

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 7-7-13 AM NOTES

“ABOUNDING IN HOPE”

ROMANS 15:13

6 in Series, “Faith, Hope, Love: Three Distinctives of the Christian Life”

1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV) “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.”

Romans 15:4 (NKJV) “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

Hope—The joyful confidence and expectation that what God has promised, He will accomplish in His perfect timing.

Esther 4:14 (NKJV) “...you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?”

I. The Source of Hope (v. 13a)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope...”

Ephesians 2:12b (NKJV) “...you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”

*His oath, His covenant, His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.*

—Edward Motes

II. The Companions of Hope (v. 15b)

Romans 15:13b (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace...”

A. Joy

Generally, the verbal form of joy is rejoice.

John 15:11 (NKJV) “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.”

The Father is the source of joy; the Son is the impartor of joy; the Spirit is the producer of joy.

Galatians 5:22a (NKJV) “But the fruit of the Spirit is... joy...”

- Happiness is external; joy is internal.
- Happiness has at its source circumstances; joy has at its source the Trinity.
- Happiness is vulnerable and insecure; joy is secure.

Isaiah 61:3a (NKJV) “To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness...”

1 Peter 1:8 (NKJV) “whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.”

Philippians 4:11b (NKJV) “...for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.”

Romans 8:18 (NKJV) “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Romans 5:2b (NKJV) "...we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Proverbs 10:28a (ESV) "The hope of the righteous brings joy..."

Romans 12:12a (NKJV) "rejoicing in hope..."

"Hope is the soil in which joy is rooted. Because joy is rooted in hope, current circumstances cannot rob you of joy."

—John Piper

B. Peace

Philippians 4:7a (NKJV) "and the peace of God..."

John 14:27a (NKJV) "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you..."

Galatians 5:22a (NKJV) "But the fruit of the Spirit is... peace..."

While strife, anxiety and worry mean to be pulled apart, peace means to be bound together.

III. The Condition of Hope (v. 15c)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing..."

Hebrews 11:1a (NKJV) "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for..."

Hebrews 13:5b (NKJV) "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*"

"Faith is acting like God is telling the truth."

—Martyn Lloyd-Jones

IV. The Measure of Hope (v. 15d)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope..."

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us."

V. The Enabler of Hope (v. 15e)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Hope, like faith and love is a gift of God.

John 15:5b (NKJV) "...without Me you can do nothing."

Romans 11:36 (NKJV) "For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen."

John 3:18 (NKJV) "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

1 Timothy 1:1 (NASB) "...Christ Jesus, *who is* our hope."

Ephesians 2:12b (NKJV) "...without Christ... having no hope and without God in the world."

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 7-7-13 AM

“ABOUNDING IN HOPE”

ROMANS 15:13

6 in Series, “Faith, Hope, Love: Three Distinctives of the Christian Life”

We have based this series on **1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV)** “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.” We have looked at faith for 3 weeks and now we are looking at hope for the third week. Beginning next week we will be examining what the Scriptures say about love – especially how it behaves in relationships within the body of Christ.

We live in a world that is on the fast track to hopelessness. That hopelessness leads people to some strange actions to try to find hope. The children of Hall of Fame baseball player Ted Williams had his head frozen through a process called cryonics with the “hope that future medical advances might bring him back to life – at least his head.” They produced “questionable” documents that showed that this was Williams’ desire. In a really weird twist, accusations were made that employees of the lab that froze Williams’ head abused it using it like a baseball. We live in a world desperate for hope! Buddhism, Hinduism, and their American cousin, “The New Age Movement” have put hope in reincarnation – a “do-over” in another life. For independent minded Americans, hope is often put in our own ingenuity and hard work. It is a sad thing to watch as that which people put their hope in fails them. Sometimes when a relationship that was the hope of a happy future breaks up, hope is gone and suicide results.

