

Last week we started a sermon series based on 1 Corinthians 13:13:

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

That first message in the series was titled “A Faith for All Seasons” and it focused on Faith. Here is a quick recap:

1. Faith is comprised of specific knowledge and information given to us by God through His Son and Word. This knowledge is known as THE faith.
2. Faith is produced when we exercise our will through belief and obedience in accordance with the Words of Christ.
3. Faith is a feeling: Joy, Perseverance and Hope.

So, this morning, we will continue our deep dive into God’s Word focusing on Hope:

1. Faith,
2. **Hope**, and
3. **Love**

DEFINITIONS

Webster’s definition of hope reads:

to cherish a desire with anticipation; to want something to happen or be true; trust; to desire with expectation of obtainment or fulfillment; to expect with confidence; desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment; expectation of fulfillment or success; someone or something on which hopes are centered; something desired or hoped for; reliance.

A biblical definition of hope would be **to trust in**, **wait for**, **look for**, or **desire something or someone**; or **to expect something beneficial in the future**.

When Marcella and I moved to Chicago back in 1996, neither of us had a job lined up. All we had was my brother David welcoming us to his home. I trusted in God that he would provide a job for each of us but had to wait on him. I eventually started a consulting job and that led to Marcella working at the headhunter agency that helped me secure my job. We just had to wait in expectation and trust God would work it out in the end, as he always does.

EXAMPLES OF HOPE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

There are several Hebrew verbs that may in certain contexts be translated “to hope” in English. One of them, qawa [h" w'q], may denote “hope” in the sense of “**trust**”, as when Jeremiah addresses God in Jeremiah 14:22:

Are there any among the false gods of the nations that can bring rain?
 Or can the heavens give showers?
 Are you not he, O Lord our God?
 We set our hope on you,
 for you do all these things.

He also uses a noun formed from the root qwh [h" w'q] to teach that the Lord is the **hope of Israel** (Jeremiah 14:8; 17:13; 50:7), which means that Israel's God is worthy of **trust**.

⁸ O you hope of Israel,
 its savior in time of trouble,
 why should you be like a stranger in the land,
 like a traveler who turns aside to tarry for a night?

¹³ O Lord, the hope of Israel,
 all who forsake you shall be put to shame;
 those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth,
 for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.

⁷ All who found them have devoured them, and their enemies have said, 'We are not guilty, for they have sinned against the Lord, their habitation of righteousness, the Lord, the hope of their fathers.'

This Hebrew word also means to collect or bind together into one cord. It is another noun from the same root, *tiqwa* [h" w. qiT], which has also translated "hope" to mean "**trust**". Similarly, the verb *qawa* [h" w' q] is parallel to *batah* [j; f' B], "**to trust**", as in Psalm 25:2-3:

² O my God, in you I trust;
 let me not be put to shame;
 let not my enemies exult over me.
³ Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame;
 they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

In the Old Testament believers are encouraged **to wait for God hopefully**, expectantly. In times of trouble, one should **wait for the Lord**, who will turn things around as we see in Psalm 25:21:

May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
 for I wait for you.

Or Psalm 27:14:

Wait for the Lord;
 be strong, and let your heart take courage;
 wait for the Lord!

Or Psalm 40:1:

I waited patiently for the Lord;
 he inclined to me and heard my cry.

And Psalm 130:5:

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

Sometimes expressions of hope are accompanied by the prayer that the supplicant will not be ashamed or disappointed.

Psalm 69:6

Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me,
O Lord God of hosts;
let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me,
O God of Israel.

Psalm 22:5

To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

Psalms 25:20

Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me!
Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.

God promises that those who **wait** for him will not be disappointed as seen in Isaiah 49:23:

Kings shall be your foster fathers,
and their queens your nursing mothers.
With their faces to the ground they shall bow down to you,
and lick the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I am the Lord;
those who wait for me shall not be put to shame.”

God is able to bring about the realization of one’s hopes. Looking with expectation is akin to hoping as we see in **Job 6:19**:

The caravans of Tema look,
the travelers of Sheba hope.

And in Jeremiah 8:15:

We looked for peace, but no good came;
for a time of healing, but behold, terror.

From “**looking for**” or “**expecting**” it is a small semantic shift to desiring as we read in Isaiah 26:8:

In the path of your judgments,
O Lord, we wait for you;
your name and remembrance
are the desire of our soul.

