

Christmas Series Part 1

The Power of Hope

Dave Spooner – Mosaic Rockford – Nov. 29th, 2015

Intro:

- Start of the Christmas series where we will be focusing in on the qualities of Christmas – Hope, Love, Joy and Peace
- The Christmas story is the story of hope fulfilled . . . (a deliver)
- And now we wait with anticipation as to the completion and fullness of all the promises of God – in the new kingdom of God.
- Hope is a very powerful condition of the soul and we are going to highlight a few of ways hope impacts our lives.
- My goal and I believe the goal of the Lord is to rekindle and strengthen your hope this morning and during this season.
- There are many things we can place our hope in . . . but I want to focus our time on putting our hope in the Lord who will fulfill all his promises to us.

Hope in God anchors our souls

Heb 6:17-19 NLV

God also bound himself with an oath, so that those who received the promise could be perfectly sure that he would never change his mind. 18 So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us. 19 This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls.

- God gives us a promise (of what is to come) and gives us an oath – that He will fulfill it
- These things are based in His character – which is unchangeable – because it is impossible for God to lie
- So those of us who run to him for refuge can have great confidence in the hope that we have.
- And this hope is a “strong and trustworthy anchor” for our souls
- And having an anchor
 - It keeps us from drifting
 - It keeps us from being destroyed
- So many things that will try to knock us off course – trials/tribulations – difficulties/defeat – death/destruction –
- Our job is to hang on – and in hanging on we are productive and focused

Hope in God renews our strength

Isa 40:27-31 NIV

Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God"? 28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. 29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

- Have you ever felt like “your way was hidden from the Lord –to you or your “cause has been disregarded by God” – that he is not and does not pay attention
- The response is – God is EVERLASTING and He created EVERYTHING; He is not tired and worn out – and he understands it all – far more and deeper than anyone
- His response is to give “strength to the weary” and “increase the power of the week”
- We in contrast, even at our very best, grow tired and weary and stumble and fall
- But those who “hope in the Lord” . . .
 - Not in their own strength, intelligence, ingenuity, good works, Money, People, Position, Organization, Family, Fame, . . . but in the Lord
- Will have their strength renewed, soar like eagles, run and not grow weary, walk and not be faint

Ps 31:24

Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.

Hope in God provides joy and peace

Rom 15:13 NIV

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.

- God of hope – the source of hope - the one who inspires and gives us hope
- Fill you will all joy and peace – the result of trusting
- Trusting is the conduit of joy and peace – so if you don’t trust you will not be filled with joy and peace
- Fill us to overflowing with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit – so one of the workings of the Holy Spirit’s power is filling us with hope that overflows . . .

Isa 49:23

Those who hope in me will not be disappointed.

Hope in God inspires endurance

1 Thess 1:2-3 NIV

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. 3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- We keep running until the end because of what is offered and because of our example

Heb 12:1-3 NIV

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

- The faith and hope knowing of the joy set before him gave him the strength to endure the cross.

Hope in God limits our grieving

1 Thess 4:13-15 NIV

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ 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.

- Good news for those who have lost loved ones, we still grieve – but we grieve with hope knowing that we will indeed see those again who “have fallen asleep in him”.
- Perhaps this is when we think of them the most, around this time of year.
- Connection to salvation?

Conclusion

- Give yourself a pep talk to place your hope in God

Ps 42:5-6 NIV

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

- Remember to anchor your hope in the character and promise of God
- Don't let go of Hope

Heb 10:23-24 NIV

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

- Prayer people
- Pray