What is your hope grounded in? If it grounded in anything other than the promises of God given in the Scriptures, you are living in false hope which means that at some point in the future you will be hopeless. **Romans 15:4 (NKJV)** “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” We defined hope as “**The joyful confidence and expectation that what God has promised, He will accomplish in His perfect timing.**” As much as I admire and have been motivated by American Founding Father Patrick Henry and his famous “Give me liberty or give me death” speech, I have to disagree with one thing that he said. Patrick Henry said, “I know of no way of judging the future but by the past.” I think that in its context I understand what he was saying, but as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ we judge the future by the promises of God. I quote the well known truth attributed to the first American foreign missionary Adoniram Judson – “The future is as bright as the promises of God”.

As the people of God at this current time in America, we need to be reminded to not lose hope. If you love America and long for God to be glorified in our nation, these are dark days. When a state legislator in Texas is hailed as a hero because she filibustered for almost 12 hours of speaking and temporarily stopped a bill to severely reduce infanticide [the act of killing an infant] through abortion, we are a nation soon to experience the judgment of God if we are not already experiencing it. When our highest court has ruled that the view of restricting marriage to one man to one woman is unconstitutional and 58% of Americans believe that same sex marriage is a civil rights issue, our hope in government and a majority opinion that agrees with the Scriptures is dashed. There is no moral majority in America today. Wait! Our hope should never have been in government, supreme court justices, or that Bible believing Christians make up the majority of Americans. Our hope is in God and His promises. Our mandate to make disciples has not changed; our command to be salt and light in a dark world has not changed. Our hope for Heaven and our pilgrim mindset that we are to adopt have not changed. The darker our surroundings, the brighter our lights seem to those in the darkness. If you know the Lord Jesus Christ, I say to you what Mordecai said to Queen Esther in **Esther 4:14b (NKJV)** “...you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?”

What is your hope grounded in when it comes to your personal life? If your hope is grounded in physical health, smooth relationships, and a comfortable life, you are headed for hopelessness. As we have seen the last two weeks, hope is developed, strengthened, and perfected in tribulation (Romans 5:3-5). Our hope is grounded in the promises of God and the Supreme Court, spiritually blinded politicians, and a nation that has left its moral foundations cannot dim our hope because the promises of God still stand. I

want to wrap up our study of this distinctive of the Christian life – hope – by doing a rather in-depth study of one verse – Romans 15:13. This verse is in reality a prayer. Look at the great words of our faith that are used in this verse – hope, joy, peace, believing, and power. Actually, I believe that the five points of the message taken from this verse sum up the Christian life.

I. The Source of Hope (Romans 15:13a)

Romans 15:13a (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope...” The grammar in the Greek allows for that to be interpreted as God being the source of hope (subjective genitive) or the object of hope (objective genitive). Both are true and are clearly taught elsewhere. He truly is the God who gives hope and He is the God in whom we hope. As we have just dealt with in the introduction of the message, God is our hope and not the government, the courts, or the politicians. I think that the context leans more toward God being the source of our hope. Paul is not talking about worldly hope – “look on the bright side” or “never, never, never give up”. Attitudes like that might engender admiration in a human strength sort of way, but this human based kind of hope is limited by human strength. When it comes to the things that really matter, without God we are all hopeless. **Ephesians 2:12b (NKJV)** describes mankind apart from God: “...you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” When you bring God in on any situation, everything changes. Dr. L. R. Scarborough, an early President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary tells the story of questioning his young son about what he had learned in Sunday School. The boy told him that they had studied about Jonah and the large fish that swallowed him and that Jonah was in the fish’s belly for three days. Dr Scarborough asked his son if he believed that actually happened. The boy said, “Of course not. A man couldn’t survive in a fish’s belly for 3 days”. Dr Scarborough said, “Son, don’t you believe that God could create a fish that could swallow Jonah and sustain Jonah’s life for three days and cause the fish to spit him out where God wanted him to be?” His son said, “Well if you’re going to bring God in on it of course I believe it.” When we bring God in on our circumstances, our trials, our pain, our disappointments, and our seemingly impossible to supply needs, suddenly hope springs up. Have you brought God in on your situation? Why not? If you put your hope material things, they can disappear overnight; if your hope is your physical and / or mental capacity to figure out a way, they are at best limited and they could disappear with one blood clot being lodged in a strategic place in your heart, lung, or head. Edward Mote put it well in a hymn that I quoted another verse from last week:

*His oath, His covenant, His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.*

- Edward Motes

Truly all genuine, lasting hope is found in God. He is the source of all hope and He is the object of all true hope.

