

# Hope: Inherit the Cosmos

Romans 4:13-5:11

*Romans (no. 11 in the series)*

Jan 16, 2022

Peter Hiett

*Video and audio versions available online:*

<https://relentless-love.org/sermons/hope-inherit-the-cosmos/>

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*This document was prepared by Brett Eades using Peter's notes and the video version of this sermon. If you encounter any significant discrepancies or errors in this document, please let Brett know. Thank you!*

Video clip: *The Simpsons*

Gracie Films; 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Television (Season 5, Episode 18, 1994)

*While the Simpsons are at a movie theater, a THX trailer is shown and the deep note literally blows the audience out of their seats, shatters an exit sign, eyeglasses, teeth, and someone's head even explodes.*

## Message

This sermon is really a continuation of last week's sermon titled, "What becomes of our boasting," from Romans chapter 4. We concluded that our boasting becomes our humiliation, which becomes our exaltation, which becomes an endless communion of Love. And we saw how God did this in Abraham by making an outrageous promise.

The promise is so outrageous, that most of us can't even begin to hear it. If we had heard it last week, our heads would've exploded at Chapter 4, verse 13 and none of them did.<sup>i</sup> So, I'm going to have to read it again. Paul is telling the story of Abraham when he makes this comment:

### **Romans 4:13:**

**For the promise to Abraham and his offspring [*sperma*: seed] that he would be heir of the world [*Kosmos*: Cosmos] did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.**

Did you notice that, according to Paul, Abraham was promised the Cosmos? That's quite a lot. In Genesis we read that he was promised a land, which is less than the Cosmos and he was promised a *sperma*, a seed—which can refer to one seed, and it does, according to Paul in Galatians 3:16, but it also refers to many according to Paul in Galatians 3:29, and according to God. He tells Abraham his seed (singular) will be like the stars (plural) of heaven<sup>ii</sup>—Scientists estimate that there are 200 billion-trillion stars in the universe that's quite a lot.

Well Paul says it's not just a land and seed, it's not even 200 billion-trillion seeds, it's the Universe, the Cosmos, that is "all things." And that would include sex, drugs, and rock and roll; it would even include Adolph Hitler, if, in fact, he is a thing. God created everything, according

to Scripture, and everything God creates is Good, according to Scripture, and so the “not good,” that is “the evil,” must not be a thing, but more like the absence of a thing (a nothing).

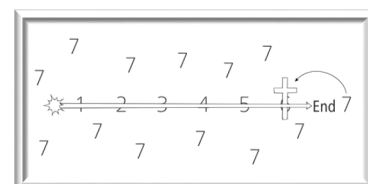
So, Abraham inherits all sex without any infidelity, and he inherits all drugs—or at least wine—without any lack of self-control, and he inherits all rock and roll without any Barry Manilow. No, I’m kidding, Barry will be in heaven, but all his music will be redeemed for it will be enhanced with electric guitar and drums—Hallelujah! And Abraham will inherit Adolph Hitler, but without any animosity, rage, and resentment for all those empty places in Adolph will be filled with Love. And Abraham will inherit Judah—that’s all the Jews which would include Jacob and Esau and Judas and Jesus, the king of the Jews. And Abraham will inherit Lazarus, that is Eliezer, his Syrian slave, who lost the inheritance when Isaac was born. Eliezer will get Abraham and Abraham will get Eliezer, in his bosom along with Hitler, Judas, Jesus, and all the Jews.

Abraham will inherit all things, and his Seed will inherit all things. Jesus is his Seed, the Promised Seed. Which means that Jesus will inherit himself somehow, as well as all things, including Abraham, who will inherit Jesus. According to Hebrews 1:2, God has appointed Jesus the “heir of all things.” Jesus is the Seed, but we’ll soon read that you are also the seed. 1 Cor. 3:21, Paul writes “all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas [Peter] or the present or the future—all things are yours and you are Christ’s and Christ is God’s” Boom, seriously your head should explode. All things belong to God and to Abraham and to Jesus and to You and to me. Which means Scripture is untrue or we’re all going to share, because we want to share, because we have faith and hope in Love.

See, either the Biblical idea of Heaven is an illusion, or it is an ecstatic communion, infinitely beyond your ability to comprehend right now, and accomplished by a miracle, that is salvation from ourselves. It’s like a symphony in which each person loves to play their own part, and yet constantly loses themselves and finds themselves in the music of all. It’s like an outrageous banquet, wherein each and every one constantly passes the ball losing themselves and finding themselves in a great dance of Joy. It’s like a honeymoon—the banquet is a wedding banquet. So at least two bodies become one body in the sacrament of a covenant that is life. It’s like a body and it is a body. We all become one body in Christ Jesus our Husband and so, he does inherit himself, which is us Boom, that’s big.

