

INTRODUCTION:

Hope and Love are things everyone needs. Hope gives you a direction otherwise you wander about lost. Some people hope for a large bank account or for their old age, some hope for fame while they are young. Others hope just to be loved, and to find the capacity to love.

Sometimes we have a conception that people who approach life in a lighthearted manner don't take things seriously enough. We often believe that they don't care about things, that they have a kind of laize faire approach toward life, that they have adopted a blended "don't worry, be happy" "hakuna matata" attitude.

Could it be that for many people, who approach life with a lighthearted attitude, they do so because they have a sense of hope that we don't completely understand or know nothing about?

And if we knew and understood the reason for the hope that they profess, their actions would make complete sense to us.

Peter told the Persian believers in his first letter, "Always be ready to give a reason for the hope you profess."

So, what is our hope?

All too often, hope is pessimistically defined as the little boy did when he said: "Hope is wishing for something you know ain't gonna happen."

Hope is not wishful thinking.

In 1965, naval aviator James B. Stockdale became one of the first American pilots to be shot down during the Vietnam War. As a prisoner of the Vietcong, he spent seven years as a POW, during which he was frequently tortured in an attempt to break him and get him to denounce the U. S. involvement in the war.

He was chained for days at a time with his hands above his head so that he could not even swat the mosquitoes. Today, he still cannot bend his left knee and walks with a severe limp from having his legs broken by his captors and never reset. One of the worst things done to him was that he was held in isolation away from the other American POWs and allowed to see only his guards and interrogators.

How could anyone survive seven years of such treatment? As he looks back on that time, Stockdale says that it was his hope that kept him alive. Hope of one day going home, that each day could be the day of his release.

Without hope, he knew that he would die in hopelessness, as others had done.

Such is the power of hope, that it can keep one alive when nothing else can.

In his book "Man's Search for Meaning", Victor Frankl, successor of Sigmund Freud at Vienna, argued that the "loss of hope and courage can have a deadly effect on man." As a result of his experiences in a Nazi concentration camp, Frankl contended that when a man no longer possesses a motive for living, no future to look forward, he curls up in a corner and dies. "Any attempt to restore a man's inner strength in camp," he wrote, "had first to succeed in showing him some future goal."

Some years ago a hydroelectric dam was to be build across a valley in New England. The people in a small town in the valley were to be relocated because the town itself would be submerged when the dam was finished. During the time between the decision to build the dam and its completion, the buildings in the town, which previously were kept up nicely, fell into disrepair. Instead of being a pretty little town, it became an eyesore.

Why did this happen? The answer is simple. As one resident said, "Where there is no faith in the future, there is no work in the present."

For a Christian -

Hope is complete confidence that God is at work performing His will even when we don't see it.

Christians see beyond, this life. We have been given a hope by God that grows as we grow older. Hope for things in this world slips by when people grow older. Hope is mentioned over 50 times in the New Testament. We will cover just a few verses.

I/ CHRIST IS OUR HOPE

1. "To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."(Col 1:27)

I have chosen this verse first, because Christ is our hope, without him we would not have hope for anything beyond this life.

This verse reminds us that Christ is IN US, that knowledge brings us hope.

When we look at our lives, and see the imperfection, we are discouraged and lose hope, but when we look at Jesus, that He loves us and dwells in us we are brought back to hope.

2. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

Since our God is the source of our hope, we wonder what this hope does for us.

This verse tells us that through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can be filled with all joy and peace.

People everywhere are looking for happiness, they are looking to wealth, fame, good times, earthly loves ect..

But we know that lasting Joy, and Peace come from within and this verse tells us that God's hope or hope in God brings these things to us.

3. "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,"(1 Tim 1:1)

We can hope because "God our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ" is our Hope. Think of that !!

Our Saviour is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the bible says All things were made by him and without him was not anything that was made. This Omnipotent, Omnipresent God is our hope.

My message last week center around sharing the gospel and evangelism. Why is this so important.

II/ THOSE WITHOUT HOPE

1." remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world."(Eph 2:12)

Being without Christ and without God means they are without hope. Oh yes they hope in worldly things, such as money and power and fame, but 99.9 percent are disappointed in even that.

The others are disappointed when they grow old and cannot enjoy the world.

2. "Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of

mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him."(1 Thess 4:13,14)

Those who all their life have lived without eternal hope, have relatives who when they die, also have no hope.

So, they are hopeless and their relatives are hopeless.

There is a difference between those who have no hope and those who have a false hope.

Hitler gave young Germans false hope that he was setting up a super race by killing those Jews who would degrade the future generations. They all died to find they hoped in the wrong thing.

So how do we know true Hope from false hope...

III/ HOPE IS GIVEN TO US BY GOD

1." Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you," (1 Peter 1:3-4)

With all the false hopes given to men by Satan and the world system, how do we get this living hope, the one that lives within us to empower us?

It is given to us by God through His mercy when we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

2. "God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. 19 We have this hope as an anchor

for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain,"(Heb 6:18,19)

God in his mercy sets hope before us, we receive it and it has become an anchor for our souls, which this verse says is steadfast and sure.

I remember, when I was first saved, and how I thought of one day walking the streets of Gold in heaven and talking with Moses, David, and other Saints. A new hope was set before me.

3." And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."(1 Cor 13:13)

This verse shows us there is a difference between faith and hope.

By faith men do things, but it is hope that keeps them going.

For instance, (Romans 10:9) "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

What do we do next? After we have believed in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, and have confessed him with our mouth, what do we do next? We Hope! And We Serve by faith!

4." For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?" (1 Thess 2:19)

Now we shall see that our hope goes beyond ourselves, to the lives of others.

We hope that not only will we be saved but that others we have witnessed to will be saved.

Not only that they will be saved but that God will help them along their Christian pathway just as He has helped us.

IV/ NOW WE CONTINUE TO HOPE

1. "For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently." (Romans 8:24,25)

In the original Greek, "We were saved in hope".

We were saved by faith in hope. But hope is not over when we are saved, there is yet the hope that we will be someday free from the power of sin, and the presence of sin.

We as Christians now hope for the redemption of our bodies, and receiving our spiritual inheritance.

Paul wrote of the "glory that shall be revealed in us" in verse 18 of this same chapter.

And back in verse 17 "Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ"

There is a big difference between, our hope and the hope of the Muslim fanatic who thinks he is going to paradise because he committed suicide while killing others.

This verse says we must with "patience wait" for the result of our hope.

We cannot hurry along our reward until we are finished with the work God has set before us.

"For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done."(Matt 16:27).

You must live your whole life, that God has given you, then can He count your works and give you your reward.

"their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. 14 If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward." (1 Cor 3:13,14)

2." Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure." (1 John 3:2-3)

This hope, It makes us better people, loving people.

We realize that in Jesus Christ we are heirs to the riches of Glory, we don't need be selfish, or covetous, because we are already rich in Christ.

We need to share our riches by witnessing to others that our hope can be their hope, and our Saviour their Saviour.

Like I stated last week "You are called to be faithful to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, trust God to then do His part and work on their hearts.

If you are here today or are watching online and are saying, I've lost hope. I'm struggling with depression, anxiety, addiction, loneliness, etc..hurt...I am here to tell you this morning there is a hope beyond all hope, that is not bound by your circumstances.

A hope that was bought and paid for by the blood of the king out of the love of the Father. You can have this hope, if you would only repent and accept Jesus as your lord and Savior. If that is you I want to pray with you.