II. The Companions of Hope (V15b)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace...” Along with hope, God generously gives joy and peace. Let’s look at these companions of true hope one at a time.

A. Joy

Joy and rejoice are from the same root (*chairo* and *chara*). Generally the verbal form of joy is “rejoice”. While joy has its source in God the Father, Jesus, God the Son, imparted it to His disciples in **John 15:11 (NKJV)** “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.” While the Father is the source of joy and the Son is the imparter of joy, it is produced by the Holy Spirit. **Galatians 5:22a (NKJV)** “But the fruit of the Spirit is ... joy...” The whole Godhead acts that you might have joy. Because joy flows out from God, it is not dependent on fickle circumstances. That is the

basic difference between biblical joy and the modern day use of happiness in everyday conversation. When we read from some of the saints of days gone by, their use of happiness was practically synonymous with our use of the word joy today. The modern use of happiness is totally circumstance controlled. Let me share some differences between biblical joy and modern day happiness.

> Happiness is external (it depends on what happens); joy is internal and thus independent of outward circumstances.

> Happiness has at its source circumstances; joy has as its source the Trinity.

> Happiness is vulnerable and insecure because it can be taken away at any time; joy is secure because its source is God and it is not tied to circumstances or the decisions of others or physical illness. You can have joy in a bad marriage; you can have joy while you have cancer; you can have joy when you have been disappointed and are enduring painful circumstances. Adrian Rogers used to say that a joyless Christian is an oxymoron. If we are in right relationship with God through Christ, we have no excuse to be joyless. When Isaiah prophesied of the coming Messiah, he said in **Isaiah 61:3a (NKJV)** “To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the **oil of joy** for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness...”

It is really hard to define or even describe joy. Peter said in **1 Peter 1:8 (NKJV)** “whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you **rejoice** with **joy inexpressible** and full of glory”. The joy of knowing Jesus Peter says is inexpressible. The Greek word carries the idea of gladness, cheerfulness and delight. Perhaps the word “delight” would be as close as we could get to a synonym of the word joy as it is used in the New Testament. This supernatural Spirit produced joy that only Christians can possess is a sanctified gladness and delight that looks beyond the momentary circumstances and sees the final chapter. It is really hard to totally separate joy and contentment. The reason we can say with Paul in **Philippians 4:11b (NKJV)** “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content”, is because we have this abiding supernatural joy, this delight and gladness in the Lord. Lasting contentment can never flow from happiness (in the modern use of the word). Joy flows out of hope. Hope focuses on the promises of God that will be fulfilled in the future. Joy is therefore also tied to the future. Joy knows **Romans 8:18 (NKJV)** “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” When we live in hope, we know the last chapter and WE WIN! As long as we fix our eyes on the God of hope and the promises of God, joy continues even when circumstances are harsh and there seems to be no way they are going to change anytime soon. Joy and hope are best friends and constant companions. **Romans 5:2b (NKJV)** “...we stand, and **rejoice** in **hope** of the glory of God.” **Proverbs 10:28 (ESV)** “The **hope** of the righteous brings **joy**...” **Romans 12:12a (NKJV)** “**rejoicing** in **hope**...” John Piper said, “**Hope is the soil in which joy is rooted. Because joy is rooted in hope, current circumstances cannot rob you of joy.**” [Sermon at Bethlehem Baptist Church, 12-18-05]

B. Peace

As with joy, the whole Trinity is involved in giving us peace. **Philippians 4:7a (NKJV)** speaks of “the peace of God”. Jesus said in **John 14:27a (NKJV)** “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you...” **Galatians 5:22 (NKJV)** “But the fruit of the Spirit is...peace...” The word “peace” is the antonym of strife or anxiety. The source of strife is sin and that is why the Gospel is called in several places “the Gospel of peace” (Acts 10:36; Romans 10:15). Since the word translated strife, anxiety, or worry means to be pulled apart, peace means to be bound together. Have you ever heard it said of someone, “He’s got it all together”? That is a picture of peace.