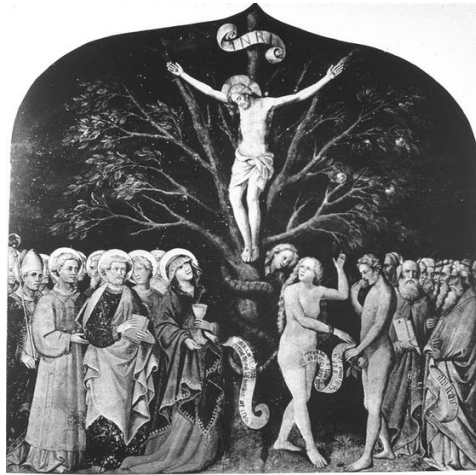
We inherit and like we said last time: “If anyone earns anything, no one can inherit everything”—even Jesus inherits all things from his Father. He works, but even his work is rest—he is the Lord of the Sabbath, the seventh day, the eternal kingdom. So, absolutely everything that’s anything is Grace—in fact, God is Grace; He is free and relentless Love. And, of course, we don’t believe that, and we’re terrified to hope which makes Romans incredibly hard to translate and even harder to preach. We don’t believe The Promise for all sorts of reasons, but let me suggest a few:

#1. We’ve been stuck in a ridiculous notion of space and time ever since the 16<sup>th</sup> century; we think it’s science, but it isn’t, and actually never was.



In Scripture, time is not absolute, and it's not simply linear—that is chronological. If you've been around the Sanctuary, you've seen this image and know that I explain it in my book *The History of Time and the Genesis of You*.

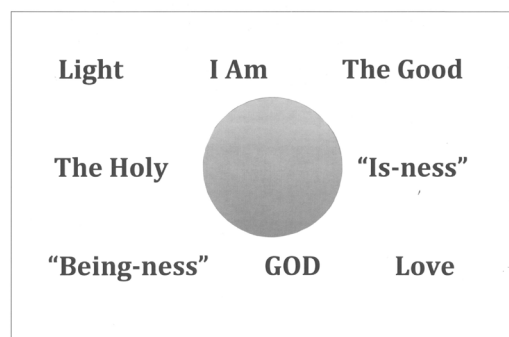
According to Scripture, we're currently in bondage to chronological time—that is we're stuck on this timeline, which Scripture describes as the six days of creation. However, there is a seventh day, or seventh age, which is God's age, for which Scripture uses the word eternal—it's outside the timeline and yet, at hand. But we will enter eternity, and eternity does and will enter us now.



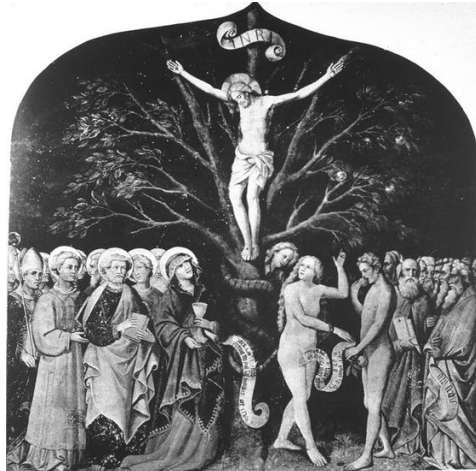
*"The Fall and Redemption of Man" by Giovanni da Modena*

This is the door between space-time and eternity. This is the End and the Beginning of the ages—the “aions”. In Scripture, time is not absolute and neither is space.

In Scripture, God is ‘I Am’ and so whatever is not God is ‘I Am not’—that is nothing.



That means that the big bang, or creation, was not really the explosion of something in the nothing. The big bang was an explosion of nothing in the something that is God. That means that space time is like a womb. And you will be born from that womb through this door:

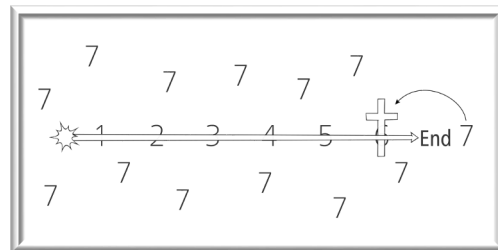
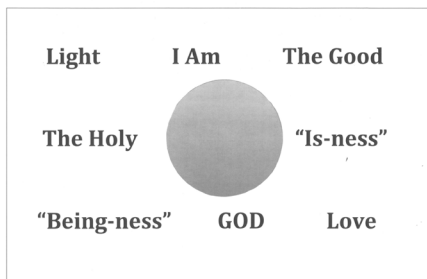


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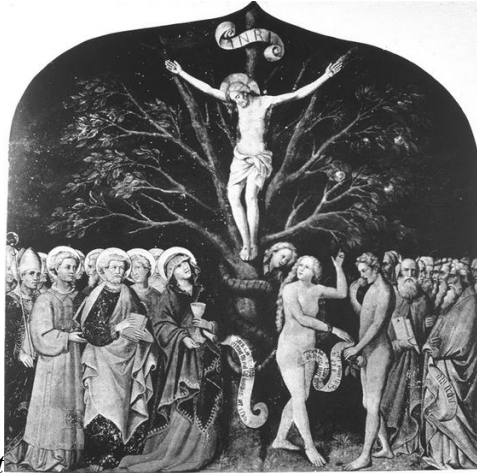
This is the beginning and end of spacetime, as we experience it. And it's the beginning and end of you, as you currently experience yourself. One day you'll look at you, in the eyes of God and think "Wow that's a new and eternal me, full of eternal life, and at home in the arms of my Father, my Abba, my Dad."

