he could not fully explain. That is an important beginning because faith can easily become something we discuss without allowing it to direct our movement. Abraham’s trust changed where he went and how he lived.

Yet entering the land of promise did not immediately produce a settled life. Hebrews says that Abraham lived there as a stranger, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who shared the same promise. The inheritance extended across generations, while their daily experience remained marked by movement and incomplete possession. They were heirs of something real, but they had not received its fullness. Their circumstances required them to keep trusting the God who had spoken.

That setting gives the city in verse 10 its significance. Abraham’s hope reached beyond the structures surrounding him. His tent could be taken down, packed, and moved. The city he sought had foundations, and its Builder and Maker was God. The stability he desired would finally come from the Lord Himself. [Hebrews 11, KJV](#).

The preacher brings this contrast close to our own lives. If someone judged Abraham only by where he slept, that person would misunderstand where he was going. His temporary dwelling did not reveal the full measure of his expectation. In the same way, our present circumstances cannot provide a complete account of our future in God. A difficult season may describe what we are experiencing, but it cannot independently determine everything that experience means.

We often allow circumstances to become a permanent definition. A loss becomes the way we introduce ourselves. A delay becomes evidence that nothing will change. A weakness begins to feel like the boundary of everything God can do. Hebrews gives us room to acknowledge

those realities while refusing to make them the whole story. A person can be faithfully walking with God and still be living in conditions that appear unfinished.

Verse 13 makes this truth more demanding: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises.” Their faith did not guarantee that they would personally witness every fulfillment before death. They received genuine evidences of God’s faithfulness, but the promises reached farther than their own lifetimes. Hebrews honors them as people who continued trusting while fulfillment remained ahead.

This keeps our understanding of BEYOND rooted in Scripture. The better country is heavenly. It cannot be reduced to a better job, a larger home, a restored opportunity, or an easier season. We may pray earnestly for healing, provision, reconciliation, and relief. Those requests belong in a life of faith. Yet our deepest confidence must reach beyond any particular earthly outcome. A believer who dies trusting Christ has not demonstrated failed faith because a desired answer did not arrive before death.

The patriarchs confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Their confession expressed both belonging and direction. They understood that their present surroundings were not the complete home their hearts sought, and they were moving toward what God had prepared. Their lives were being interpreted by a destination they could not yet fully see.

That confession did not make them careless. Abraham still cared for his household, handled conflict, made decisions, and received visitors. Pilgrim faith gave direction to his responsibilities. Likewise, remembering that this world is temporary should deepen our faithfulness within it. We can care for our homes without expecting them to provide permanent security. We can love our families without making them responsible for satisfying every longing in our hearts. We can work diligently while remembering that our value does not rise and fall with our professional progress.

The sermon warns us not to let “here” become everything. This warning matters in comfortable seasons as well as painful ones. Hardship may expose the instability of temporary things, while comfort can conceal it. When life is going well, we may quietly begin to believe that our income, health, reputation, or routine will remain unchanged indefinitely. Pilgrim faith receives those blessings gratefully while remembering that they belong to the journey.

Hebrews 11:15 also examines the country behind the travelers. If they had remained inwardly occupied with the place they left, they might have returned. Their direction mattered. A person can change outward circumstances while remaining attached to former loyalties. We

can remember the pleasure of an old pattern while forgetting its bondage. We can remember acceptance while overlooking what that acceptance required us to compromise.

The better country gives us a reason to continue forward. Holiness becomes more understandable when belonging is clear. We are learning to live as people whose future is with God. Our choices begin to express that relationship. We turn from what would draw us away because we are responding to the One who has called us.

The passage closes this movement with the assurance that God is not ashamed to be called their God. Their trust is personal, and His identification with them is personal. These were not people whose histories contained no failures. Abraham's wider story includes fear, mistakes, and correction. Yet Hebrews presents his life through the direction of faith. This gives hope to those who are still growing. We do not need to pretend that the journey has been flawless. We need to continue responding to the faithful God who leads us.

The core truth is that our circumstances describe where we are traveling, while God's promise reveals the destination toward which we are walking.

Personal Reflection / Part 01

For reflection, consider what Abraham's obedience and his life in tents teach you about promise and present experience. What changes in your thinking when you recognize that someone can die in faith without receiving every desired earthly answer? Which blessing have you begun asking to provide permanent security? Is there something from the country behind you that still attracts your heart? How could your family see your eternal hope expressed through responsible and loving conduct?

For your personal response, write about one circumstance you have treated as a permanent definition of your life. Describe it honestly, then explain what Hebrews 11 gives you reason to believe beyond it. Finish by identifying one responsibility you will fulfill faithfully while you wait. Let your response become a declaration of direction: I will care for what God has entrusted to me today while keeping my heart directed toward the city He has prepared.

