

Never Lose Hope

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

Hebrews 6:9-12 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- I. Paul had just written some harsh words to these people about their walk and service for the Lord.
 - A. He had told them they were dull of hearing.

Hebrews 5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

- B. He had told them they were way behind where they should be by now in their spiritual growth and knowledge of God.
- C. He had reprimanded them for their need to be taught again the very basic first principles of the Gospel of Christ.

Hebrews 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

- D. He had made it clear to them that this all spoke of serious problems with their understanding of the Gospel and was a characteristic of those who would be rejected and lost.

Hebrews 6:7-8 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

- E. He was not wrong or out of order for saying these things to a group of people who were claiming to be Christians.
- F. It is a necessary part of the responsibility of any preacher of the Gospel, and even more for this apostle, to warn those who are out of the way.
- G. It is the same as if we were driving a vehicle and it starts to veer off the road so we grab the wheel and make a correction to prevent a calamity.
- H. It is something that has to be done, and done often, but it is not all that preaching and teaching is about.
- I. There are other things that must be accompany the rebuke, reproof, and correction given.

- II. Paul said he was persuaded better things of these people than the bleak picture he had painted.

- A. "...and things that accompany salvation," he said, "though thus we speak."
 - 1. He assured them that he had not given up on them and was counting them as lost.
 - 2. He gave them to know that he saw the evidence of salvation in them, also.

3. He was simply trying to correct an error and instruct them in the way of righteousness.
 4. We all need to know when we are acting or thinking out of character for a Christian.
- B. The main idea we need to notice here is the hope that Paul had for people.
 - C. He surely could see all the errors and shortcomings of other people better than any of us can.
 - D. He was surely more concerned about these problems than most of us are.
 - E. But when he dealt with issues in the churches or with individual people you will always see Paul ending his exhortation by expressing his hope for them.
 1. The Galatians were off the track with false doctrine which, as it always does, confused them about sin and immorality and ruined their testimony.
 2. To them also Paul gave some very stern and harsh warnings, but at the same time expressed his hope for them that they would grow out of this.

Galatians 5:4-10 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. **For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.** For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. **A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded;** but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

3. The Corinthians were probably the most messed up and immoral of the churches, but yet Paul expressed to them his hope for them a number of times among all the rebuke and correction and warnings.

2 Corinthians 1:7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

2 Corinthians 10:15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; **but having hope, when your faith is increased,** that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

III. So we should follow Paul's example in this matter.

- A. It is easy for carnal people to see the faults in others.
- B. Our own spiritual immaturity and hypocrisy are revealed when we are critical of others and prone to find fault without holding forth hope for them.
- C. Hope is part of faith and charity – we cannot truly have faith or charity if we have no hope.

1 Corinthians 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

- D. Hope is not to be exercised only for ourselves, but for others.
 1. If we love our neighbor as ourselves we should hold out at least as much hope for them as we do for ourselves in all things.
- E. Hope is faith in what we do not see in the present.

Romans 8:24-25 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

1. Hope is not something we exercise only when we see evidence, but when accompanied by faith, we exercise hope for things we do not see any evidence of right now.

F. Faith is our reason to hope – not evidence.

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

IV. Our faith and hope is vital in the salvation of others.

Mark 2:5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

- A. The church would not be here on earth, and neither would any person who is saved, if they were not necessary for redemption of lost souls.
- B. God's true children are the light of the world and the salt of the earth.
- C. We are no good to the kingdom of God when all we can do is condemn and find fault with others.
- D. If they do not see us exercising faith and hope for them we will be a stumbling block to them and no help at all.
- E. Have faith and hope for that lost and wayward loved one – don't just mourn over their sins and despair with their present moral or spiritual state.

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

- F. Think of how much it encourages you when someone has faith in you and hope for you.
- G. Be that kind of encouragement to others, especially those who are have made an attempt to be right with God, or who are trying.