

HOPE IN CHRIST

*By Verna Kwiatkowski. Sky View. A poetic meditation
on Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15:19, 20.*

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*If only for this life we have hope in Christ,
We are to be pitied more than all people.*

I agree with Paul. If believers had no existence after the grave,
Our hope in Christ would take on a whole different flavor, and it
Would not be good. In exchange for our faith, we'd want God
To make our lives easier here while we live. Health and wealth
Would be high on our demand list, with long life included. "You
Promised!" we'd say, pointing to the Bible, as if God had failed.
No patient endurance, no laying up treasures in Heaven, no
Reunion with loved ones – no wonder we'd grieve! Just here
And now, me and mine – if only for this life we had hope in Christ.

How shallow! How useless!

How pitiful!

BUT

*Christ has indeed been raised from the dead,
The firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep!*

Paul KNEW that Jesus had been raised from the dead, because
He saw him on the road to Damascus long after Jesus had died.
Jesus spoke to Paul, calling him by name, knowing all about him,
Piercing him with light so bright that it blinded him, no doubt for life,
Had not Jesus sent Ananias to Paul to place his hands on him
And restore his sight. For God did not call Paul just to blind him,
But to give him an assignment that would require him to be
Absolutely certain that Jesus was alive and that there was a life
Beyond this world awaiting all believers that would make hardships
Here look like momentary, light afflictions, worth enduring, but hardly
Worth mentioning, compared to the glory that will be revealed in us.
Paul was that person. He lived his life in such close connection with
Jesus that he could say, "Follow my example, as I follow the example
Of Christ." Both his mind and heart were set on heavenly things, on
Things above. His anticipation – his expectation – can be ours as well!
Hope in Christ extends FAR beyond this life and goes on forever!

How promising! How exciting!

How glorious!

AND

The invitation still is open! No matter how you've behaved,
Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you, too, will be saved!
Enjoy your salvation; trust in the Lord; meditate on these things.
Move upward and onward as though soaring on eagles' wings.
When we arrive at our Father's House, you'll find, along with me,
It was true! The half had not been told! The best is yet to be!

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