

Hope



THE ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL

Lesson Two: The Neglected Virtue.

Introduction. There have been scores of sermons preached on biblical principles such as faith, love, confession, and faithful service to the Lord. How many have we heard on hope? Is there nothing the Bible offers on this subject? Is it less important to life in Christ?

I. Hope in Relation to Faith and Love. Much of what Scripture teaches about hope we learn from its relationship to other important elements of our service to God.

- A. *Paul's Love Chapter* (1 Cor. 13:1-13). After addressing the temporary nature of miraculous spiritual gifts Paul lists hope among things that “abide” or “remain” (YLT, GLT) now (1 Cor. 13:13a).
 - 1. This follows Paul’s powerful teaching on love, which he contrasts with faith and hope—declaring, “the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13b).
 - 2. If hope “remains” it indicates that it plays a necessary role in what it means to serve Christ is in this age.
- B. *The Hebrew Writer's Faith Chapter* (Heb. 11:1-40). As the Hebrew writer begins his beautiful chronicle of those who have lived “by faith” he starts with a definition of this necessary response to the gospel.
 - 1. In this definition we learn the importance of hope. There can be no faith without hope—faith is the “substance of things hoped for” (Heb. 11:1).
 - 2. There are things “hoped for” that shape the “substance” of what it means to have faith in God, in Christ, or in the promises of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - 3. If faith relies on hope for its substance it too is necessary in order for us to be pleasing to God (Heb. 11:6).

II. Hope and Salvation. The role of hope in salvation is not due only to its relationship to faith and love. The Bible teaches that hope is essential for salvation.

- A. Confession of Christ is necessary for salvation (Rom. 10:8-11; Matt. 10:32-33).
 - 1. This confession is a confession of hope (Heb. 10:23).
 - 2. The one who believes affirms by his confession that he puts his hope in Jesus for salvation.
- B. Hope is necessary for salvation.
 - 1. By definition, hope is eager expectation of things unseen (Rom. 8:24-25).
 - 2. Paul teaches that we are “saved in this hope” (Rom. 8:24a).
- C. Faithfulness demands that we strive to maintain “full assurance of hope until the end” (Heb. 6:9-12; cf. Heb. 3:6).
 - 1. This hope demands patience and endurance (1 Thess. 1:3; cf. Lam. 3:26).

Conclusion. Hope is an essential part of having faith. Hope is something that endures throughout the gospel age. Far from being a trivial and insignificant trait only a few optimistic people have, the Bible connects it with the kind of behavior Christians should practice. In fact, the Bible teaches that hope is necessary for salvation.

Discussion Questions

1. First Corinthians chapters 12-14 address the proper use of miraculous spiritual gifts such as gifts of tongues and prophecy. Chapter thirteen falls in the middle of this discussion and shows the superiority of love and the temporary duration of miraculous gifts. Explain what Paul means by saying faith, hope, and love “remain” now: _____

2. In Hebrews 11:1 list some ways that other translations render the word the King James and New King James versions translate “substance.” _____

What are some things “hoped for” when one puts faith in Christ? _____

3. How do Hebrews 11:1 and 11:6 show that we must have hope to be pleasing to God? _____

4. In Matthew 10:32-33 Jesus teaches that we must confess Him before men. Is the Hebrew writer describing a different confession when he speaks of a confession of hope? Why or why not? _____

5. Paul teaches that the Christians hope in things we cannot yet see something by which we “eagerly wait” for such things “with perseverance” (Rom. 8:25). If one waits, but not “eagerly” or “with perseverance” does he or she possess the kind of hope Paul says the Christian should have? Why or why not? _____

6. In the context of Hebrew 6:9-12 how does the Hebrew writer indicate that they can demonstrate “full assurance of hope until the end”? _____

7. In 1 Thessalonians 1:3 Paul speaks of the faith, hope, and love of the brethren in Thessalonica. List the actions he associates with each of these things: _____ of faith; _____ of love, and _____ of hope. Explain what is meant by the action he associates with hope: _____

8. In Lamentations 3:26 what does Jeremiah say is good for one to do who hopes for the salvation of the Lord? _____

