"But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." As a child, I took these words to heart. I knew the day-to-day reality of my mother's sickness was not the salvation Christ had promised. I hoped for a cure and I waited for the day when my mother would be the woman she once was, before Multiple Sclerosis claimed all of her motor function, and the vibrancy of her life. That hope had no answer, and in her body, it was death that we were waiting for, not life. It was as the lamenter said, "my splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD." If hope was to have any place in my life as a Christian, hope could not be hope "for" a future so shrouded in mystery. For me, Christian hope must be hope "in" something, the very revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

I am not saying hope "for" is without merit, so to speak. Some emphasis of Hope must be located in the future, of what God will do. But, the danger of "hope for," is that it disregards the other chronological locations in time, in the past and in the present, in which Hope also resides. Hope in Christ is, has been, and always will transcended the space-time continuum, contemporaneously in past, present, and future, all at once. Christian hope, described by Migliore, is "grounded in the resurrection of the crucified Jesus, sustained by the presence and promise of life-giving Holy Spirit, and oriented to the glory of the triune God." (Migliore, 358) The historical "resurrection of the crucified Jesus" locates Hope in Christ in the past. I recognize the crucifixion and resurrection as actual events occurring both at a particular time, and forever in time. I hold in thanksgiving and glory, the life-giving sacrifice of God embodied in the particularity of Jesus Christ, which extends from the historical moments of Christ's death and resurrection to the eternal presence of God across all time. Hope in Christ is also located in the present, as the sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit, in each moment, is sealing Christ upon my heart, so that the truth of Christ may be revealed to me continuously. Hope in Christ is also located in the future, as Christ redeems all things back into complete relationship with God.

If we only locate Hope in one particular part of time, we lose the fullness of Hope in Christ, which refuses to be limited by time. James Cone suggests the dangers of allowing hope to only reside in the future, as people passively accept their present under the assurance of future circumstances. As Cone states, "heaven cannot mean accepting injustice in the present because we know we have a home over yonder...to believe in heaven is to refuse to accept hell on earth." (Cone, 149) When Hope is regulated to just the future, it runs the risk of disempowering people into docile participants in the face of injustice. Rather Hope in Christ, present across all time, serves as a catalyst to hold the present accountable to the promises of God revealed in the past and expected in the future, should they not be occurring in the present.

When Hope is in Christ, and freed from the expectations of Hope "for," the true greatness of God can be imagined. Sarah Coakley, proclaims a new vision of the body, as a part of the "eschatological horizon" which does not allow the body to again "succumb to "appropriate" or restrictive gender roles." (Coakley, 166) When hope is only located in the past, at the very moment of the resurrection, we imprison the Spirit to sustaining, not Christ, but our own understandings of the world. We fail to conceptualize a world beyond our own imposed binaries, crafting a future in our own image rather than in the divine imagination. Both Coakley and Cone suggest the liberating nature of hope is tempered when it is limited to any one particular area of time, if only grounded in the past or in the future.

I cannot claim to know what to hope "for." I can only say that the hope I had prior to my mother's illness, in the midst of her life, and now, after her death, is the same. It is hope in Christ, which is not limited to any particular time or place or outcome. I have hope because God chose us in the incarnation of Christ in Jesus, and in the resurrection, continues to choose us now and forever.