



First Christian Reformed Church of Lynden
From Generation to Generation for the Glory of God

God's precious and exceedingly great promises in hard times

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom,
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Scripture

Reflections on Heaven, part one, promises of a future and a hope in these hard times.

Psalm 16:11 You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Isaiah 25:8-9 He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. ⁹ It will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Isaiah 65:17-19 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth,
and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.
¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create;
for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.
¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people;
no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress.

John 14:1-3 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

John 17:3 This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

I Corinthians 2:9 As it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him."

II Corinthians 5:1-5 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

Philippians 3:20-21 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Colossians 3:1-4 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

II Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved [longed for] his appearing.

I John 3:2-3 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Song

Psalm 59:16 But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.

[You can Google the hymn to hear it if you would like to sing along.]

We're Marching to Zion (by Isaac Watts)

Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known;
join in a song with sweet accord,
join in a song with sweet accord
and thus surround the throne,
and thus surround the throne.

Refrain: We're marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion
The beautiful city of God.

Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God;
but children of the heavenly King,
but children of the heavenly King
may speak their joys abroad,
may speak their joys abroad. *Refrain*

The hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets
before we reach the heavenly fields,
before we reach the heavenly fields,
or walk the golden streets,
or walk the golden streets. *Refrain*

Then let our songs abound, and ev'ry tear be dry;
we're marching through Emmanuel's ground,
we're marching through Emmanuel's ground,
to fairer worlds on high,
to fairer worlds on high. *Refrain*

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Prayer

II Chronicles 7:14 If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Our Father in heaven, who dwells in unapproachable light, whose glory outshines ten thousand suns, whose presence fills heaven and all creation, we dare to call on your holy name because you have adopted us as your children.

We confess that we have not longed for our heavenly home as we ought. We confess it is hard for us to imagine what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined. It is hard for us to imagine what you have prepared for those who love you. By your Spirit create in us a greater longing for eternal things, lasting things, holy things. Grow in us a true desire for heaven, for that place where your good and perfect will is always done.

When life here is hard, when life seems futile, when everything seems like vanity, fix our eyes on what is solid, on the glory and joy that is before us, enabling us, like Jesus, to endure whatever you in your good pleasure deem necessary and right in this life to prepare us for the life to come.

Grant us wisdom to plan and prepare for the next ten thousand years, and not just the next few decades on earth. Bring to completion the good work you have begun and thank you for your promises to which you will be faithful. Enable us to live our days here with a true sense of our citizenship in heaven.

Thank you for the hope that is ours because of Jesus. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, Amen.