

### Living Between Two Worlds

"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."  
Colossians 3:1-4

"Equipping disciples to pursue Christ passionately in order to impact the culture."

East Cooper Baptist Church Purpose Statement

"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."  
Isaiah 40:31

"From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him."  
Isaiah 64:4

"This is a waiting in which hope, confidence, and patience are combined. The true God is thus distinguished from the idols, for none of the idols can perform nor have they ever performed fearful deeds on behalf of their devotees, whereas Yahweh, the God of Israel and the true God, can control all of creation and cause it to respond to His will when He comes down to earth to execute judgment."  
The Book of Isaiah, Volume 3, Edward J. Young, pg. 494

How do we deal with the parallelizing power of the world, the flesh, and the devil (sin)?

*Answer from the Hyper Spiritualist:* Christ is a (potentially) good place to begin but you must pursue harsh bodily disciplines, and have angelic guides/mediators and understand authority flows from individual visions. (Answer from the Apostle Paul's response is this type of "spirituality" leads to egocentricity and a loss of connection with Christ. Chapter 2 verse 17) The Apostle Paul posits that to escape the single hold of sin we should know the wonder and love of Christ, our union with him and live with the expectant hope of heaven.

"This sanctification is throughout, in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there is abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; from which arises a continual and irreconcilable war."

The Westminster Confession, Chapter 13, Article 2.

"In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may seem to be winning; yet, through the continual supply of strength that comes from the empowering Spirit of Christ, the regenerate (new life) part does overcome; and so, believers grow in grace..."

The Westminster Confession, Chapter 13, Article 3

"Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."  
Romans 8:33-34

## Observations:

1. The “autonomy” of scripture is liberating and life-enhancing versus “imagine there is no heaven...”
2. Sound theology, based upon God’s revelation helps adjust our expectations as we live in a beautiful but fallen world. (not settling for too little or demanding too much)
3. Living with the hope of heaven produces joy, thanksgiving, and anticipation, as we live in a less than perfect world.

“God is the highest good of the reasonable creature. The enjoyment of him is our proper; and is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied. To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives, or children, or the company of any, or all earthly friends. These are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are but streams; but God is the fountain. These are but drops, but God is the ocean.”  
The Works of Jonathan Edwards

“Hope is one of the Theological virtues. This means that a continual looking forward to the eternal world is not (as some modern people think) a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do. It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth “thrown in”: aim at earth and you will get neither.”  
Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis, Book 3-10

“To come to You (Christ) is to come home from exile, to come to land out of the raging storm, is to come to rest after a long labor, to come to the goal of my desires and the summit of my wishes.”

Charles Spurgeon

“Death is not to be regarded as a disaster, when it follows on a good life, for the only thing that makes death an evil is what comes after death. Those who must inevitably die ought not to worry overmuch about what accident will cause their death, but about their destination after dying. Christians know that the death of a poor religious man, licked by the tongues of dogs, is far better than the death of a godless rich man, dressed in purple and linen (see Luke 16:19 and following). Why then should those who have lived well be dismayed by the terrors of death in any form?”  
City of God, Augustine, Book 1, chapter 11

## Questions for Discussion

1. Why does living with a belief that there is no ultimate law giver and produce a void that can be coupled with individual autonomy that can lead to anarchy and ruthlessness?
2. What do we mean when we say we live in the “already but not yet” regarding the kingdom of God?
3. How does an understanding of living in a glorious but imperfect world lead to adjusted expectations? Give an example of how our expectations can be too high or times when we can settle for less than what we should.
4. How does the biblical view of the hope of heaven help produce a joy and anticipation in the present life?
5. What was Augustine’s view of death from The City of God?

6. What is the center piece of the argument from the Apostle Paul regarding our growth in grace in this world? (see verse 4)

***Biblical verses to meditate on and memorize for the month of October:***

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2