PART 02

Your Treasure Is Training Your Heart

Matthew 6:19-34 and Colossians 3:1-17

02

Your Treasure Is Training Your Heart

Read Matthew 6:19-34 and Colossians 3:1-17.

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21, KJV).

The sermon asks why we plan carefully for education, retirement, and financial security while giving so little thought to eternity. The comparison is searching because planning for an earthly future requires action. A student studies when other activities would be more enjoyable. A household limits spending to reduce debt. Parents make sacrifices to provide opportunities for their children. We accept present limitations because we believe a future good deserves them.

The preacher asks us to bring that seriousness to our spiritual lives. What future is our daily conduct preparing us for? This question reaches into the desires directing our speech, the habits forming our children, the loyalties shaping our spending, and the permissions we grant ourselves when obedience becomes costly. Our lives are moving in a direction even when we have not consciously examined it.

Matthew 6 places Jesus’ teaching about treasure within a larger examination of the heart. Earlier in the chapter, He addresses giving, prayer, and fasting. He repeatedly challenges the desire to perform righteousness for human approval. He then contrasts earthly treasure, vulnerable to corruption and theft, with treasure in heaven. From there, He speaks about the eye and declares that no one can serve two masters. Possessions, perception, and allegiance are brought together. What we treasure influences what we notice and whom we serve.

Matthew 6, KJV.

This helps us understand why something ordinary can gain extraordinary authority over a heart. Its power is not determined only by its cost. A modest income can dominate someone through constant fear, while a large income can be stewarded with generosity and restraint. A ministry opportunity can become spiritually disordered if preserving it becomes more important than truthfulness. A relationship can acquire too much authority if pleasing that person consistently takes priority over obeying God.

Jesus asks us to consider service. Who is directing our decisions? What do we feel unable to risk? What do we protect even when protecting it requires compromise? The answers may expose a treasure we would never have named as such.

His words also invite us to examine how investment trains our hearts. We often assume that habits simply reveal what we already love. Yet what we repeatedly give attention to can deepen its hold upon us. Continually investing in comparison can strengthen dissatisfaction. Rehearsing an offense can nourish resentment. Giving time to Scripture, prayer, and faithful service can help turn our attention toward God.

Spiritual formation is not mechanical. Religious routines can be performed with a divided heart. Nevertheless, our patterns matter. We cannot reasonably expect eternity to govern our thinking while giving it almost no place in what we read, remember, discuss, or practice. A truth that receives little attention may remain part of our stated belief while losing influence over our daily reactions.

The preacher observes that we can become fluent in describing cultural problems while remaining strangely quiet about what God has prepared. We may know the details of an argument, a news story, or a financial concern, yet struggle to recall the promises meant to sustain us. Being informed is appropriate. Becoming consumed can narrow our understanding until every new event seems capable of determining our final future.

Scripture gives us another frame of reference. It reminds us that the present is real but incomplete, that God remains faithful, and that His purposes extend beyond the limits of what we currently see. Giving His Word room in our minds helps us place earthly concerns within that larger account.

Jesus' teaching about treasure is followed by words about food, clothing, and anxiety. He tells His hearers that their heavenly Father knows their needs. The same chapter includes the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." Eternal priorities do not make material needs unworthy of attention or prayer. A person facing financial pressure may need practical help, wise counsel, employment, housing, or food.

The call to seek first God's kingdom concerns the rule under which we pursue those necessities. We can plan responsibly without assuming that planning gives us complete control. We can seek provision without making provision our ultimate security. We can work toward stability while allowing God's righteousness to govern how we work, spend, and respond to uncertainty.

Colossians 3 brings the same principle into daily conduct. Paul tells believers to set their affection on things above, grounding the command in their relationship to Christ and the promise of appearing with Him in glory. He then addresses sexual sin, covetousness, anger, malicious speech, and lying. He calls them to mercy, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love. Future glory has consequences for present behavior. **Colossians 3, KJV.**

If we anticipate life with Christ, that anticipation should affect the way we speak to our spouse, receive correction, handle disagreement, and treat people who cannot advance our interests. Heavenly-minded language does not remove the need for repentance in ordinary relationships. It makes that repentance more urgent because our conduct is meant to reflect the One to whom we belong.

The sermon's warning about unforgiveness belongs within this examination. Christ's commands must be taken seriously. We are called to release revenge and respond to His mercy. That does not require us to call wrongdoing acceptable or abandon wise accountability. Forgiveness can be practiced alongside truthful boundaries. Eternal priorities should make us more faithful in both mercy and wisdom.

The preacher urges us to use what will pass away to serve what matters forever. A home can become a place of hospitality. Income can meet a real need. Time can be given to teaching children, encouraging a struggling believer, or listening to someone who needs care. Skills can serve the church and the wider community. These acts express a life responding to God's grace.

They also invite us to reconsider success. Some of the most enduring uses of our lives may attract little attention. A quiet act of faithfulness may matter more than an accomplishment that receives public praise. We should therefore ask what our stewardship has served, as well as how much we have accumulated.