We don't believe the promise because:

1. We're stuck in space and time (even though eternity is on our hearts; so when we read scripture, we think "impossible; poetry.")
2. We're in the dark and in the middle of the story.



If you judge a novel by one page in the story, you will not understand the Plot, the Logos—Jesus is the Plot:



*"The Fall and Redemption of Man" by Giovanni da Modena*

3. We think we're writing the Story (and so we have seized control of the Plot—the Beginning, the End and the Way—which actually is the Promise). And so, of course:
4. We're terrified to hope.

**We Don't Believe the Promise Because:**

1. We're stuck in space and time.
2. We're in the dark and in the middle of the story.
3. We think we're writing the story.
4. We're terrified to hope.

Hope can hurt, can't it? Last time I asked you if you ever felt like God made you a promise, and now you find that promise humiliating. In other words, the Hope hurts.

- Hope is like an empty space, that contains just a seed of faith.
- Hope is the distance between what you have, and what it is you desire.
- Hope is the distance between what you experience now (a seed) and the promised blessing (all things good).

So maybe, with the prophet Jeremiah, you cry, "Cursed be the day that I was born! ...Lord, be not to me a deceitful brook ... don't make me hope for water and then withhold your blessing..."<sup>iii</sup> "Don't withhold your blessing." And yet all hope involves waiting, doesn't it, or it wouldn't be hope. "Hope that is seen is not hope," writes Paul in four chapters, "For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."<sup>iv</sup> I suck at patience and also hope.

Solomon writes something utterly fascinating in Proverbs 13:12 "Hope deferred makes a heart sick, but a desire fulfilled—literally: a 'coming desire'—is a tree of life." I used to quote that first line to God, complaining that he was making my heart sick, by deferring my hope. The only problem with that idea is that hope always involves waiting and God is eternal, never late, and exactly on time. So maybe God doesn't defer Hope, but I defer hope, and I do that by not waiting, which is not hoping, but something the Bible calls "wanting."<sup>v</sup>

Recently through some words that my wife received, the Lord told me. “Don’t let hope flee from your prayers,” and I have, at times, because it hurts. But he also quoted himself saying, “‘The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want.’ And then, told me, “Want for nothing for I am with you.” Hope; Don’t Want. I think that means that I’m to desire the green pastures and the still waters, but I’m to trust that the Shepherd is the Way, who will lead me in time, but I defer that hope by seizing control, abandoning the way, and so, becoming lost.

Maybe all sin, is seizing control of hope. Instead of hoping that God will give us the good, we take knowledge of the good, and so do evil. Instead of hoping that God will give us life, we take the Life of the Shepherd. Instead of hoping that we’ll be made in his image, we try to do it for him. Instead of hoping for all things, we take all things, destroy all things, and are then unable to inherit anything. Hope is faith in Grace over space and time.

Last week I asked why do people get scared and angry when we suggest that God might justify all and make all things new? We noticed that if God justifies all, no one can justify themselves and so, ego dies. Perhaps another way to say this is to say: we’re terrified to hope, for fear that the promise is too big. If we fear that the promise is too big, that reveals that we think God is too small, or that we think that we must ensure that the promise will happen. Which means we aren’t hopeful, we’re wanton. So, God makes us wait and wonder in the wilderness like the Israelites.

I’m saying that we try to ensure our faith with fear: So, we say “God is Salvation, but I am salvation too.” And subconsciously we think: “Rather than hope for all things, I’ll settle for a house and two cars and ensure my hope with hard work and anxiety.”<sup>vi</sup> Right now, there are literally hundreds of millions of people enacting legislation—that is law—and preparing for war in the middle east over a piece of land called Israel, and a dispute over which group is comprised of the genetic descendants of Abraham. And people that call themselves “Christians” are actually joining that fight. It’s because they don’t believe the promise and they’re too terrified to hope. You can’t grow faith in The Promise with fear that The Promise isn’t true.

