

Upcoming Events

Mother's Day: Today!!

Business Meeting: May 19 at 4:30 p.m.

Ladies Bible Class: May 19 at 4:00 p.m.

Memorial Day: May 27

Panera Bread Open Bible Study: Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Hebrews class Mondays at 10:00

Hope

“For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.”
Romans 8:24-25

“For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

May Birthdays

2 Peggy Woodruff

15 Kena Brown

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
Mike McKnight

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Walking in Hope

By Jonathan McAnulty

There are many ways to describe what it takes to be a devout Christian, but perhaps one of the most succinct answers is supplied by the apostle Paul, who wrote, *“Now there remains faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love”* (1 Corinthians 13:13).

While Paul reminds us that the greatest of the three characteristics is Love, he does so to stress the importance of Love, not to downplay the importance of either faith and hope. When we consider that without faith it is not just difficult, but downright impossible to be pleasing to God, we may begin to understand just how grand love must truly be (cf. Hebrew 11:6).

However, while Faith certainly gets a lot of favorable press, and Love is most certainly admired, it is frequently true that we tend to hear less spoken concerning the vital part Hope has to play in the Christian scheme of things.

The goal of the Scriptures, we are told, is to point the world to Hope. *“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope”* (Romans 15:4; NKJV). This Hope spoken of by God in His word is not some nebulous, unspecified aspiration or dream. Rather, it is quite a specific Hope, so that we read that there is *“one Hope of our calling”* (Ephesians 4:4).

When the Bible talks about a Christian's Hope, it is referring to concrete ideas and specific promises, which God, who cannot lie, promised to His children (cf. Titus 1:2). Chief among these promises God has made is the promise of eternal life through Christ Jesus His Son, and the closely related promise concerning the resurrection of the dead. This is the Hope which anchors the

Christian soul, an anchor sure and steadfast (cf. Hebrews 6:18-19). Just as Jesus was risen from the dead, so too those who have put on Christ in baptism, dying to their old self, have the concrete Hope that they too will share in the resurrection of the righteous (cf. Romans 6:3-5).

True Hope, likewise, is not without concrete consequences. Just as true Faith demands that a person act in accordance with their Faith, if that faith is to have value (cf. James 2:14-26), and just as true love demands that a person act in accordance with their professed love, with kindness (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:4-6), so too does true, scriptural Hope make certain demands upon a person.

Christian Hope precludes worldly sorrow and worry (cf. Matthew 6:32-33; 1 Thessalonians 4:13). If we truly believe in the promises of God, we continue forward doggedly in our faith, certain that God will work things to our good, confident that the *“the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”* (Romans 8:18; NKJV). It is this Hope that gives Christians the confidence which knows that in all things, even peril and distress, they are more than conquerors in Christ (cf. Romans 8:37).

Christian Hope encourages boldness in our speech and Christian confession (2 Corinthians 3:12). With worry precluded, we do not fear what man might do to us when we speak (cf. Matthew 10:27-28). Likewise, because of the awesome nature of the message, we are stirred to boldness. We have the gift of eternal life, and it is promised to any and all who will obey the Gospel of Christ! If we are eager to share good news about such mundane matters as births, weddings, and sport-related-victories, should we not be much more excited to talk about the fact that we can be raised from the dead.

Christian Hope encourages faithfulness and self-sacrifice. Understanding what is offered, we are willing to *“count all things loss for Christ, so that we might know Him, if by any means we might obtain to the resurrection of the dead”* (cf. Philippians 3:7-11). When the going gets tough, it is Hope that keeps us going, steadfastly putting one spiritual foot in front of the other, in our service to the Lord.

Christians are to walk in faith, living loving lives... but those lives should also be lives full of Hope. Lives of joyful optimism, trusting unwaveringly in the promises of God. Lives which fail to contain this Hope are lives which are failing to truly follow the road Christ walked. Let us rejoice in Faith. Let us rejoice in Love. But let us also, always, rejoice in Hope.

We Love the Souls of Everyone

By Phil Sanders

“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3-4).

Because we love the souls of men and want them to go to heaven, we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul knew this burden and said, *“I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek”* (Romans 1:14-16).

Because we love the souls of men, we are not afraid to speak out against sin. We know that passions of the flesh *“wage war against the soul”* (1 Peter 2:11).

Because we love the souls of men, we preach the need to follow Jesus. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. *“No one comes to the Father except through me”* (John 14:6).

Because we love the souls of men, we point people to what is best. The Lord Jesus came to bring us an abundant life (John 10:10). His yoke is easy, and His burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30). He is the *“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”* (Isaiah 9:6). He is *“our wisdom and our righteousness and sanctification and redemption”* (1 Corinthians 1:30). We can do no better than to preach Jesus and Him crucified to every soul in every place who will hear.