The core truth is that what we repeatedly invest in reveals and shapes the direction of our hearts.

Personal Reflection / Part 02

For reflection, consider how the surrounding teachings about giving, prayer, and fasting deepen Jesus' words about treasure. Where do you see the difference between using money and serving it? Which habit receives attention out of proportion to its eternal importance? How does Colossians connect future glory with present conduct? What are your children, family members, or those you influence learning about treasure by watching your decisions?

For your personal response, write about one habit that needs to be redirected, one resource you can use to serve someone, and one relationship in which eternity should change your conduct. Choose a specific action for this week. Let your response express this commitment: I will give God's kingdom room in my schedule, my stewardship, and my relationships.

PART 03

Put Eternity on the Other Side of the Scale

2 Corinthians 4:7-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, and Romans 8:18-25

03

Put Eternity on the Other Side of the Scale

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, and Romans 8:18-25.

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17, KJV).

Paul’s words about light affliction can be misunderstood when we begin with verse 17 and ignore the argument leading to it. The chapter describes gospel ministry carried in vulnerable human bodies. The treasure comes from God, while the vessels remain fragile. Paul names trouble, perplexity, persecution, and being cast down. He describes the cost of serving others through the gospel and connects his endurance with the life of Jesus.

His confidence rests especially in resurrection. The God who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise His people and bring them into His presence. Only after establishing that confidence does Paul speak about present affliction in relation to eternal glory. He is speaking from within suffering, and his hope is grounded in what God has done and promised. [2](#)

[Corinthians 4, KJV.](#)

That setting matters when we apply the passage. A wounded person bearing witness to God’s faithfulness is doing something different from an observer telling someone else that the wound should not hurt. Paul gives suffering believers language for hope. His words should be handled with the tenderness appropriate to the experiences he describes.

The sermon pictures a scale. On one side we place loss, criticism, injury, exhaustion, and disappointment. On the other side we place what God has promised. The illustration exposes how easily our judgment of life becomes occupied by only one category of evidence. We can be meticulous in weighing our pain while giving little attention to resurrection and eternal glory.

Paul gains perspective by bringing that glory into view. “Light” is comparative language. The glory is so great and enduring that serious suffering cannot outweigh it. “For a moment” is also comparative. A burden may last for years or continue throughout a person’s earthly life. Paul does not promise that every difficulty will end quickly. He places the whole present life within the horizon of eternity.

This allows us to acknowledge the severity of what happened. We can say that an experience has been devastating and still believe that it will not have the final word over God's future for His people. We can name grief without surrendering hope. We can admit exhaustion without concluding that God has abandoned us.

Verse 14 holds this reasoning together. God raised Jesus. Christian hope rests on His action in Christ and His promise concerning those who belong to Him. It reaches farther than the expectation that circumstances will eventually improve. Improved circumstances remain vulnerable to death. Resurrection addresses the deepest limit of our present existence.

This is why the sermon's "more ahead" must include more than earthly progress. A better job, a healed relationship, or an easier season can be a great gift. Yet even the best earthly conditions cannot complete the promise of redemption. Paul's confidence remains meaningful when strength decreases, when outward conditions deteriorate, and when death approaches. God's purpose extends beyond what happens within a mortal body's present limits.

Verse 16 places outward deterioration alongside inward renewal. These experiences can coexist. We may expect spiritual renewal to produce visible vitality every time, but Paul describes something more complex. God can be sustaining a person deeply while the body remains weak. The inner life can be renewed while physical limitations continue.

That does not make the body unimportant. The following chapter anticipates God's provision beyond our present earthly dwelling, and Romans 8 speaks explicitly of the redemption of the body. God's final answer to bodily weakness includes bodily redemption. While we wait, renewal may appear through patience, restored trust, courage to receive help, willingness to forgive, or strength to fulfill a small responsibility.

Such renewal may be quiet. It may not produce a dramatic account we can easily share. A believer does not need an impressive testimony every week in order to be sustained by God. Sometimes the evidence is simply that the person continues turning toward Him with an honest heart.

Paul says that we look toward what is unseen and eternal. This is attention grounded in what God has revealed. We do not know every detail of the future, but we know enough about His character, Christ's resurrection, and His promises to resist treating visible conditions as the whole account.

This practice may require repeated return to Scripture. Fear repeats itself readily. Hope may need repeated attention as well. Reading resurrection promises during grief gives grief a larger setting. Remembering eternal glory during exhausting service helps us assess that service beyond immediate recognition. We are learning to give God's promise sufficient room to influence our understanding.

The sermon urges us not to allow one person's rejection to define God's love or one difficult season to become our definition of forever. That application can strengthen us while leaving room for real care, honest conversation, and necessary change. Eternal perspective should help us act wisely within the present. It can give courage to seek relief, receive support, or address a harmful situation.