**Romans 4:13-16:**

**For the promise to Abraham and his offspring [*sperma*: seed] that he would be heir of the world [*kosmos*: cosmos] did not come through the law (the knowledge of Good and evil and our ability to choose good and do good) but through the righteousness of faith (that’s trust). <sup>14</sup> For if [“the heirs are so by law” - DBH], faith (trust) is null (it’s pointless), and the promise is void (it has no meaning). <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.<sup>vii</sup>**  
<sup>16</sup> **That is why it depends on faith (trust), in order that the promise may rest on grace (The Promise is a gift: Grace) and be guaranteed to all his offspring [seed]—not only to [that (YLT)] of the law but also to [that of (YLT)] the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.**

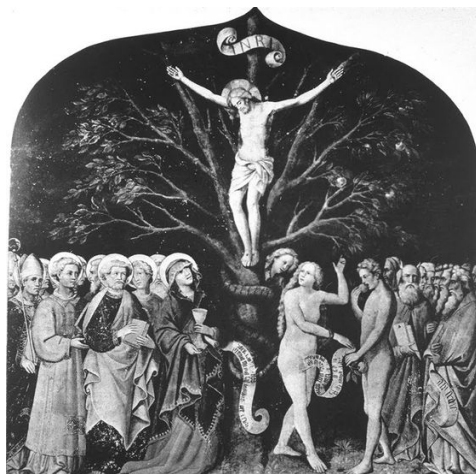
That means all are seed and yet all inherit the promised seed. In Galatians 3:16-29 Paul equates the Seed that is promised to Abraham, with Jesus, and then with faith, as if faith come to us is Jesus come to us, which then makes us Abraham's seed and heirs to the promise, which is also seed. That means that all that inherit faith, inherit Jesus, and inherit themselves—the seed of Abraham—which is their true selves and all things with them. I don't know any other way to explain all that Scripture.

**Romans 4:16b-17:**

**Abraham, who is the father of us all,<sup>17</sup> as it is written, “I have made you the father of many (which is all) nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead [dead people don't have live or faith] and calls into existence the things that do not exist [including faith in an empty dead place, where there once was no faith or life.]**

Last week we reviewed the life of Abraham. When he was a 75-year-old uncircumcised gentile living in Syria, the Word of God just came to him one day as an outrageous and apparently unconditional promise: [Genesis 12:1] “Go [and it turns out that God is telling him to go in the direction in which he is already headed], and I will bless you and make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Isn't that a crazy thing to say? It means Abram is the judgment and blessing of God or that the judgment and blessing of God is in Abram as a seed. And so, whatever you do to Abraham you do to him—the Seed.

Well, just as Paul describes in Galatians 3, the Promise came to Abram and the faith came to Abram in Genesis 12:1, but it seems to have only been about the size of a seed. Yet over the next 25 years as Abram is humiliated, the promised seed just seems to grow, and God reckons it as righteousness because it is. At 100 years old Isaac is born—Abraham's life love and laughter. And about 30 years later God tells Abraham to Sacrifice Isaac to him on Mt. Moriah, which is Mt. Calvary, Mt. Zion, and the Holy Mt. where mankind (Adam) is made in the image of God.



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Soren Kierkegaard called Abraham's obedience, "The Teleological Suspension of the Ethical" and the definition of faith—biblical faith. For in that moment Abraham had to believe that the Good was not knowledge of good and evil in a book, but that the Good was the Word of God, his living Helper, his husband, if you will. He surrendered his judgment to the Judgment of God—that's the death of the ego, and the life of Faith, which hopes—on the Holy Mt. Abraham hoped.

Hebrews 11:19 tells us that at that moment Abraham "reasoned that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead, from which, [as a parable] he did receive him back." You know the story: God intervened; God provided a lamb: his Life, Love, and Laughter, his Son, the promised blessing promised to Abraham, the heart of the Father and the judgment of God, the indestructible and eternal seed, Jesus our Lord. Abraham surrendered his life (Isaac) and received his life and every life back. He surrendered the promise and received the promise back, and all things with him.

"Because you have done this, I will bless you," says the Lord. And yet the Lord had already unconditionally promised the blessing fifty years earlier when Abraham was uncircumcised gentile. God can unconditionally promise the blessing, that is conditioned upon faith, for God himself implants that faith within us with his promise, like a seed.

And faith for the distance, from conception to fruition, is called hope. Faith is the promised seed and hope is faith for the distance.