Twenty-seven times qawa [h" w'q] comes into the Greek Old Testament as hupomeno [u]pomevnw], “to wait”, “to be patient”, “to endure”. Where suffering is present, the term may indicate that the individual is bearing affliction patiently while hopefully waiting for the Lord's deliverance. Psalm 40 is a psalm of thanksgiving that recounts the suffering of an individual whose hope was realized. As we saw earlier: “I waited patiently for the Lord”. In Psalm 130:5-6 it reads:

⁵ I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
⁶ my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

Because of the close connection between hope and trust and because of the requirement to trust in God alone, several passages warn against trust in other things.

We should not trust in:

1. riches (Job 31:24-28; Psalm 52:1-7; Proverbs 11:28),

Whoever trusts in his riches will fall,
but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.

2. idols (Psalm 115:3-11; Habakkuk 2:18-19),

¹⁸ “What profit is an idol
when its maker has shaped it,
a metal image, a teacher of lies?
For its maker trusts in his own creation
when he makes speechless idols!
¹⁹ Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake;
to a silent stone, Arise!
Can this teach?
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
and there is no breath at all in it.

3. foreign powers (Isaiah 20:5),

Then they shall be dismayed and ashamed because of Cush their
hope and of Egypt their boast.

4. military might (Isaiah 30:15-16; 31:1-3; Hosea 10:13),

You have plowed iniquity;
you have reaped injustice;
you have eaten the fruit of lies.
Because you have trusted in your own way
and in the multitude of your warriors,

5. princes (Psalm 146:3-7),

³ Put not your trust in princes,
in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

⁴ When his breath departs, he returns to the earth;
on that very day his plans perish.
⁵ Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD his God,
⁶ who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
who keeps faith forever;
⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.
The LORD sets the prisoners free;

6. or other humans (**Jeremiah 17:5-8**).

⁵ Thus says the LORD:
“Cursed is the man who trusts in man
and makes flesh his strength,^[a]
whose heart turns away from the LORD.
⁶ He is like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see any good come.
He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.
⁷ “Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.
⁸ He is like a tree planted by water,
that sends out its roots by the stream,
and does not fear when heat comes,
for its leaves remain green,
and is not anxious in the year of drought,
for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

God is the true object of hope, but occasionally there are others. One may put one's hope in:

1. His steadfast love (Psalm 33:18),

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,

2. in his ordinances (Psalm 119:43),

And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your rules.

3. and in his word (Psalm 119:49, 74, 81, 114, 147).

Remember your word to your servant,
in which you have made me hope.

Besides waiting in eager expectation for God, one may wait or hope for his teaching (Isaiah 42:4) and for his salvation (Psalm 119:166).

Isaiah 42:4 reads:

He will not grow faint or be discouraged
till he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.

Psalm 119:166 reads:

I hope for your salvation, O Lord,
and I do your commandments.

For much of the Old Testament period hope was centered on this world. The beleaguered hoped to be delivered from their enemies (Psalm 25); the sick hoped to recover from illness (Isaiah 38:10-20). Israelites trusted God to provide land, peace, and prosperity. In early passages there are few expressions of hope for the next world. Those who descend to the grave have no hope (Isaiah 38:18-19). Only those still living could hope (Ecclesiastes 9:4-6,10), as salvation was for this life. Toward the end of the Old Testament God made known his plan to bring his everlasting kingdom to earth (Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14) and to raise the dead (Daniel 12:2). At that point hope became

more focused on the next world, especially on the resurrection. God will swallow up death forever (Isaiah 25:7), and the dead will rise again (Isaiah 26:19); this is the salvation for which the faithful wait (Isaiah 25:9).

EXAMPLES OF HOPE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament consistently uses the verb *elpizo* [ejlpivzw] and the noun *elpis* [ejlpiv"] for **hope**. Just as the Old Testament emphasizes hope as trust, Paul writes about setting our hope on God as we see in 1 Timothy 4:10:

For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

and on Christ as we see in Ephesians 1:12:

so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

As Jeremiah proclaims that God is the hope of Israel, Paul announces that Jesus Christ is our hope as we read in 1 Timothy 1:1:

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

Parallel to those passages in the Old Testament where those who hope are not put to shame, Paul says hope does not disappoint us in Romans 5:5 which reads:

and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

The reason is that we already have a taste of the future glory because of the love with which the Holy Spirit fills our hearts. In other words, the gifts of

love and of the Spirit are down payments of future glory for which we hope as we see earlier in that same Romans chapter in verse 2 (cf: Eph. 1:13-14):

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

In the Old Testament hope has to do with waiting for, looking for, desiring. This is paralleled in the Gospels, where the word “hope” is not very frequent but the idea of **looking expectantly is**. Simeon looked for Israel’s consolation at the advent of the Messiah (Luke 2:25-26). Likewise, Anna, the prophetess, upon recognizing who Jesus was, proclaimed him to all those who were anticipating redemption (Luke 2:36-38).