Paul's statement that affliction works toward glory also requires careful thought. God's redemptive power does not make wrongdoing morally good. Betrayal remains betrayal, and those who cause harm remain responsible. God can redeem an experience without excusing the evil within it. Nor does Scripture call us to manufacture suffering as though pain were an independent spiritual achievement.

Paul's suffering belongs to his faithful service in Christ. His confidence rests in God's work through and beyond it. We can seek protection, treatment, relief, and justice while continuing to trust the Lord who will finally make all things new.

Romans 8 adds that those who possess the firstfruits of the Spirit still groan while awaiting bodily redemption. Groaning and hope belong in the same life. We do not have to choose between honest weakness and trust in God. The Spirit's presence sustains us within the waiting rather than requiring us to become incapable of sorrow.

The core truth is that suffering is real, while resurrection and eternal glory provide the final measure of our future.

Personal Reflection / Part 03

For reflection, consider why verse 14 must remain connected to verse 17. How does “light” differ from “painless,” and how does “momentary” differ from “brief”? What evidence of inward renewal could exist while outward strength decreases? Where have you allowed one disappointment to define the future? How could you offer hope to someone without rushing their grief?

For your personal response, describe one burden honestly. Then write the promise of Scripture that speaks to your final future. Identify any care, counsel, protection, or practical help you need now, and name one faithful action you can take while the situation remains unresolved. Let your response express this conviction: I will tell the truth about my suffering and give God's promised glory its rightful place in my understanding.

PART 04

The City Where God Dwells With His People

Revelation 21:1-27 and Revelation 22:1-5

04

The City Where God Dwells With His People

Read Revelation 21:1-27 and Revelation 22:1-5.

*“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain”
(Revelation 21:4, KJV).*

The sermon moves from Abraham looking for a city to John seeing the holy city. Revelation 21 opens with a new heaven and a new earth. John sees the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride. The promise is larger than a vague picture of leaving difficulty behind. It includes God’s completed work, a renewed creation, a holy city, and His presence with His people.

The announcement at the center is, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.” The greatest treasure of the promised future is God Himself. Beauty, security, and freedom from suffering belong within the greater reality of dwelling with Him. Our understanding of heaven should therefore deepen our desire for the Lord, not merely our desire for relief. **Revelation 21, KJV.**

The preacher pauses over the personal quality of this promise. God Himself will be with His people. That assurance reaches places human care cannot fully reach. Others can listen, stay, pray, and help, but no human being completely knows every hidden wound, unspoken fear, or private sorrow. God knows us with a completeness that is beyond even the most loving human relationship.

The promise that He wipes away tears presents restoration as personal care. His people are known. Their sorrow is not overlooked. Their future is not being prepared by someone indifferent to what they have endured. The One who brings redemption to completion is the One who has known them throughout the journey.

We should not claim to know precisely how every memory and sorrow will be transformed. Scripture gives us a certain promise without explaining every process. God will remove the

realities that make sorrow, death, and pain recurring features of present life. His knowledge of us will be complete, and His restoration will be sufficient.

Death is more than a physical event in our experience. It interrupts relationships, changes households, and turns ordinary routines into reminders of absence. A familiar chair, a holiday, a conversation we can no longer have, or a decision we must now make alone can carry the weight of loss. Revelation addresses the enemy beneath those interruptions: there will be no more death.

This is why Christian hope matters when we grieve. It announces that the loss presently confronting us will not remain the permanent structure of God's future. First Thessalonians 4 comforts believers concerning those who have died in Christ. Its assurance is that the Lord will gather His people and they will be with Him. The promised future gives grief a horizon beyond separation.

We may rightly anticipate being gathered with those who belong to Christ. Yet Scripture directs our certainty toward being together with the Lord. We do not need to fill every unanswered question with imagined details in order to receive comfort. God has already given a promise substantial enough to sustain us.

The sermon also gives concrete pictures of a world without recurring bodily deterioration, hospital-bed farewells, or the supports required by present weakness. Such pictures help us feel the significance of the biblical promise. The certainty, however, rests in what Revelation says: death, sorrow, crying, and pain will be gone.

That future should deepen our respect and care for people living with illness or disability now. Their dignity is already complete as people made in God's image. They deserve inclusion, support, and loving attention in the present. The promise of bodily restoration gives us reason to value the person whose body needs care today.

Likewise, the promise of freedom from sorrow should make the church more compassionate toward those who grieve. We can sit with someone, listen patiently, meet practical needs, and acknowledge the difficulty of the day. Our future hope gives strength for present care. It should make us more willing to remain with people through the long process of sorrow.

John describes gates, foundations, precious stones, gold, and dimensions beyond the scale of an ordinary city. The names of Israel's tribes and the Lamb's apostles appear within the vision. Its beauty is joined to God's faithfulness toward His people. The equal length, breadth,

and height give the city a striking form, and the later declaration that God and the Lamb are its temple keeps divine presence at the center.

