

Faith and Hope

Introduction

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

There are quite a few passages in the bible that link Faith and Hope. This verse is probably one of the more well-known verses that links the two.

What is hope?

Hope – a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen

Interactive: What are some of the things you hope for (expect and desire) IN THIS LIFE?

Graduate high school
Graduate college
Good job
Car
House
Wife/husband
Children

Those are the things it seems most people hope for.

Interactive: Why do you expect these things to happen?

Dedicated to studying
Hard work
Good things can happen since we live in the USA

On March 27, 2017, just a few months ago, a guy that I worked with committed suicide. He was only 31 years old. I had worked with him for approximately 7 years.

From all we could tell he did this because his fiancée had broken off their engagement. He left behind a wife from whom he was divorced. He left behind parents who had no closure and surely grieved terribly. He left behind a five-year-old son who still didn't quite understand what was going on.

Why am I telling you this story, and what does it have to do with faith and hope?

I Cor. 15:19 If in this life only we have **hope** in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable (miserable)!

I didn't know this person's personal life very well, but from all I could see, he only had hope in this life. He had not put his faith in Christ.

Again, all of the things you mentioned earlier about your hopes are good, and I'd say that most people hope for those same things – including my co-worker who killed himself. But if that is all we have hope for, then we don't hope for much!

Thankfully, there is HOPE beyond this life! There is hope for SOOOOO much more than this life can offer.

What do you hope for Spiritually?

Eternal life in God's presence!!!!

Rom. 5:1-2 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have^[a] peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Interactive: Describe the difference between us and God?
Especially in regard to sin?

We said earlier that hope was a feeling of expectation for something we desire to happen. With there being such a vast difference between us and God, why would we EXPECT to be able to spend our eternity in Heaven?

This is where we go back to our first verse. This is where faith comes in.

Faith isn't just a blind belief. With faith, there is a reason to believe. We have reason to believe we can spend eternity with God!!

I Pet. 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a **reason** for the **hope** that is in you, with meekness and fear.

I want us to consider a few reasons for the hope that is in us.

1. God has promised Eternal Life

God has promised eternal life with Him to those that serve Him!

Matt 19:29

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit **eternal life**.

I Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on **eternal life**, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Titus 1:2 in hope of **eternal life** which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,

We could have turned to a lot more passages but I think this is enough verses on this point to make eternal life to be REAL to us. For us to see it is in our grasp because God, who cannot lie, has promised it to us!

2. God is Trustworthy! (God Does Not Lie! God Keeps His Promises!!)

It's important that God does not lie because He is the one who has promised eternal life!

Has anyone ever let you down? It doesn't have to be something sinful that they did. Maybe they didn't help when they could have. Maybe they didn't try as hard as they should have to help others. Maybe they were deceitful with their words.

Have YOU ever let yourself down? Again, doesn't have to be something necessarily sinful, but it could be.

Coach Saban often mentions that his players have talent, but they need to be more consistent. What does he mean by that? He means that he can't trust that player to perform his duty on an every-down basis.

When we put our trust (faith) and our hope in men, we are setting ourselves up for a fall.

But we can trust God!

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Friends or family who are moody? You don't know which version of that person you are going to get!

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

The very definition of truth is God's word.

3. God is Love! God is Merciful!

I John 4:8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is Love.

God is the very definition of love! Without God, we would not know love!

Why is it important that God is love and that He is merciful?

Rom. 11:22 Therefore consider the **goodness** and **severity** of God: on those who fell, **severity**; but toward you, **goodness**, if you continue in *His* **goodness**. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

Obviously, God can be severe but for this lesson I want us to focus on God's goodness, because ultimately, God has left it in our hands which side of God we will face.

I've heard it explained that grace is giving someone something good they didn't deserve and mercy is NOT giving someone something bad they did deserve.

Our sins that we talked about earlier would be the reason that we wouldn't have eternal life. We deserve eternal punishment. And that is why it is important that God is Love. God is merciful.

Think about the following verses. Don't they sound like most parents' love and attitude toward their child.

Ps. 145:9 The LORD *is* good to all, And His tender **mercies** *are* over all His works.