The constant companions of a life filled with hope are joy and peace. Since hope is not tied in to circumstances, neither is joy and peace. Stop saying “If only this circumstance (marriage, physical problem, job situation, or a financial problem) would be resolved in a way that would make me happy, then I could have joy and peace”. Joy and peace flow out of hope and hope is tied to the promises of God and not our circumstances.

III. The Condition of Hope (V15c)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing...” **Romans 15:13 (NIV)** “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him...” This hope along with its companions (joy and peace) responds to faith – to believing. Remember back to the first messages in this series where we saw in **Hebrews 11:1a (NKJV)** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...” Faith take that hope that is focused on the future fulfillment of the promises of God and gives that hope substance – something to stand on in the here and now. Faith looks at hope and says that the promises are true and then orders our present behavior to conform to the promises God has made. To give an example, God promises over and over what is summarized in **Hebrews 13:5b (NKJV)** “*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*” Hope says, “This is a promise from God and God cannot lie.” Faith gives that hope substance and says, “Even when I don’t sense His presence, I know He is there because of His promise. I am going to act like He is with me, trust Him, commune with Him until I sense His presence with my emotions.” The best definition of faith is the simplest one: “Faith is acting like God is telling the truth”. [Martyn Lloyd-Jones]. If we are to walk in hope accompanied by joy and peace, we must give substance to the hope we have with faith.

IV. The Measure of Hope (V15d)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope...” This short point is so exciting. God doesn’t just give us enough hope to squeak by until we get to Heaven. He has given us a multitude of promises that we may abound, overflow in hope. That word, “abound” is translated “overflow” in the HCSB. Everything that God gives us, it is overflowing – love, grace, mercy, and here, our hope. The measure of God is summarized in **Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)** “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us”. Hope will never run out in this life.

V. The Enabler of Hope (V15e)

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Hope, like faith and love is a gift of God. We can’t work up hope. The word used here for power is the power that gets things done. Nothing of any eternal value is possible in and of ourselves. Jesus said in **John 15:5b (NKJV)** “...for without Me you can do nothing.” We cannot repent unless God grants us repentance (2 Timothy 2:25). We cannot believe unless God gives faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Hope is impossible in our own strength (Eph 2:12).

By ending with a reference to “the power of the Holy Spirit”, the prayer begins and ends with God. Everything in this universe begins with God, is accomplished with His power, and exists for His glory. **Romans 11:36 (NKJV)** “For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.”

Our knowledge of the Scripture works in tandem with the enabling of the Holy Spirit to hope. The result is that we live by the promises instead of our circumstances and God gets all of the glory.

CONCLUSION

What is your hope for eternity? Is it in some vague positive attitude that things will eventually work out? Is it in the belief that you’ve not been that bad and God surely wouldn’t condemn someone like you – you’re just not that bad of a person? The Bible doesn’t say that you will be condemned for trusting in your own goodness; the Bible says you are already condemned. **John 3:18 (NKJV)** “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” **1 Timothy 1:1 (NASB)** speaks of “...Christ Jesus, *who is* our hope”. **Ephesians 2:12 (NKJV)** speaks of those who “...were without Christ...having no hope and without God in the world.” I plead with those who may have a false hope and those who have no hope to come to Christ, turning from everything else and look to the cross where He died in your place and believe, entrust yourself completely to Him and looking only to His sacrifice for you of Himself as your only hope.