

Having Hope

Romans 15:1-7

9/ 10-11/ 05

Intro

Hope is something we cannot do without. If we have no hope, there is no reason to live. Those who were prisoners of war in Vietnam said that it was only hope that kept them going.

But sometimes we become very discouraged, beaten down, depressed, and weary from broken relationships and the heaviness of daily life. It's time like these that we need to be reminded again that God is the God of hope.

Paul is concluding the section on the areas in the church where there can be disagreement. What about Christmas, Easter, drinking, dancing, eating this or that. There are too many churches where relationships are broken, and Paul gives us insights into how to have hope in trials and troubles such as these.

In these verses Paul gives us insights and lessons about having hope and growing in hope.

These are insights Paul give us in having hope from God.

I. Bear the Burden of Others

A. Its' not about me

- It's so easy to get wrapped up in our trials and problems that we often lose our perspective.

Illus – Many people are so focused in their problems that it becomes a situation where they are staring at their issues and become fixed on themselves.

- Verse 1 – bear the burdens of those who are weak. *Don't insist on having your own way, even if you have the right to do so.*
- There is an old saying that many think is in the Bible. It says, "God helps those who help themselves." But it would better to say, "*God helps those who help others.*"

Acts 20:35, "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Luke 6:38, "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure --pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

B. Love your neighbor

- This is one of the greatest commandments because it summarizes the law and the prophets
- What is interesting is that hope comes to us when we fulfill God's Word in loving our neighbor.
- The key is to love even those who are against you.
- The Samaritan was good because he didn't let the Jew's hatred of him stop his compassion.

John 4:9, Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink

since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

Luke 10:33, “But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,”

- What many do not understand is that there is hope in the heart of the person who does not focus on just pleasing himself.

II. Persevere in Faith

A. Stay on course

- Here Paul brings in our relationship to God to have a bearing on how we relate to our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- There will be many times when we will face the temptation to quit. This comes from frustration because of a lack of hope.
- Paul is teaching us here that through perseverance we will have hope in our relationships with others.
- Perseverance means to stay the course, stay steady, don't let the winds of trouble or trials blow your life off course.

I Timothy 1:18-19, “This command I entrust to you, Timothy ,my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good

conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.”

Luke 8:14-15, “The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.”

B. God is greater than the obstacles

- If this is known, truly known, then there is hope.
- But if this is in doubt, then hope itself is in danger of being lost.

Isaiah 40:26-31 See who created the stars...

- David tells us to lift up our eyes to God for our help...

Psalms 121:1-2, “I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.”

C. Faith brings hope

- Verse 13 – may you abound in hope in believing.
- In Romans 5, Paul wrote about how tribulation and trial bring about perseverance, which brings hope, and then that hope does not disappoint.

Romans 5:3-5, “And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about

perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

Illus – When David’s camp at Ziklag was attacked by the Amalekites while he and his men were away, a terrible discouragement fell up the camp; even to the point that there was talk of stoning David. All hope was lost, but David knew where to find hope...

I Samuel 30:6, “Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.”

III. Be Encouraged in the Word

A. The scriptures are for our instruction

- Paul writes in verse 4 that what was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that we might be encouraged by the Word to have hope.
- In other words, we study through the whole counsel of God’s Word because we are to learn from how God relates to others.
- Paul wrote to the church at Corinth that we are to learn from the mistakes of Israel.

I Corinthians 10:1-11 We are to learn from Israel’s mistakes

- All of scripture is for correction, for reproof, and encouragement.

II Timothy 3:16-17, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

B. And to encourage the soul

- God knows there will be times when we will be discouraged and so He says that we receive from God’s Word and find that our souls will be encouraged. Then we are able to bear with one another.
- There is so much pain in our lives that comes from broken relationships. Here, Paul is pointing us toward Christ as the answer.
- “*May the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind.*” Verse 5

Philippians 2:2-4, “**make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.**”

C. May the God of hope fill you

- Verse 13 is one of the most beautiful verses in the chapter.
- There is a very simple, yet profound principle found there. *May the God of hope fill you...*
- **Our believing opens our hearts to being filled with joy and peace, abounding in hope.**
- If we are not filled up with God, we will be filled up with ourselves, and frankly, that is what gets in the way of relationships and causes so much pain.

Ephesians 3:16-19, “that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.”

Conclusion

To be filled up with all the fullness of God is such a wonderful desire. You will be filled with hope and peace in believing. May we truly be of one mind and heart in Christ Jesus.