**Romans 4:18:**

**In hope he believed against [epi: upon] hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring [seed] be.”**

That first line can be translated “In hope upon hope he believed”—meaning a whole lot of hope. But most seem to think it’s an idiomatic expression to be translated as something like “In hope against hope he believed.” It doesn’t make sense to say that true hope is against true hope. But it does make sense to say that true hope is against false hope—

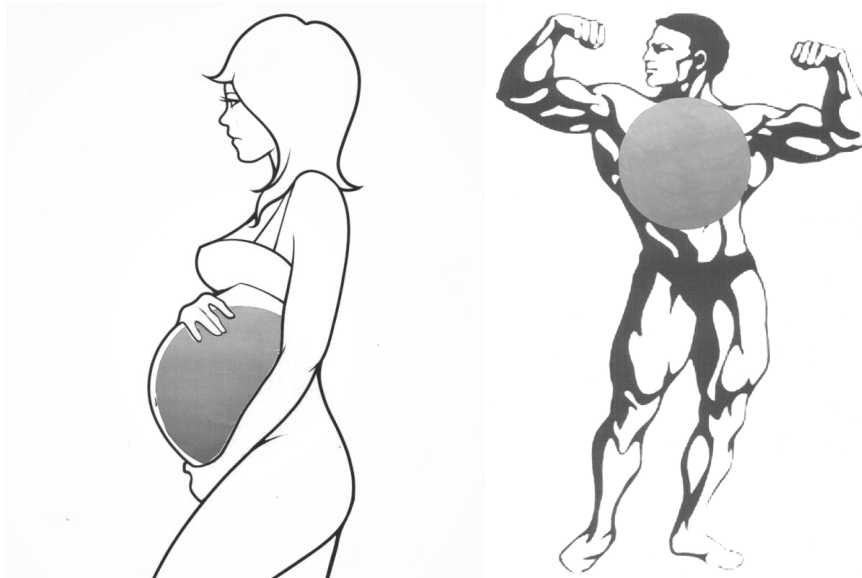
- False hope, which isn’t hope in God but hope in human will and effort.<sup>viii</sup>
- False hope, which isn’t hope but, actually, “wantonness.”

Remember from the story that Abraham didn’t only hope in God to fulfill the blessing. Abraham also hoped in himself to fulfill the blessing which isn’t hope. Twice he basically pimped Sarah to foreign monarchs, all to save his own skin and then was humiliated in return—that’s not faith or hope in God. And when he was 85, and Sarah remained barren, Abraham impregnated his wife’s slave girl, Hagar, trying to guarantee the blessing—and that’s not faith or hope in God—that’s wantonness.

**Romans 4:19:**

**He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness [*nekrosis*: “the deadness”] of Sarah’s womb.**

He considered his own necrotic body and Sarah’s necrotic womb and perceived that his body was like Sarah’s womb. Just as there was an empty womb, an empty void, in Sarah.



So, there was an empty void, even death, in Abraham’s body. This is young Abraham in a Speedo with a body good as dead. I’m saying Sarah had an empty womb. And Abraham’s body was also an empty womb. But he had a seed of faith, that transforms wantonness into hope.

**Romans 4:19b-20:**

**He** [recognized that Sarah's womb was dead (DBH)] <sup>20</sup> [yet he did not falter through infidelity to God's promise (DBH)], **but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God.**

Now from that verse and the verse before, you might think Paul had never read the book of Genesis, but we know that Paul knows Genesis like the back of his hand. He knows about Hagar, and he knows that at 99 Abraham fell on his face and laughed when God told him that Sarah would have his son. He knows and so he must consider Abraham to be, like, two people.

- An Abram and an Abraham
- An old Abraham and a new Abraham
- A false Abraham and a true Abraham
- One that wants and one that hopes
- An Abram that thinks he must make himself the father of many nations and an Abraham that thinks he has been made the father of all nations.
- An Abraham that believes he must justify himself and an Abraham that believes The Promise—he is eternally justified, it is finished.

It's like Paul is speaking of the true Abraham, that hopes against the false Abraham, even as hope grows in Abraham's wanton despair. It's like faith was implanted in the womb of Abrams body by means of the promise. It was only the size of a mustard seed, but as Abram's ego dies, the Seed grows. That Seed in Abraham is the Promise in Abraham, who is Jesus Christ our Lord, such that it's no longer Abraham that lives but Christ in Abraham.

You know, on Mount Moriah, every bit of human reason or hope, every bit of wantonness, would've told Abraham that he'd best run from the judgment of God, and hide Isaac—hide his life, love, and laughter, hide the blessing—in the dark, in the depths of the earth, like a tomb. But in Hope, against hope—all human hope—he surrendered the promise to the one who spoke the promise in the first place and the Promise rose from the tomb that had been old Abraham. Verse 20: He grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God—not as he took classes and tried really hard, but as he worshipped, as he hoped—as he gave glory to God fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.<sup>ix</sup>

What had God promised? Romans 3:13 That Abram and his seed would inherit the Cosmos, or to put it another way:

*"Behold, I make all things new." - Revelation 21:5*

*[It is the] plan for the fulness of time to unite, (bring together under one head) all things in Christ Jesus." – Ephesians 1:10*

*"When I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto myself." - John 12:32*

*"Turn to me and be saved all the ends of the earth! For I am God and there is no other. By myself I have sworn; from my mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: 'to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear allegiance.'" - Isaiah 45:22-23*

*"Behold God saw everything that he had made, and it was very good" - Genesis 1:3*