These details invite reverence and wonder. They also invite humility. We can marvel at the scale and beauty without assuming that Scripture has supplied every architectural detail. The security of our hope rests in the God who prepares the city. We know enough to trust Him, even while much remains beyond our understanding.

Revelation 21 also joins consolation with warning. God gives the water of life freely, and the overcomer inherits. The chapter speaks of judgment and the exclusion of what defiles. Heavenly hope must therefore remain connected with repentance and faithful allegiance to Christ. The holiness of the promised future reveals the seriousness of belonging to God.

At the same time, the warnings should be read within the chapter's larger argument. They should not become a simplistic verdict on every anxious feeling experienced by a sensitive believer. We are called to sincere repentance, enduring faith, and obedience. We come thirsty to the One who gives life, trusting His mercy while receiving His call to holiness.

If God's presence is the center of our future, present discipleship should include learning to desire Him. Prayer, Scripture, worship, and obedience help form that desire. We appropriately bring needs before the Lord. As we grow, we also learn to seek Him because He is worthy of our love. We can ask for help with today's burden while recognizing that our deepest future is to dwell with Him.

The core truth is that our eternal hope centers on God's presence and His complete defeat of death, sorrow, and pain.

Personal Reflection / Part 04

For reflection, consider how the new heaven and new earth enlarge your understanding of the future. What does God's personal presence contribute to the promise that tears will be wiped away? Which details of your picture of heaven come directly from Scripture? How could future restoration improve the care you offer someone today? Is your longing for heaven becoming a deeper longing for God Himself?

For your personal response, write about a sorrow you are placing within God's promised future. Record what Revelation clearly promises, then identify someone you can care for because of that hope. Describe one concrete expression of compassion. Let your response become this commitment: I will look toward the presence of God and practice compassion while waiting for His complete restoration.

PART 05

The Spirit Is the Earnest of Our Inheritance

Ephesians 1:3-14, Ephesians 4:25-32, and Romans 8:9-23

05

The Spirit Is the Earnest of Our Inheritance

Read Ephesians 1:3-14, Ephesians 4:25-32, and Romans 8:9-23.

“Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance” (Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV).

The final major movement of the sermon connects God’s promised future with the Holy Spirit’s present work. Ephesians begins with praise for what God has done in Christ. Paul speaks of His gracious purpose, holiness, adoption, redemption through Christ’s blood, forgiveness, and inheritance. The Spirit’s seal appears within that account of salvation.

This setting is essential. The promise is connected to the gospel heard and believed, to redemption in Christ, and to the praise of God’s glory. Our understanding of spiritual experience should grow from that foundation. God’s saving work gives meaning to the Spirit’s presence among His people. [Ephesians 1, KJV](#).

The preacher emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is more than a moment of excitement or a feeling in a service. Paul’s language gives weight to that emphasis. The Spirit is God’s pledge concerning the inheritance. What we experience in prayer and worship belongs within a saving purpose that extends toward complete redemption.

A seal marks belonging and authenticity. In Ephesians, believers are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. The image directs our attention toward God’s claim upon His people. Those who belong to Christ do not need to derive their entire identity from human approval, visible success, or the condition of a particular season. God has acted graciously toward them.

This helps explain the sermon’s repeated confession, “I am His.” Belonging to Christ places our lives within a relationship greater than the circumstances presently surrounding us. We are known by the One who redeemed us. His claim upon us carries both assurance and responsibility.

Later in Ephesians, Paul tells believers not to grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom they are sealed unto the day of redemption. The command appears among instructions concerning truthfulness, anger, honest work, helpful speech, kindness, and forgiveness. The seal belongs

within a life of holiness. Confidence in God's promise should make us responsive to His correction.

A person who treasures the Spirit's presence will therefore examine ordinary conduct. How are we speaking? What are we doing with anger? Are our words building people up or wounding them? Are we living truthfully? Are we willing to extend the mercy we have received? These questions belong to Spirit-filled discipleship because Paul places them within the same account of belonging.

The KJV calls the Spirit "the earnest of our inheritance." In this setting, earnest means a pledge or deposit assuring what remains to be received. The sermon's down-payment illustration helps us grasp the relationship between present grace and future fulfillment. God has already given something real that points toward what He will complete.

The Spirit is not a small fragment of God. The image concerns the stages of our participation in His saving work. God is truly present with His people now, while the fullness of redemption still lies ahead. We have received real forgiveness, spiritual life, and fellowship with Him, but we continue to await the complete inheritance.

This explains a tension many believers experience. We know that God has acted, yet weakness remains. We worship sincerely, yet grief can still arise. We experience His presence, yet our bodies still need rest and care. The deposit does not mean that every feature of the final inheritance has already appeared.

