

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

A Hope Primer

Speaker:

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Scriptures:

Various

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Theme: Fix your hope on the glory in Christ as it brings all the stability we need.

Introduction: Everyone is looking for hope. It's a requirement for life in this fallen world, as we face the sufferings and tribulations that are part of our day-to-day experience. For believers, hope is the forward-looking aspect of faith, as we anticipate what is to come (Heb 6:19-20). Hope will keep us from being tossed by the storms of life and will keep our trust fixed on the gospel's sure promises.

We can consider four brief lessons on hope throughout Scripture:

1. You can't see it

Everything in this life is transient, temporary. People fail us, good things end, health and wealth can disappear.

Therefore, hope cannot be fixed on the things we can see. All that we can see is attached to this world, which is passing away.

Romans 8:24, "For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?"

Lesson 1: if you can see it, you can lose it and therefore it is not worthy of hope and cannot hold the weight required for hope.

2. It's attached to eternity

Scripture consistently calls us to fix our hope on the things above, on eternal things (Col 3:2; Matt 6:33; Phil 1:23).

God's kingdom cannot be shaken (Heb 12:28), and so hope that is fixed there is solid and sure.

Lesson 2: only Christ and the glory to come are sure things that our hopes can rest on. We can have and keep Jesus, and here and now he fills the soul with joy unspeakable, full of glory.

3. It's carried along by the Spirit

Hope is instilled and maintained by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We can and should cry out to him to work in us, reminding us of God's love and sustaining us in our trials and sufferings.

Lesson 3: it is the Holy Spirit that brings hope to roost and flourish in supernatural ways, convincing us daily of the gospel and God's great love to sinners.

4. It requires building and testing

Christian hope is not a once-and-done process. It is the ongoing work of God in our lives to deepen and strengthen our confidence in him (Rom 5:3-4).

In the midst of this world's shakings, the Spirit is at work to fix our hope only in God. We must not conclude that God has abandoned us—we must turn to him for help.

Questions:

1. What do you hope for? What are your longings? Is there anywhere that you feel hopeless?
2. How is God at work in you to grow in your hope *in him*?