For He had said "Let us make (Adam) man in our own image, after our likeness," And on the 7<sup>th</sup> day "it is finished" and "everything is good." In the next chapter of Romans, Paul claims that all who died in the first Adam, will be made alive in the last Adam, Jesus, perfect image of the invisible God. It was an organized Institutional Christian denomination (my brothers) who asked me to publicly confess that all those promises were impossible. And Paul writes:

**Romans 4:21-22:**

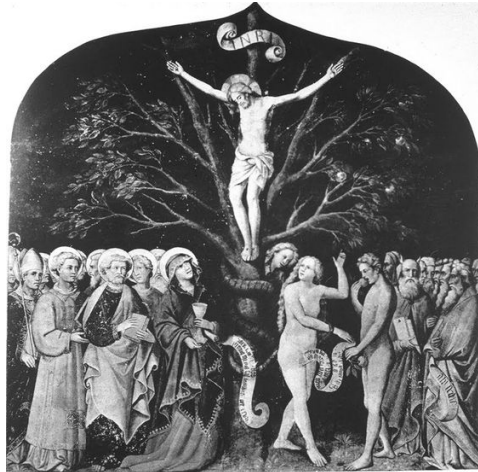
**"[Abraham gave glory to God] fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. <sup>22</sup> That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness."**

It is unrighteousness and faithlessness to refuse to believe that God can make all things new and give the Cosmos to Abraham and his Seed. When we argue that God cannot save, don't we do the work of the devil? We defer hope and make the heart of humanity sick.

**Romans 4:23-25:**

**But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, <sup>24</sup> but for ours also. ~~It~~ [righteousness] will be counted to us who believe ~~in~~ [epi: upon] him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, <sup>25</sup> who was delivered up [dia: "through"] our trespasses [which are faithlessness and unrighteousness] and raised [dia: "through"] our justification [which are faithfulness and righteousness, given to us as our inheritance].<sup>x</sup>**

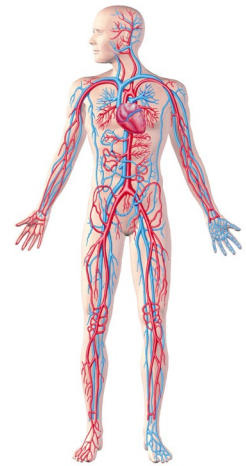
Remember this scene?



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And how it is contained within a building—the temple? Which—in reality—is the Body of Christ: that's many members constantly losing life (for the life is in the blood) and constantly receiving life (for the blood is a river of life.)



It is many members joined together like musical instruments in a symphony, or participants at a great banquet which turns into a dance, or lovers that lose themselves and find themselves in one body.



*Gibson, Mel (Director). (2004). The Passion of the Christ [Motion picture]. USA: Icon Productions.*

This is what happens in the heart of the temple but now portrayed outside the city walls for all to see. We will need eternity to ponder this, but in the heart of the temple, which is the body, the life, which is in the blood, is delivered up (*paradidomai* is the verb)—that is, it's handed over, also translated betrayed.

We did that in faithlessness, which is transgression—we took the life from the tree. But God does this in faithfulness, which is our justification—he gives his life on the tree. We took (that's sin). And God gave (that's Grace). And God still gives, and now tells us to “take,” which for us means “receive,” for we now know that he has always given, forgiven, his life to us. So we live in hope, rather than die in wanton despair, for we've been to the holy mountain, and now we know: God is faithful.

- Faith is a decision to lose your life and find your life in another.
- Hope is a longing for all the members of a body to make that decision together.
- Love is the reality that constantly makes that decision and so binds everything together in a communion called life.<sup>xi</sup>

Faith, Hope and Love is the judgment of God, implanted in the garden sanctuary of your heart. Jesus is the judgment of God, and we are his body his one body. Each and every one of you is a member of that body. Or maybe I should say, “the new you (the true you) is a member of that body.” Actually, your old you” (the man or woman you thought you created) is an empty void, even a womb, which gives birth to the new you, the man or woman that God has created, who is the person that you truly are. And, as we’ll see, that new ‘man’ is—in some fantastic way—Jesus.

You are giving birth to Jesus, in you—the true you. And when a woman gives birth (although it involves great suffering, endurance, character, and a whole lot of hope), she knows that she didn’t create the baby, and so she’s not proud she’s grateful. You will be infinitely grateful that God has created you, saved you, and redeemed you and so you will confidently, gladly, and ecstatically give yourself away, lose yourself and find yourself, in an endless communion of Love that is Life—eternal Life. For all things are yours, you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s. That’s how God makes you right: You take his Life—that’s transgression, and



God raises his Life in you—that’s justification, and alive in you, he binds all things together, and you’re grateful. It begins as a seed of faith implanted in you as a promise, it grows into an eternal communion of endless love, and it all happens through hope. Hope in God and you will find that God has always been hoping in you.

