

Romans 8.18-25

The Power of Hope

If we hope for what we do not see... there are contained in that sentence 2 of the most powerful words in the world... the word "if", and the word "hope". In many ways they are synonyms, both words deal with the question of potential, but there is a nuanced difference. There is potential contained in the first word, and potential explained in the second. That potential is the is power of the practice of hope. "If" says, it might be possible, "hope" says it is certain, I see it, I understand its shape, I know its power... Here we see "If" applied to our practice; "If" you will only do this, then you move from the realm of empty dreams and into the realm of very sure and certain promise. If you will only believe and act on that belief, then the power to ignite transformation in your life is unlocked. And that power is the power of hope.

I. WAITING EAGERLY

- a. Paul begins by telling us that hope empowers our waiting with eagerness.

- b. That determined and hungry heart that says I can't wait to get started, so let's get busy chasing it down.
- c. Longing is part of it, but longing alone leaves us languishing.
- d. Longing powered by this eagerness drives after the object of its desire
- e. This is crucial for us to understand, for it allows us to define the object of our desire with clarity and focus. We do not desire a place, a reward, a thing or a circumstance... our desire is for a person - the person of Christ. Jesus IS the hope of heaven.

II. JESUS OUR HOPE

1 Timothy 1:1

¹ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

- a. The hope of heaven must be understood as the presence of Jesus Christ.
 - i. He has loved us with an everlasting love,
 - ii. an eternal love that chose us from before the foundations of the world
 - iii. He has given Himself for us to redeem us
 - iv. He has given to us His own personal inheritance
 - v. He has given to us the reward of His own obedience and the reward of His own suffering as He bought us for Himself.

- b. Any other object, idea or person being our great hope is idolatrous
 - i. Family
 - ii. Friends
 - iii. Enjoyments
 - iv. Goals
 - v. Dreams
 - vi. Here or in eternity
 - vii. NONE of them are permitted to be our great hope

III. HOPE, FOCUS AND TRANSFORMATION

a. His promises drive our desire for transformation

2 Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

b. We become that which we gaze upon

2 Corinthians 3:17–18

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

c. The clearer our vision of Him, the truer our transformation

1 John 3:1–3

¹ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

- d. We cannot be like the world AND like Him
 - i. We are not yet what we will be
 - ii. The final transformation will occur when He appears,
 - 1. this sets the tone of our hope
 - 2. This life can never satisfy
 - 3. This life will never be able to see the completion of our hope
 - 4. BUT, this life IS the furnace of much of our transformation

iii. Notice the last statement - he who has this hope in Him, purifies Himself JUST as He is pure...

e. Hope is the catalyst of our purification

f. Hope is that which aims us with purpose towards being pleasing to and in Christ

g. Hope also comforts us when we see our own failure

2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, ¹⁷ comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

IV. THE POWER OF HOPE

a. Hope driven by knowledge

2 Peter 1:2–4

b. Hope is foundational, but also promissory

2 Peter 1:5–11

c. Hope becomes the packing that holds much together

i. Hope allows us to hold on to what we have acquired, while still leaving room for more

ii. Hope enlarges to include all the possible when powered by the promise of God

d. Grace, Truth and Hope are inseparable

Colossians 1:3–7

e. All God's promises are rooted and answered in the PERSON of Christ Jesus

2 Corinthians 1:20

²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

- i. But all of the promises of God INCLUDE His working that glory IN US... this is the power that is displayed through the church to the vindication of God's wisdom, righteousness and perfect plan

Romans 3:21–26

²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Ephesians 3:8–12

f. Hope empowers righteousness

Titus 2:11–14

g. Hope creates a desire for imitation

1 John 2:3–6

³ Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶ He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.