Romans 8 makes the relationship clear. Those who possess the firstfruits of the Spirit still groan while waiting for the redemption of the body. The Spirit who raised Jesus will also give life to the mortal bodies of His people. Present spiritual life and future bodily redemption belong to one continuing work of God. **Romans 8, KJV.**

Our weakness does not automatically contradict the promise. It belongs to the waiting in which the Spirit sustains us. The believer's hope is not that every limitation has already disappeared, but that God will complete the redemption He has begun.

The sermon speaks from an Apostolic Pentecostal setting and emphasizes receiving the Holy Ghost and praying in tongues. Acts 2 describes believers being filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. Peter later calls his hearers to repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. These passages provide the broader setting for the sermon's invitation.

Ephesians contributes its own emphasis. It explains the Spirit's relationship to gospel faith, belonging, inheritance, and final redemption. Reading the passages together allows each to deepen our understanding. Acts describes the outpouring and the apostolic response to the gospel. Ephesians unfolds the significance of the Spirit as seal and earnest.

The preacher also describes prayer and worship as reminders that heaven is real. Many believers can remember moments when God's presence renewed a hope they had struggled to hold. Such consolation should be received gratefully. It can strengthen us, direct our attention toward Christ, and remind us that our present life is part of something greater.

Nevertheless, the inheritance does not depend on reproducing the same emotional intensity every time we pray. Feelings vary with exhaustion, grief, health, and circumstance. A quiet day does not establish that God has withdrawn His promise. A powerful day does not remove the need for repentance or accountability. Our confidence must remain grounded in Christ and His Word.

The Spirit's work reaches into the direction of the whole life. He strengthens obedience, draws us toward Christ, and helps us live as people who belong to God. Spiritual assurance becomes more deeply rooted as we learn to receive both His consolation and His correction.

The sermon reminds us that we were purchased through Christ's blood. Ephesians places redemption and forgiveness within that saving work. This gives our lives dignity and direction. We belong to the One who acted graciously for our salvation. Our response is gratitude, surrender, and faithful love.

We do not need to manufacture our worth. We do need to take seriously the life into which His grace calls us. The inheritance gives hope, redemption gives reason for worship, and the Spirit's presence gives strength for the journey.

The core truth is that God's Spirit is His present pledge of the inheritance, strengthening us to live as people who belong to Christ while awaiting complete redemption.

Personal Reflection / Part 05

For reflection, consider why the Spirit's seal must remain connected to the larger account of redemption. What does "earnest" teach you about present grace and future fulfillment? How does Romans 8 help you understand spiritual life alongside groaning? Where have you relied too heavily on emotional intensity to assess your faithfulness? What would honoring the Spirit's presence look like in your speech and relationships?

For your personal response, write a truth about Christ's saving work that grounds your confidence. Identify an area in which your conduct needs to reflect that you belong to Him. Bring one weakness honestly before God, then name a step of repentance or obedience. Let your response express this commitment: I belong to Christ, and I will receive His assurance with gratitude while responding to His Spirit with obedience.

PART 06

Let Hope Become a Way of Life

Jude 20-25, Romans 8:26-27, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

06

Let Hope Become a Way of Life

Read Jude 20-25, Romans 8:26-27, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” (Jude 20-21, KJV).

The sermon ends with a call to respond. Hearers are invited to repent of misplaced focus, renew their expectation of Christ’s coming, and seek refreshing in the Spirit. This response follows the teaching’s central movement. If eternity has grown distant in our thinking, we need to turn our attention toward God again.

Repentance may involve obvious sin, but it may also involve the gradual displacement of what matters most. A person can remain active in church while becoming increasingly absorbed in progress, recognition, possessions, or conflict. Responsibilities that began as service can quietly become the center of identity. We may continue speaking the language of faith while our strongest desires are being directed elsewhere.

The preacher includes himself in that examination. This is a useful model for leaders and for anyone influencing others. Spiritual responsibility does not remove the need to examine our own attention. We all need to ask whether what we are building, maintaining, or defending has acquired more importance than the Lord who called us to serve.

Jude gives Spirit-led prayer a wider setting. He addresses believers facing corrupt influences and distorted teaching, then calls them to build themselves up in their most holy faith, pray in the Holy Ghost, remain in God’s love, and look for Christ’s mercy unto eternal life. His next instructions concern helping others. Prayer, perseverance, future hope, and compassion are joined together. **Jude, KJV.**

This gives prayer a purpose reaching beyond a private experience. We seek God so that we may remain faithful, grow in love, and respond wisely to people who need help. A renewed awareness of eternity should make us more attentive to their spiritual welfare and more available to serve.

The sermon strongly encourages prayer when belief has weakened. A distracted or discouraged believer should turn toward God rather than allow uncertainty to grow in isolation. Yet people can struggle with assurance for different reasons. Grief, unanswered questions, exhaustion, spiritual neglect, or confusing teaching may all contribute. Prayer can accompany patient instruction and trustworthy support.

