

Hope & Faith

I often preach about love. After all we serve the God of Love.

If we look at 1 Corinthians 13:13 HCSB

We read: *“Now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*

In fact, that whole chapter is significant of the expectations of love. As tempting as it is to go down that path, today I am speaking about the other two aspects of this scripture: hope and faith.

Now we know a few things about faith. If we look at Hebrews 11:1 HCSB we get a pretty good idea about what faith is...

“Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.”

So if faith is the reality of what is hoped for, I think we need to understand what hope is and how it works...

Let's first start with a dictionary definition of hope:

- 1) Hope is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen
- 2) Hope is a feeling of trust

Hope and faith are very closely tied together. After all, did we not just read that faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen?

Where is our Hope Placed?

Where is our hope this morning? Is it in the Lord? Is it in our country? Is it in our police? Is it in our bank accounts? Is it in us?

What does the word actually mean?

When we look at hope in the bible many times we find that this word comes from the Greek word “elpis”, which means expectation or confidence the closest corresponding Hebrew word is “yachal” which means to wait expectantly...

Let's examine our understanding of hope this morning.

Is your hope this morning a feeling or an expectant waiting for a promised reality?

Without opening up a whole word study this morning, let me say that we have several examples from Paul telling us about hope:

Colossians 1:23 HCSB says: "if indeed you remain grounded and steadfast in the faith and are not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard. This gospel has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have become a servant of it."

So what is this hope of the Gospel?

Romans 8:24 – "Now in this hope we were saved, yet hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees?"

Let's look at our definitions once again...

- 1) Hope is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen
- 2) Hope is a feeling of trust

Where do we place our hope?

Do we desire to be saved? Do we trust his word that we are?

You see, the world looks at hope as a conditional thing, but we as Christians need to realize that our hope is a sure thing! Why? Because "Faith is the REALITY of things hoped for..."

When we look at the world today do we lose faith or has our faith become crippled because we have lost hope?

God has said through the prophet Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 29:11 – "For I know the plans I have for you" — this is the Lord's declaration — "plans for your welfare, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

Let's look at the word, specifically at the word "Hope" right here in this scripture...

h8615. תִּקְוָה *tīqwâ*; from **6960**;
literally, a cord (as an attachment
(compare **6961**)); figuratively,
expectancy: — expectation ((-ted)),
hope, live, thing that I long for.
AV (34) - hope 23, expectation 7,
line 2, the thing that I long for 1,
expected 1;
I.cord
II.hope, expectation
A.hope
B.ground of hope
C.things hoped for, outcome

Here we see hope is literally a cord...

My Friends, God has literally provided us with a lifeline for our faith...

Consider what has happened recently, the terrorism of 911 in the USA, the attacks in Canada's capitol, the Attacks in Paris... In fact, consider all of the atrocities committed around the world on an ongoing basis.

Do you ever feel impotent? Like you can't make a difference? Have you ever felt overwhelmed by the shootings at the high schools? Have you ever felt the tragic loss of children due to starvation? Have you ever lost your job? Worried about your next meal? How you are going to get your car fixed?

Like so many people who feel they have no hope, we become paralyzed by circumstance. We cannot see how we can change the situations we find ourselves in.

We become well informed and we convince ourselves that we are doing something about it... and in many cases we are... we are giving up hope...

Let me ask you a very pointed question this morning...

Where does your hope come from?

Do we seek for hope as an emotional feeling within ourselves based on our ability to control, manage or deal with a situation OR do we seek for hope as a lifeline from someone who knows the plans He has for us?

Do we derive our hope from ourselves or from the Lord?

If your hope is in your ability to deal with everything that comes into your life then your faith is in yourself. If your hope is in yourself and you know that you cannot change what is happening, then you will certainly fall into despair, depression or perhaps even apathy.

NOW... We serve a God who can do and accomplish anything! If we place our hope and faith in him, then we wait in expectation of a future that God has promised.

It is my hope that each one of you will embrace this truth this morning...

Hope is a cord, a lifeline if you will. Now let's visualize life as a flowing river. Is your hope tied to the eternal rock Jesus or is it attached to you? As you are swept downstream through life and you are pulling on the cord of hope and anchored to the rock? Would you rather find Jesus at the end, with his feet firmly planted on the shores of eternity or would you rather find yourself at the end of your rope?