Ps. 103:17 But the **mercy** of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children

I Pet. 5:7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

How often do we really think about the tender care that God has for each one of us?

Heb. 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put **my** laws in their mind, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their **God**, and they shall be **my people**.

God wants me, and God wants you, to be His people!

Eph. 2:1-7 (v4!!)

I don't think I thought about how beautiful this passage is until recently. Verses 2 and 3 point out how terrible we have conducted our lives. Verse 4-7 describe how God, through His love and mercy, is showing us, and wants to show us eternally, His grace and kindness.

4. **God doesn't want us to perish (He wants us to SUCCEED!!)**

2 Peter 3:9 – not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance

When I was very young I had all these scary images of God. I thought He was out to get me! I thought He was just looking for a chance to pounce on me. Nothing could be further from the truth! Yes, God will condemn us if we are not faithful, but that is NOT what He wants for us!!

1Cor 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

That doesn't sound like someone who wants us to fail does it? Why would God provide a way of escape IF he was out to get us?

God has always felt that way about His people.

Joshua 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Rom. 8:37-39 We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us; nothing able to separate us from the love of God.

Ps. 35:27 Let them shout for joy and be glad,
Who favor my righteous cause;
And let them say continually,
"Let the LORD be magnified,
Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

A psalm I'm sure a lot of us have memorized before is Ps. 23. I think it describes the kind of relationship God wants to have with us. He wants to take care of us. He wants to make sure we have the things we need. He will comfort us. He wants us to dwell with Him forever!

Ps. 23

5. God has already paid the price!

I John 2:1-2 Jesus is the “propitiation” for our sins

Propitiation – signifies the removal of wrath by the offering of a gift

Why should there be wrath? Because of our sins and how God cannot stand sin!
What gift was offered? The pure and terrible sacrifice of Jesus blood.

Rom. 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3:16 – For God SO LOVED!

I think we become callous to this verse. I used to see it at every football game on TV, and at least for a while it seemed it was everywhere.

But there is a good reason for it to be everywhere. It is a beautiful verse that in the space of a few lines tells us that God wants us to have eternal life and also that God has given the ultimate sacrifice so that can happen!

Conclusion

Have you noticed that all the reasons for hope we listed are because of God?!

God has promised.

God Keeps His promises.

God is love and mercy.

God wants us to succeed.

God has paid the price.

I Pet. 1:17-21 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, **so that your faith and hope are in God.**

You see, all our faith should be in God, and we should live by that faith:

Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

I can't put faith in myself to earn this hope. I know WHO I AM! I am a sinful creature! I know the bad decisions I've made. I know the ugly thoughts I've had. I know the terrible things I've done!

Trusting (having faith in) God gives hope. Trusting ourselves gives (anti-hope?)
Despair, discouragement, hopelessness, pessimism

I can't do anything to earn heaven!

Eph. 2:8 – For by grace you have been saved through FAITH, and that not of yourselves; It is the gift of God!

Backup Material

I Pet. 1:3-5 God has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus.
We are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation.

Heb. 6:8 but if it bears thorns and briers, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned.

God is GREAT enough to do whatever we need!! There is nothing that God cannot do that is good for us!

Faith and Hope verses:

Rom. 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

I Cor. 13:13 ^{And} now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

Col. 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

I Thess. 1:3 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,

Heb. 11:13 (doesn't use the word hope but it is there) These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them,^[a] embraced *them* and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

2 Timothy 1:12 "I Know whom I have believed"

I doubt that I really do.

Knowing whom God is gives us hope!

God has set us up to succeed!

We use the analogy of someone running out on the road and pushing a child to safety while they themselves are killed by an on-coming car. That's a split-second decision.

We also use the analogy of someone changing the train-tracks so that a train will run over their own son so that the train won't run into an on-coming train. That's a split-second decision.

Who would plan thousands of years ahead to let their Son be tortured and killed to save someone?

Is. 40:28-31 Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength!

To have “faith” in God means that we put our confidence in all three: His wisdom, His goodness, and His power. – April 13 Diligently seeking God

Rom 5:21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1Cor 1:9 **God is faithful**, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Heb. 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

Rom. 9:16 ... but of God who shows mercy

Rom. 15:9 that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy