

We began last week a short topical study on the theme – Gospel Hope. I entitled it Gospel Hope to distinguish it from a carnal or worldly hope—if you recall, I provided a simple definition—Gospel hope is a confident expectation in God and His promises—hope is the confident expectation of future blessing—it has a peculiar eye to the promises of God—while faith believes the promises hope waits for their fulfillment—faith believes, hope waits.

Furthermore, I mentioned last week, hope waits for or anticipates the glory of God—it anticipates beholding His glory, partaking of His glory, and dwelling in that glory for all eternity—this is the hope of the Christian—to see Christ, be like Christ, and be with Christ for all eternity.

This brings us to our second study of Gospel Hope—Its Importance—and here I want to show you that true hope provides a present affect in the soul—while hope anticipates the fulfillment of promises, it produces a powerful and present force in the soul.

Perhaps I can put it this way—Hope provides at least three present benefits—Purity, Patience, and Protection—it motivates us to purity, it promotes patience (or endurance), and it protects us from various temptations—simply put, Gospel Hope provides three present and important benefits—Purity, Patience, and Protection.

Perhaps I can speak of these three as the offspring of hope—Hope's three beautiful and productive daughters—to the extent that true or Gospel Hope exists, these three daughters or benefits will of necessity be present as well.

- I. Purity
- II. Patience
- III. Protection

#### I. Purity

1. 1Jn.3:1-3—"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. 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. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure..."
2. [a] The nature of hope, v3—"And everyone who has THIS HOPE"—that is, the hope of seeing Christ and being like Christ...
3. Last week I described this as "the hope of glory"—the hope of seeing and sharing in the glory of Christ—this is true hope...
4. [b] The object of hope, v3—"And everyone who has this hope IN HIM"—that is, our hope is built upon Christ...
5. Christ is Himself the grounds of our confidence and the object of our expectation—we hope in Him and for Him...
6. [c] The result of hope, v3—"And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure (that is, just as Christ is pure)..."
7. In other words, the hope of seeing Christ, being with Christ, and being like Christ, motivates us to keep ourselves pure...
8. Last week, in an attempt to distinguish between faith and hope, I gave an illustration about a young bride recently married...
9. Due to poverty, her young husband was forced to leave her, and go into the city in search of a job and home...
10. Every week he wrote her letters, reiterating his love for her, and his promise that one day very soon he would return...

11. I suggested that faith read the letters and believed them, while hope enabled her to look out of the window in anticipation...
12. But hope would not only enable her to patiently and eagerly wait for her beloved, but it would motivate her to keep herself and home in order...
13. She would always keep the house clean and herself presentable, because she anticipated the return of her beloved...
14. Well, this is similar to the grace of hope—it not only enables us to look out the window, but also keep the house clean...
15. The Greek word rendered "purifies" literally refers to "oneness and singularity of affections and allegiance..."
16. Joel Beeke—"The Greek word for *purify* refers to undivided allegiance, or having one's eyes on one thing. It implies wholeness and singleness of purpose. It means having undivided motives in our living and our service, being wholly dedicated to living to glorify Jesus Christ..."
17. The hope of seeing and being like Christ, motivates us to purify ourselves—"just as He is pure"—just as Christ is pure...
18. That is, we use Christ Himself as our standard of purity—we purify ourselves in the same way that He was pure...
19. Christ Himself is the standard of purity—who was free from all sin and had a perfectly undivided purpose or goal...
20. Lesson 1—A hopeful person is a pure person—the more hopeful we are to see Christ, the more we will purify ourselves...
21. In fact, the more we think about Christ, spend time with Christ, the more we will inevitably look like Christ...
22. I suggest to you, within these verses of Scripture, we find both the WHY and HOW of Christian holiness or purity...
23. Christian holiness or purity isn't something we pursue in order to become His children and earn eternal glory...
24. Christians pursue purity because they know who they are, that is, God's children, and know what they shall be...
25. It's the knowledge that we are God's children, and the hope that one day soon we shall see Christ and be like Christ...
26. And this is, among other things, a major difference between true religion, and all other man-made religions...
27. Every man-made religion says—work as hard as you can and you can have the hope of paradise in some form...
28. But Christianity says—Here in Christ you have paradise, and now because of that, work as hard as you can...
29. Hope is a powerful incentive or motive to work—for example, think of a young lady engaged to be married in 6 months...
30. Let's say, she's convinced she needs to lose 10-15 pounds before the wedding—and so she little desserts and exercises daily...
31. Now—what enables her to say no to that chocolate cake, and what motivates her to get out of bed and exercise...
32. Well brethren, it's NOT so that her husband will love and accept her, but it's because he does love and accepts her...
33. And the hope or anticipation of one day being his, motivates or encourages her to prepare herself for her beloved...
34. So too, dear people, we as Christians are presently betrothed to Christ, and one day will be publically wed to Him...
35. And this grand fact, the hope of being with Christ, ought to motivate us purify ourselves just as Christ is pure...
36. Lesson 2—A hopeless person is an impure person—that is, those who lack hope, lack all incentive to be pure...

37. True purity is driven by hope—confident expectation of one day seeing Christ, being with Christ, being like Christ...
38. It's precisely for this reason, that those without true hope fail to pursue true purity—they live for this world...
39. They have no hope of publically being wed to Christ—their philosophy is—"Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die..."
40. Why do sinners live for this world—why do sinners prefer the temporal and shallow things of this foolish world...
41. It's because their eyes have never been opened to the glories of the world to come—they have no hope beyond this world...
42. A man's life will always be shaped by his hope—if his hope is in this world, he will live for the things of this world...
43. Perhaps I can put it this way—a worldly hope produces worldly living, and a heavenly hope produces heavenly living...
44. Thus, this is the first daughter of hope—purity—"everyone who has this hope in them, purifies themselves..."

## II. Patience

1. As we search our Bibles, it becomes very evident that closely related to Biblical hope is the concept of patience...
2. 1Thess.1:2-3—"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father..."
3. This is one of the many verses that couple together faith, love, and hope—these three graces are closely related...
4. Paul describes a unique influence of each grace—"work of faith"—that is, faith enables us to do good works...
5. "Labor of love"—that is, love enables us to selfless give ourselves for the good of others—to labor on their behalf...
6. "Patience of hope"—that is, hope enables us to have patience—patience is the fruit of hope, it results from it...
7. If you remember I mentioned last week, faith believes the promises and hope waits—essential to hope is waiting...
8. Lam.3:26—"It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD" Rom.8:25—"But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance (Ps.130:5; Gal.5:5)..."
9. Hoping and waiting are closely related—or perhaps put another way, true hope enables us to wait with patience...
10. John Cotton—"There are two acts of hope: expectation—and waiting. This is not an expectation of mere opinion, but a sure expectation..."
11. When a person becomes a Christian, much of their salvation is given to them in the form of a future promise...
12. For example, I was converted in 1994, at which time I was saved out of this evil world, forgiven, and renewed...
13. And yet, in addition to these present benefits, I was also given the rest of my redemption, in the form of promise...
14. Most often, there's a long wait between the gift of this promise and its fulfillment—sometimes 50 or more years...
15. Hope keeps us content as we wait for the fulfillment of these promises—it keeps our eyes forward looking...
16. Now, this Greek word rendered "patience" in the KJV and NKV, is a very rich word with various layers of meaning...
17. At the very heart is the idea of waiting—and thus, I suggest it carries with it three related concepts—hope enables us to wait eagerly, contently, and enduringly...

18. [1] Hope enables us to wait eagerly, Heb.9:28—"To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation..."
19. Phil.3:20—"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" Gal.5:5—"For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith (1Cor.1:7; Rom.8:23, 25)..."
20. To be "eagerly" waiting, implies readiness and affection—because we love Him we are waiting for His return...
21. The stronger our hope, the more eager we are to see Christ, and thus more determined to be ready when He returns...
22. To know how strong or lively our hope is, we must only ask ourselves—How eager are we for Christ's return...
23. [2] Hope enables us to wait contently—the fact that we shall soon have heaven, enables us to live with little on earth...
24. Hope says to us—Sure you may not have much now, but there is coming a time when you shall have all things...
25. The hope of glory or salvation, makes everything in this world appear very small and insignificant, in comparison...
26. What is this entire world with all of its passing pleasures and possessions, in comparison to what awaits us...
27. What does it matter if we have to suffer a little mistreatment now, and endure the hatred and scorn of this world...
28. What does it matter if many of our friends and family, talk behind our backs or even ridicule us to our faces...
29. While all of these things hurt and bring sorrow to our hearts, in the light of eternity, they lose their terror and fright...
30. [3] Hope enables us to wait enduringly—gospel hope enables us to endure or persevere to the end of our Christian race...
31. For example, think of a man running a 10K race for the first time—he starts out strong but then grows weary...
32. And yet, all through the race, his wife follows him from the sidelines, nudging him on with various encouragements...
33. "The race is almost over—the finish line is just around the corner—just a little longer and you will receive your reward..."
34. She lays before her tired husband all the glories that await him at the finish line—perhaps she'll take him to IHOP...
35. Well, this is what HOPE does—it as it were whispers in our ears—Keep going and don't give up—glory is waiting...
36. Oh dear friends—I know for some us, the last year or two has been rather difficult, if not outright unbearable...
37. Don't give up—keep running—keep looking to Christ for grace and strength—the finish line is drawing near...
38. Can you see that line dear brother or sister—remember, faith believes the promises and hope waits for their fulfilment...

### III. Protection

1. 1Thess.5:8—"But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation..."
2. Paul is contrasting those who are of the day and of the night—that is, those who are of the light and darkness...
3. To be of the day or in the light means, you are walking in moral purity, but also, you have awakened to truth...
4. You know now you have serious enemies, and thus he exhorts them to be sober—which refers to moral alertness...