I will say it one more time... faith and hope are not just an emotions. Faith is the reality of hope placed in the Lord.

Let's go back to Hebrews 11:1 HCSB

"Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen. "

I want to look at the word reality here really closely:

g5287. ὑπόστασις *hypostasis*;
from a compound of 5259 and
2476; a setting under (support),
i.e. (figuratively) concretely,
essence, or abstractly, assurance
(objectively or subjectively): —
confidence, confident, person,
substance.
AV (5) - confidence 2, confident 1,
person 1, substance 1;
I. a setting or placing under
A. thing put under, substructure,
foundation

So if faith is the reality and reality is a setting or placing under, then faith is the actual foundation of what is hoped for. I will place my assurance in the LORD!

As Christians we place our faith and our hope in God who is not a liar. He delivers on his promises. This whole academic look at "hope" culminates in this:

Hoping in the wrong thing is quite simply idolatry.

Picking the wrong source to place your hope in can in fact be eternally fatal. You see it is our hope that drives our actions. Our hope underpins our goals. The greatest trick of the enemy is to take away hope. After all, why try to do something if we don't believe we can succeed?

Did you know that Hope is actually a gift of the Holy Spirit? The Spirit leads us to Christ, Jesus saves us and the Holy Spirit confirms to each one of us the Hope of eternal life. Faith becomes our reality.

Titus 3:6,7

"He poured out this Spirit on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that having been justified by His grace, we may become heirs with the hope of eternal life."

We have an assurance of eternal life!

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

"Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

We are instructed to not focus on the problems of this world, because it is temporary, we are told to look to him. We need to place our faith in him because that is the only assurance we have of hope. If we look just to ourselves - we are beyond hope. If we want something in the world to change, we need to invite God to the situation!

Romans 5:2-5

We have also obtained access through Him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

God has a plan to give us hope folks! This is why when we are tested or tried, we can be happy! We cannot afford to tie our joy to our circumstance we must tie it to our faith. This is what gives us HOPE! The joy of the Lord is your strength!

Romans 8:24-27

Now in this hope we were saved, yet hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patience.

In the same way the Spirit also joins to help in our weakness, because we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with unspoken groanings. And He who searches the hearts knows the Spirit's mind- set, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

The Holy Spirit joins to help us! If our God is for us, who then can stand against us? We might not even know what to ask for and we are still covered and can still have hope!

Romans 12:12,13

Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer. Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality.

Nuff said on this one. It's really pretty clear!

Romans 15:4,5

For whatever was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that we may have hope through endurance and through the encouragement from the Scriptures. Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement allow you to live in harmony with one another, according to the command of Christ Jesus.

Get to know the scriptures; they are the Rhema – The Living word of the Logos – Jesus Christ.

(Rhema – literally means an utterance or thing said. It literally signifies the action of the utterance.)

Romans 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, as you believe in Him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are empowered to hope by the Holy Spirit!

CS Lewis once said:

“Most people, if they had really learned to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never quite keep their promise.

At present we are on the outside... the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the pleasures we see. But all the pages of the New Testament are rustling with the rumor that it will not always be so. Someday, God willing, we shall get “in” ... We will put on glory... that greater glory of which Nature is only the first sketch.

We do not want to merely “see” beauty–though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words–to be united

with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.”

My dear friends, do you feel like there is no hope this morning, do you feel hopeless to deal with the tragedies around you. Do you feel like your life has no hope?

This morning, if I have just described you, then your hope is not placed where it should be...

Remember what I said earlier? Hoping in the wrong thing is idolatry

We need to commit to placing our hope and faith in the Lord Jesus maker of heaven and earth.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, Today I pray that we will learn to place our hope in you. There are so many things in this world we feel powerless about. The enemy uses these things to discourage and to rob us of hope. We need hope Lord. Hope is the foundation of our faith.

Holy Spirit please grant us the gift of faith this morning. Cause each person here to place his or her hope in you. Give us the strength to not place our hope in the things of this world or even ourselves. Cause us to rely on your for our hope. Through the hope you give us Lord, you have thrown us a lifeline. This morning I pray we grab a hold of that lifeline and never let go.