We do not need to pretend that our questions have disappeared before beginning to pray. We can come honestly and ask the Lord to help us understand and trust His Word. The faith being strengthened is directed toward Him. We depend on His truth rather than on our ability to produce certainty by force.

Romans 8:26 says that the Spirit helps our infirmities. Paul acknowledges that we do not always know how to pray as we ought. There are moments when we cannot organize our experience into a clear request. We know we are hurting but cannot see what resolution would be best. We recognize our need without being able to explain its full depth.

The Spirit's help reaches us in that weakness. God knows the heart, and His care is not limited by our eloquence. This gives us reason to pray with dependence. We may be open, willing, and responsive while remembering that spiritual life is His gift. The purpose is fellowship with Him and faithful surrender to His work.

The preacher also asks whether we still believe that Jesus is coming. First Thessalonians 4 gives that expectation a pastoral purpose. Paul writes to believers concerned about those who have died. He announces resurrection and the gathering of Christ's people, then tells them to comfort one another with those words.

The promise is meant to become shared encouragement. We should speak of Christ's coming in ways that strengthen readiness, consolation, and faithfulness. The central assurance is that His people will be with the Lord. That hope gives us reason to keep loving, serving, and enduring while we wait.

The sermon specifically calls families to teach children that their future extends beyond a career, a house, and retirement. These are useful earthly goals, but they cannot explain the whole purpose of a life. Children learn our priorities through what receives attention, what earns praise, what causes anxiety, and what we willingly sacrifice for.

If we speak of God's kingdom while consistently giving it the last available place, those watching us can see the contradiction. We can begin to change that through ordinary practices. Read Scripture together. Explain why honesty matters when dishonesty would be

easier. Let children see thoughtful generosity. Speak of those who died in Christ with both honest grief and resurrection hope.

Teach belonging as well as responsibility. Let them understand that holiness grows from relationship with the Lord. Give heavenly hope a place in the household's language, and let that hope be expressed through patient, loving conduct. Our children need to see how eternity affects the way we live today.

A service can restore attention, but daily choices reveal whether that attention is taking root. After worship, will we make room for Scripture? Will we speak differently? Will we repair harm we caused? Will we become more generous or patient? Will we seek help with an unresolved problem rather than hiding it?

These responses belong to renewal. The sermon calls us to remember the seal of promise, and Ephesians calls us to honor that seal through truthful and gracious living. The direction of our lives should increasingly reflect what God has given.

This does not require every day to feel victorious. It means that we continue returning to Christ, receiving grace, accepting correction, and taking the next faithful step. Perseverance often develops through these repeated responses.

Jude's closing instructions turn toward compassion because people around us are also struggling with weakness, confusion, and danger. Our awareness of eternity should move us toward them. We can listen, pray, explain Scripture patiently, support a grieving household, or encourage someone whose confidence has weakened.

We do this with respect for the person's dignity, trusting God's work in their life. We can invite and encourage without trying to force a spiritual experience. The aim is to help people respond sincerely to the Lord.

A church that remembers eternity should become a community that cares deeply about people. Its hope should be heard in its teaching and seen in its patience, generosity, holiness, and love.

The core truth is that eternal hope grows into prayer, perseverance, holy conduct, and compassionate concern for others.

Personal Reflection / Part 06

For reflection, consider what Jude places alongside praying in the Holy Ghost. How can you seek renewal with a sincere and dependent heart? What does Christ's promised coming offer a grieving believer? What are people in your household learning about eternity from your priorities? Who needs your patient encouragement as they seek to follow Him?

For your personal response, describe a rhythm of Scripture and prayer you can practice consistently. Identify one distraction you will reduce to make room for it. Write how you will bring eternal hope into your household, and name someone you will encourage or care for this week. Let your response become this declaration: I will remember what God has promised and allow that hope to shape the way I pray, live, and care for people.

FINAL RESPONSE

Living Today in the Light of Forever

A faithful response to an eternal promise

C

Living Today in the Light of Forever

The message begins by asking whether we can look at what surrounds us and still believe that God has prepared more. Scripture gives that “more” a clear direction. It includes resurrection, complete redemption, life in God’s presence, and the end of death and sorrow. Our hope reaches beyond improved circumstances into the future God has promised His people.

That future gives meaning to present faithfulness. Abraham teaches us to obey while our dwelling remains temporary. Jesus teaches us to examine our treasure. Paul teaches us to consider suffering in relation to eternal glory. John directs our attention toward God’s presence and restoration. Ephesians helps us understand the Spirit as the earnest of our inheritance. Jude calls us to pray, persevere, and care for others while looking toward eternal life.

We are still traveling, and the journey still requires trust. Some questions remain unanswered. Some burdens require ongoing care. Some responsibilities will be fulfilled without much recognition. Yet none of these realities exhausts what God has prepared. We can live responsibly within the present because our deepest hope reaches beyond it.