In connection with hope in Romans 8:18-25 Paul speaks of waiting with eager expectation for the revelation of the children of God (v. 19), waiting for the adoption as sons (v. 23). We are waiting “for the righteousness for which we hope” (Galatians 5:5) and for “the blessed hope”, namely, the glorious appearing of our Lord (Titus 2:13). Paul has both an eager expectation and a hope for God to be glorified in him, whether in life or death (Philippians 1:20). He goes on to express his desire to leave this world to be present with Christ (Philippians 1:23).

As I shared last week Philippians is one of my favorite books in the Bible so I cannot pass up an opportunity to read this portion of Chapter 1:

²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.

As hope is connected with patient endurance in the Old Testament, so in the New Testament trials lead to hope (Romans 5:3-4) and hope is steadfast (1 Thessalonians 1:3). When we hope for something we wait for it through patience (Romans 8:25; 15:4).

In the Old Testament hope is linked with “putting confidence in” or “taking refuge in”. Paul also parallels hope with trust. He hopes to send Timothy and trusts in the Lord that he himself will come (Philippians 2:23). Hebrews talks about courage and hope (Hebrews 3:6). Likewise, Paul links hope and boldness (2 Corinthians 3:12). In a passage about the confidence we can have in God's promises, Hebrews 6:18-19 mentions taking refuge by seizing the sure anchor of hope that is set before us.

Reminiscent of the Old Testament false objects of hope, Paul counsels the wealthy not “to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches” (1 Timothy 6:17). In addition to putting hope in God and Christ, we hope for salvation (1 Thessalonians 5:8); God’s glory (Romans 5:2 ; Colossians 1:27); resurrection (Acts 23:6; 24:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13); the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23); righteousness (Galatians 5:5); eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7); the glorious appearing of Jesus (Titus 2:13); and that we shall become like him when he does appear (1 John 3:2-3).

From the above list it is apparent that, in contrast to the Old Testament, New Testament hope is primarily eschatological. After being introduced late in Old Testament times, hope in the resurrection of the dead grew in the intertestamental period (*the time period between the Old Testament and New Testament*) in such proportion that Paul could speak of the resurrection as the “hope of Israel” (Acts 24:15; 26:6-8; 28:20). If our hope is only for our present existence, it is most pitiable (1 Corinthians 15:19). When our believing friends and relatives die, we grieve in hope of the Lord’s return, unlike unbelievers who have no hope. **The only sure hope is Jesus:** when he returns, believers who have died and those still living will both be given imperishable bodies like that of the risen Lord (1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Hope is the proper response to the promises of God. Abraham serves as a prime example here. Even though he was very old, he had confidence that God would fulfill his promises. In Romans 4:18 we read:

In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”

Like Abraham, we can trust in God’s promises as we can see in Hebrews 6:18:

so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.

More generally, we are told that the Scriptures engender hope (Romans 15:4). The Holy Spirit is also a source of hope, for his power causes hope to abound (Romans 15:13). Finally, hope comes as a gift from God through grace (2 Thessalonians 2:16).

Hope leads to joy (Romans 12:12), boldness (2 Corinthians 3:12), faith and love (Colossians 1:4-5):

⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,

Hope also leads to comfort; we are to encourage one another with the knowledge of the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:18). Though boasting in our works is disallowed, we may boast or exult in hope of sharing God’s glory (Romans 5:2; cf. Hebrews 3:6).

Hope has a sanctifying effect. We who look expectantly for the return of Christ, knowing that when we see him, we shall become like him; purifying ourselves “as he is pure” (1 John 3:3). Hope also stimulates good works. Following his teaching on resurrection of the dead, Paul exhorts his readers

to do the Lord's work abundantly since such "labor is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:51-58).

So, we see that there is a strong tie between faith, hope and love. Remember that faith is comprised of specific knowledge given to us by God through His Son and Word. It is produced when we exercise our will through belief and obedience and that it is a feeling of joy, perseverance and hope.

Hope would be to **trust in**, **wait for**, **look for**, or **desire something or someone**; or **to expect something beneficial in the future**.

I put my faith in God, in His Son Jesus, His Word, and hope with certainty for the resurrection of the dead and to be with God in Heaven one day. Do you know God's love? Have you heard and answered God's call on your life? If you need to speak with someone about putting your faith in God and having that certain hope to be saved, please see John or me at the end of today's service and we would be glad to share more about the good news of Jesus with you.

Let's pray.