I have an old friend, who was the youngest of four, and repeatedly told by her mother and siblings that she was a mistake—she hadn’t been wanted. No one had hoped that she would be born, she thought. It made her rather hopeless, insecure, driven, and alone. In a session of healing prayer, she had a vision. After I had preached a sermon from Genesis in which I spoke of the universe as a womb, into which God speaks his word, she sent me this description of her vision.

- “Peter, he showed me the most amazing thing. I saw the Holy Spirit prepare a place for me. It was a dark orb and He hovered over it and touched it here and there. Wherever He had been, the dark orb was covered with light, pure, white, and intense. I came to understand that this was my mother's egg and that He was preparing this place just for me. I cannot describe to you the intensity of everything. First, there was this indescribable peace. Then trust. I just knew that everything I saw was supposed to BE.

- The most amazing thing was what I understood about the creativity and purpose of the Holy Spirit. His single intent was to glorify God, to glorify Jesus. And this intention was motivated by this intense love, so much so that His love for God and Christ naturally extended to me. In other words, He was not using me to glorify them. The extension of His love to me glorified us all. His love was so pure and intense and single-minded that I knew He was telling me that I was not a mistake, that He intended me, that He created me with love and purpose (which is different than for a purpose), and in that act and my trusting consent, God would be glorified.
- It is no surprise to me that after that prayer experience, I went home with my children for our family reunion, and no one told the story of how I am unwanted. That was the first time.
- And it was no surprise to me that in your preaching in Genesis, the creation of the earth looked remarkably like my own creation—a void covered with light, surrounded by substance.

I think another way to say that is: He creates us in Hope. Romans 8:24, “In this Hope we are saved.” The Cosmos is like a womb, we’ll read that in Romans 8. You, your old self, is like a womb, we’ll read that soon, here in Romans 5. And hope is like a womb; it prepares a place for Love. Hoping for my children; prepared a place for my children. Hope expands our hearts and teaches us the beauty of Grace. God plants a seed of faith, that makes you hope and in that empty space he reveals himself—he is Love (free Love; Grace).

You know Jesus refers to himself as the Son of God because God is his father, but he only calls himself “the Son of God,” 4 times in the Gospels. However, he refers to himself as “the Son of Man” 82 times. That’s not because we are his father, but because we are his mother and he is born of our labor, not our works, but our labor—our suffering, endurance, character, and hope.

This old universe is a womb; Your old self is a womb; Hope is a womb. And in that womb Christ in formed, according to Paul.<sup>xii</sup> And in Christ “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”<sup>xiii</sup> And “through him” writes Paul “are all things.”<sup>xiv</sup> The Universe is a womb giving birth to you. You are a womb giving birth to Jesus. And in Jesus are all things—the Universe.



So, this is a picture of your womb. It’s not a dead womb, Sarah. It contains an entire New Creation. So, have hope; Get you’re hope up! It’s impossible for you to Hope too much. And yet you can hope in the wrong way, which is actually no way. You know, Abraham never hoped too much, he only hoped in the wrong way, which is actually no way, The Promise is the Only Way.

**Romans 5:1-2:**

**Therefore, since we have been justified [made right] by faith [trust], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup> Through him we have also**

**obtained access by [in] faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice [literally: Boast] in hope of the glory of God.**

Paul tells us that we will each have “an immeasurable weight of Glory,” but you see, our ego can’t bear that weight; we must have faith that the Glory is a gift. We must hope for all things, but believe we earn no things, for we inherit all things, or we will be crushed by everything. Only Love bears all things.

**Romans 5:3-5:**

**Not only that, but we rejoice [literally: boast] in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame [“hope does not disappoint us” RSV, NRSV, NKJV], because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.**

1 Corinthians 13:7 “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things...” You are commanded to Love. God is Love. Love hopes all things. Hope for everything, and want for nothing, for in this moment God is giving you exactly what you need.

## Communion

So, at the edge of spacetime and eternity, the Shepherd, who is the Way, who is the Door took bread and broke it, saying this in my body given to you, take and eat.

And in the same manner after supper and having given thanks, he took the cup saying, this is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you and do it in remembrance of me.

[Takes a piece of bread, dips it in the cup and holds it aloft] You see this is like a seed of faith and it creates a space—or maybe it transforms a space from wantonness into hope. And that space will be filled with the glory of God, and God is Love. God is better than you thought. The Love of Jesus is deeper than you know. And the Spirit is everywhere, working the wonders of mercy. [Eats the bread] Have hope.