During the coming week, return to these truths one day at a time. Begin with Hebrews 11:8-16 and identify one responsibility you will fulfill while remembering your destination. Then read Matthew 6:19-34 and examine where your time and attention are being invested. As you move into Colossians 3, choose one behavior to put away and one quality to practice within a relationship.

Give a day to 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, naming a burden honestly and placing the resurrection promise beside it. Read Revelation 21 and offer care to someone experiencing grief, illness, or loneliness. Return to Ephesians 1 and 4, considering how belonging to Christ should affect your speech and conduct. Finish the week with Jude, setting aside unhurried time to seek God and encourage someone who needs strength.

Let the response become specific. A renewed awareness of eternity should make a difference in a conversation, a habit, a decision, or an act of love. We do not need to change everything at once. We do need to respond sincerely to what the Lord is showing us.

Our closing declaration is this: I belong to Jesus Christ. I will live responsibly in the present while keeping eternity in view. I will give His Word room to shape my attention and His

Spirit room to direct my conduct. I will speak honestly about suffering while remembering resurrection. I will use what has been entrusted to me to serve people and honor the Lord. My hope rests in the God who has prepared a future for His people and remains faithful throughout the journey.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for calling us to a future that reaches beyond the limits of this present life. Thank You that our hope does not end with what we can accomplish, possess, understand, or resolve. You have acted for our salvation, given us Your Spirit, and promised to bring redemption to completion.

Forgive us for allowing temporary things to occupy the place that belongs to You. We have sometimes measured Your goodness by our circumstances, progress, or the approval of others. We have carefully planned for earthly goals while giving little attention to the inheritance You have promised. Renew our understanding of what we are living for.

Teach us to walk like Abraham, responding to Your call even when we cannot see the whole road. Help us care faithfully for the people and responsibilities You have placed before us. Keep our hearts directed toward the city whose Builder and Maker is God. When our present dwelling feels fragile, remind us of Your faithfulness.

Examine our treasure. Show us where possessions, recognition, resentment, or anxiety have gained too much authority. Teach us to use our time, homes, resources, and abilities in ways that serve Your kingdom. Give us generous hearts and the wisdom to act responsibly with what You have entrusted to us.

Help us bring eternity into our households. Let our children and those we influence see faith in our conduct. Make us truthful, patient, and willing to repent. Teach us to forgive as we have received forgiveness, and help us walk in wisdom as we care for those who need protection and support.

You know the burdens we carry. You know the grief we can explain and the sorrow for which we have no words. Meet us in our weakness. Give us courage to receive care and seek help where it is needed. Sustain those who are exhausted, comfort those who mourn, and strengthen those whose hope has grown faint.

Keep resurrection before us. Help us remember that present suffering will not have the final word over Your people. Renew us inwardly while we await the redemption of our bodies. Teach us to give Your promised glory its rightful place in our understanding.

Thank You for the promise of Your presence. Thank You that death, sorrow, crying, and pain will not remain forever. Deepen our desire to be with You. Let that desire make us more compassionate toward people who suffer today. Help us offer patient care while trusting Your complete restoration.

Thank You for redemption through Your blood and for the Holy Spirit of promise. Help us receive the earnest of our inheritance with gratitude and reverence. Let our confidence rest in Your faithfulness, and keep our lives responsive to Your Spirit. Make our speech gracious, our relationships truthful, and our obedience sincere.

Refresh us in prayer. Where our words fail, help us. Where our attention has wandered, call us back. Where we have resisted correction, soften our hearts. Where we have grown weary, renew our willingness to seek You.

Prepare us for Your coming. Give us courage to speak of hope, patience to explain Your Word, and love to reach toward those who need You. Keep us faithful in the responsibilities of today while strengthening our expectation of the future You have promised.

We place our lives, our households, our grief, and our future in Your hands. Help us live today in the light of forever.

In Jesus' name, amen.

Continuing in Scripture

Continue with Hebrews 10:32-39 to see the call to endurance that prepares the way for Hebrews 11. Read Hebrews 13:14-16 to connect seeking the city to come with praise, generosity, and good works. Return to Matthew 6:19-34 and Colossians 3:1-17 to examine how eternal priorities shape attention and conduct.

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18 together with 5:1-10, following Paul's movement from fragile vessels and costly ministry to resurrection, bodily hope, and living to please the Lord. Study Romans 8:9-27 to consider the relationship between the Spirit's presence, adoption, suffering, bodily redemption, and help in prayer.

Spend time in Revelation 21 and 22:1-5, allowing God's promised presence and restoration to deepen your hope. Read Ephesians 1:3-14 alongside 4:25-32 so that assurance and daily holiness remain connected. Return to Acts 2:1-4 and 37-39 for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost and the apostolic call to respond to the gospel.

Finally, read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Jude 20-25 as passages for shared encouragement. Let the promise of being with the Lord strengthen your faith, and let prayer, perseverance, and compassion give that hope expression in your life.