5. We are exhorted to put on two pieces of armor—the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of the hope of salvation...
6. This describes the Christian as a warrior, who must ever be ready to defend himself from the attacks of his enemies...
7. By "salvation" here is meant "future salvation"—this is what we hope for—salvation from the presence of sin...
8. There is a sense in which Christians have been, are being, and will be saved—they have been justified, they are being sanctified, and will be glorified...
9. 1Thess.5:9—"For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom.13:11)..."
10. Thus, by "future salvation" is meant—salvation from remaining sin, a weak and decaying body, the temptations of Satan, and a wicked and godless world...
11. This is the SALVATION that we are hoping or waiting for—and it's this hope that serves as an important piece of armor...
12. Thus, Paul describes the hope of future salvation as a helmet, because it protects our MIND or our THINKING...
13. This is where our enemies first level their attacks—they attempt to detract our thinking from the holy Scriptures...
14. Jeremiah Burroughs—"When a child of God is in the world, and meets with a great deal of opposition, and much evil that would discourage his heart, that would strike him at the very head, then he holds forth the hope of salvation as a helmet; and that will serve him; that will secure his head. It may be that his legs, or some other parts, may be touched, but the helmet of salvation will secure his head and keep him alive..."
15. [1] Hope protects from despair—that is, it keeps us from gloominess, dejection, discouragement, and depression...
16. Our enemies would attempt to convince us that all is hopeless—God has left us, and we are all alone and defeated...
17. Ps.42:5—"Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted (disturbed) within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance..."
18. If we were to read the context of this Psalm, we would find, that David's enemies were suggesting that God has left him...
19. To combat this devilish suggestion, David speaks to himself, and exhorts himself to hope in God, and in His promises...
20. He has promised never to leave nor forsake me, and regardless how things may appear—I shall soon praise Him...
21. In other words—regardless of my present circumstances, God will eventually rescue me according to His promise...
22. This means, He will either bring a temporal deliverance, and rescue me now from my enemies, at least in part...
23. Or else, eventually, He will bring future salvation, so that I will praise Him in heaven for the help of His countenance...
24. You know, oftentimes Christians must speak to themselves, and remind themselves, that they have HOPE....
25. We have to remind ourselves, that regardless how dark and difficult things appear—we have in our possession a promise...
26. Bunyan's Pilgrim Progress—Christian and Hopeful was seized by Giant Despair, and through into Doubting Castle...
27. Bunyan—"Giant Despair threw them into a very dark dungeon, which the two men found disgustingly foul land smelly. They lay there from Wednesday morning until Saturday night without even a crumb of bread or drop of water; there was no light at all, and they had no one to ask what would become of them. They were, therefore, in a very evil situation, far from all friends and acquaintances..."
28. Bunyan—Giant Despair tempts them to take their own lives—"I am leaving you a knife, a rope, and some poison; you choose which means of death you prefer. Why should you choose life, seeing that it involves so much bitterness and pain..."

29. Bunyan—But then, in the midst of despair, the pilgrims began to pray—"But it so happened that on Saturday at about midnight the pilgrims began to pray and continued in prayer until almost daybreak. Then Christina, a short time before daylight, became astounded and passionately exclaimed, What fool I am! Here I lie in a stinking dungeon when I could be walking in complete liberty! I have Key in my pocket called Promise that I am sure will open any lock in Doubting Castle. That's great news, my brother? cried Hopeful. Get it out right now and try it..."
30. Bunyan—So the pilgrims put the key into the lock and it opened and they were liberated from their despair...
31. But what exactly was this Key of Promise—well Bunyan himself tells us, because in the margin he puts 1Jn.2:25—"And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life..."
32. [2] Hope protects from deception—that is, from lies that attempt to turn our attention to untruth and false doctrine...
33. Those whose hope is fixed on Christ alone as their hope of salvation, will never give heed to the lies of the enemy...
34. [3] Hope protects from distraction—if Satan can not destroy us with despair or deception, he uses distraction...
35. Exhortation 1—Let us lament the state of man without hope—because he has no hope, he has no purity, patience, or protection...
36. But there is good news for poor hopeless sinners—for the Scripture teaches that true hope is given BY GRACE...
37. 2Thess.2:16—"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace..."
38. Hope is given by grace—that is, it's given to those who don't deserve it—it's given to those who deserve the opposite...
39. This means who don't have to do anything to earn or merit hope—it is given by God as a free and gracious gift...
40. Exhortation 2—Let us give thanks to God for the grace of hope—brethren, true hope is an essential Christian grace...
41. And thus, as a grace, that is as a gift from God, we must be sure to give thanks to its author and source—the God of hope...
42. Exhortation 3—Let us labor to cultivate and increase our hope—just as faith and love, hope must be increased...
43. Does hope motivate us to purify ourselves, does it provide patience, and does it protect our thinking from despair, deception, and distraction—then, brethren we need a stronger and more vibrant hope...
44. But you might ask—How is the grace of hope cultivated or strengthened—well, this is a question we must come to next week...
45. But let me end by simple saying—because our hope is in Christ, we must seek for it, in the Person of Christ...
46. It's in Him that we find all grace (which includes hope)—and this is true for sinners as well as saints—all hope is found in Christ...