So just close your eyes for a minute and let me ask you, have you given up hope? Did you know that Christ in you is the hope of glory? [In Colossians Paul refers to “Christ in you” as the “Hope of Glory”] So, you see, if you’ve given up hope you’ve given up the Shepherd. But don’t panic, he rises from the dead and he says to you, “have hope.” I think he would say something like this maybe: sweetheart, you have never hoped too much, you have always hoped too little, and you have hoped in the wrong way. Hope in me, for I am leading you to your inheritance, which is all things. These slight, momentary afflictions, they prepare you for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. You see, what you are to receive is so big that only Love could bear it. And I am Love. And I am giving myself to you, so have hope. In Jesus’s name, have hope, Amen.

## Benediction

Hope for everything and want for nothing, for in this and every moment I am giving you exactly what you need—faith that hopes for all things, infused with Love. In other words, believe the gospel. Amen.

## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> The poet only asks to get his head into the heavens. It is the logician who seeks to get the heavens into his head. And it is his head that splits.

- G.K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy: The Romance of Faith* (New York: Bantam, 1990), p. 17-18.

<sup>ii</sup> Genesis 15:5

<sup>iii</sup> Jeremiah 20:14, 15:18

<sup>iv</sup> Romans 8:24-25

<sup>v</sup> The Israelites were “wanton” in the desert, complaining and demanding blessings, because they refused to hope in God.

But they soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel. But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness, and put God to the test in the desert... -Psalm 106:13-14

But refuse *the* younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. – 1 Timothy 5:11-12 NKJV

<sup>vi</sup> Neither can one who wills the Good do so out of fear of punishment. In essence, this is the same thing as willing the Good for the sake of a reward. The one who wills in truth one thing fears only doing wrong, not the punishment. In fact, he who does wrong, yet sincerely wills the Good, actually desires to face the consequences - so that the punishment, like medicine, may heal him. He understands that punishment only exists for the sake of the sinner. It is a helping hand. It goads one to press on further toward the Good, if one really wills it. On the other hand, the one who is divided considers punishment or hardship as a sickness. He fears all worldly setback for there is nothing eternal in him.

True, fear deceptively offers to help us. It too offers to keep us on the right track. Yet the one who strives in fear never becomes God's friend. Fear is a deceitful aid. It can sour your delight, make life arduous and miserable, make you old and decrepit; but it is never able to help you toward the Good. The Good will not tolerate any alien helper.

Those who live in fear may indeed desire heaven but not for itself. . . . Only one thing can help us to will the Good in truth: the Good itself.

- Kierkegaard, *Provocations* (Farmington, PA: The Plough Publishing House, 1999), p. 37

<sup>vii</sup> Where was there no law? Well, perhaps in the garden before Adam and Eve took the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil AND in the life of every person as a little child before they have the “knowledge of good and evil.” (Deuteronomy 1:39)

<sup>viii</sup> False hope is hope in something that may or may not happen, unlike biblical hope, which is an anchor, for its assured and has already happened. Hope for the Greeks and for us is usually wishful thinking, but for the Hebrew it was faith in God's Promise, for God is faithful and his Word always accomplishes that for which it is sent (Isaiah 55:11).

<sup>ix</sup> Humiliation becomes exaltation for God transforms wantonness into Hope.

Hope cannot come through law for that is wantonness.

Hope must come through inheritance for that is faith in Grace.

<sup>x</sup> We could spend a year just talking about this verse, and still be amazed that we only begin to maybe understand.

The fact that Jesus was “delivered up (*Paradidomai*, also translated betrayed, handed over, delivered) for (*dia*—translated ‘on account of,’ ‘because of,’ ‘through,’) our transgressions and raised for (*dia*) our justification,” must somehow fulfill all of the sacrificial system and all Jesus said about goats and sheep, tares and wheat, chaff and grain, our transgression and our justification.

He is the condemnation of “sin in the flesh” and the justification, which is the “redemption of our bodies.”

As he dies the old man dies, and as he lives (rises), the new man rises.

He returns the life we took, even in us as we confess our sin, and he surrenders (*paradidomai*) his Spirit.

And he is the life we live, even in us, as God imparts that spirit, and we bear the fruit of that Spirit, which is our Justification and Righteousness.

He is the decision to expire, surrender the breath, the spirit, the life.  
And he is the decision to inspire, receive the Breath, the Spirit, the Life.

He is God's judgment, he is God's decision to bleed, to circulate life, to give himself (paradidomai) to all and fill all things with himself who is love and binds all things together.

<sup>xi</sup> Faith is a decision to lose your life and find your life in another, and God is faithful.

Hope is a longing for all the members of a body to make that decision, and Hope in you is Christ in you.

Love is the reality that constantly makes that decision and so binds everything together in a communion of love that is life. God is Love

<sup>xii</sup> Galatians 4:19

<sup>xiii</sup> Colossians 2:2-3: "God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

[This is "The Pinata Theory of the Atonement" (Well that's what I call it). We, the children, break his body—on his birthday—and all the "treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge" spill out. We eat the treasure and start to party.]

<sup>xiv</sup> 1 Corinthians 8:6