

HOPE – Baptism Weekend

Feb 13, 2022

Intro: Stefan Duerksen

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV) but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

Why is this important? What we place our HOPE in LEADS our HEART (emotions, emotional responses)... regardless of what we may say we believe... **You could say that whatever you PLACE YOUR HOPE IN WILL DETERMINE THE KIND OF FRUIT YOU BEAR. Both good and bad.**

Psychology Today writes: “Hope is a key factor research has identified as critical in determining how we negotiate suffering. If people believe that their suffering will end, or that some possibility of rescue is likely, they can endure incredible discomfort.”

A. **Two kinds of HOPE:**

1. **Hope apart from future certainty:**

- a. “I really hope we can go on a holiday this year” “I really hope I am able to get this job” “I really hope she feels the same about me as I do about her” “I hope that life can return to normal soon”
- b. We have a desire for a positive outcome that may not be certain or guaranteed.

2. **Christian Hope is set on: a future certainty – a future goal - Jesus**

a. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (ESV)**

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; This type of hope is the birthplace of being able to truly LIVE for God. Of being able to live a life of sacrifice! Because we know that God will use all things for his glory and that ultimate good will come as we follow him...

b. **Our HOPE is set on a person – JESUS CHRIST and his PROMISES TO US.**

- c. This type of hope is the birthplace of being able to truly LIVE for God. Of being able to live a life of sacrifice! Because we know this life and world is temporary... we can truly begin to let go of the world, when our HOPE is in CHRIST ALONE.

d. **1 Peter 1:13-15 (ESV)**

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,

B. **Two Danger Zones:**

1. **Not having HOPE – Hopelessness**

- a. Hopelessness is something we ALL experience. We feel hopeless when we can't see a way forward... nothing certain in the future or with the issue we are facing...

- b. Hopelessness in extremes can lead to depression... anxiety... addiction... and can even lead people to feeling suicidal.
 - c. Staying here though often leads to the SECOND DITCH.
- 2. Placing our HOPE in the wrong thing/person/outcome**
- a. This can end up being just as damaging as the first danger zone!
 - b. **For example:** suicide... often the person loses all hope... which can lead to them thinking their only HOPE is death. It is the ONLY WAY TO END THEIR PAIN.
 - c. **For example:** addictions – the addict usually HATES the addiction! But deep in their heart... the only way to manage life and deal with stress and pain is to SELF-MEDICATE.
 - d. **For example:** placing our HOPE in a boyfriend or girlfriend – what happens when they disappoint? Your whole world is shattered.
 - e. **For example:** placing your hope in a political party – which party has their complete allegiance to Jesus?
 - f. **For example:** financial security or health... what happens if you lose your job? Or your health?
 - g. When we place our HOPE in the wrong thing/person/outcome... we place our HEART and LIFE into things that are entirely uncertain and leave ourselves open to DEEP disappointed and we often end up FAILING to bear the FRUIT of the Spirit that would enable to find true contentment in life and empower us to fulfill our purpose as believers.

Setting our HOPE fully on Jesus is critical to living fully for him.

C. Hope in Christ produce this kind of fruit:

1. **Self-sacrificing LOVE. (Rom 12:1)**
 - a. We no longer feel the need to preserve SELF. We aren't living for this world.
2. **Freedom from sinful vices & addiction (It's a process!) (John 8:31-32)**
3. **Peace & Perseverance through hardship (Jer 29:11; Heb 11:1)**
4. **Extravagant generosity (Mat 19:21; Acts 2:44)**
5. **Contentment & satisfaction in life. (Lam 3:24-25; Hebrews 13:5)**
6. **Prayerfulness (the greatest indicator of a HOPE found in Jesus) (Rom 12:12)**

PRAY OVER CHURCH: Romans 15:13 (ESV) May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

D. Putting our Hope in Christ:

1. **Spending time in the Word**
 - a. Spending time in the Word is key. Read the Psalms! There are dozens of examples of HOPE being found in the Word.
 - b. **Psalm 119:92 (ESV)** If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.
 - i. HOPE is found in God's Word – Ps 119:43, 49; 81; 114; 116; 147; 166
2. **Trust his promises**
 - a. In the Word we learn the promises that God makes that we are able to hold onto!
 - i. Salvation

- ii. He's always with us
- iii. Filling of the Spirit when we ask
- iv. Good plans for our future
- v. Preparing a place for us
- vi. Forgive us EVERYTIME we confess
- vii. Answer us when we pray
- viii. Turn all things for good as we follow Him

3. PRAY – bring your needs, desires, heart, failures, heart to God in prayer

Joshua 5:13-14 (ESV)

When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us, or for our adversaries?” And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?”

1 Corinthians 8:9-13 (ESV)

But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV)

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Luke 9:25 (ESV) For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

Heart Checklist: (before you take a stand)

- **Ensure your Hope is in Christ**
- **Examine your heart and repent from sin**
- **Prayerfully consider your position**
- **Assume the best in others**
- **Listen & give grace to people on all sides**
- **Pray for our leaders & country**
- **Put the Testimony of Jesus FIRST then stand for Truth without sacrificing Love**

Luke 23:34 (ESV) And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments. THIS IS OUR EXAMPLE.

PRAY & Worship - CLOSING PRAYER