

Romans 15:13 - Abounding in Hope – 28 July 2013

This morning we are looking at the message of hope, you can't miss it, it's shining right in front of you and we are looking at this very vital subject in the Bible of hope and in order to begin our sermon today, let's have a short look at this video clip that we have prepared for you.

Video clip plays:

There is No Hope. These are full very haunting words, maybe words you have heard before. People have said that to you, there is no hope. Or, maybe you have said these words to yourself, there is no hope and they are painful because it brings back memories of failures and disappointments and when we look around us, the world we live in, it is a world without hope. There are people today who are helpless, they are in despair, they don't see the light at the end of the tunnel, they contemplate suicide, they have broken marriages. They live empty lives.

If, you really think about it. There is no, nothing quite as devastating as a hopeless life. It is like a living hell, there is no hope, you are in misery, and there is no prospect of getting better. It just is a difficult way to live your life and in fact I think one thing that makes hell, hell is that there is absolutely no hope in hell. When a man or woman, refuses to believe in Jesus Christ and dies in his sins and goes into this eternal flames called hell, one of the great torment of hell is that there is no hope, it will never get better.

You have no possibility of getting out of it. And so one of the things that makes hell, hell is the complete absence of hope. But life today can be a living hell for many people, when you do not find hope and that's why, it is so important for us to come to the Word of God. It is so important for us to come to the Scriptures, because the Bible is a book of hope. The Bible tells us about Jesus and how He is the hope for humanity.

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We as a church has been journeying through the book of Romans and we come to this glorious verse in verse 13 of chapter 15, where Paul says, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit, you may abound in hope.

In a hopeless world today, we can find hope, because we worship a God of hope, who by His Holy Spirit wants us to overflow and to abound in hope. There are three major graces of the Bible, they are faith, love and hope. It's taught in 1st Corinthians. So you have faith, you have love and you've hope and it is said that hope is often seen as the Cinderella of the trio. You say why? You know the Cinderella story ? She has two step-sisters who are always invited to the party but Cinderella will always be the one left out. And I think, hope is like the Cinderella of the Bible. Everybody talks about faith. I mean, you can't be in any church, where there is no mention of faith. You will hear plenty of sermons about love, but very rarely do we hear a message on hope.

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It's the forgotten, neglected Cinderella of the trio, but this morning, we are coming to looking at the vital subject of hope, because every body needs hope. Hope keeps us going on, hope gives us courage and passion to live on and God wants you to have hope.

A story is told of a little boy, who was severely burned in an accident. He was hospitalized and the school system in the city is as such. If you are not in school, you are in hospital, they will send a relief teacher to help you catch up with your schoolwork. Now, the school authorities didn't know how bad this child was burnt, they didn't know the condition, they routinely sent a teacher there. So the teacher was supposed to work with a boy on nouns and adverbs. She was not told how severe, when she got there she saw the boy, she was shocked, she was horrified how badly burned he was and so she stumbled over the lessons, she she really messed up in a sense her class on adverbs and nouns.

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She felt sorry, she left. The next day the nurse called out the teachers and says, what have you done? She says, oh no, I am so sorry, I, I know I didn't do a good job, but what I really do wrong? She says, oh, no, no, no, you are mistaken, you did not do anything wrong. You see, we have been very worried for this boy for some time. He seemed to have given up all hope, all fighting spirit, but after your visit yesterday, his attitude completely changed. He seemed to want to live, he seemed to have decided to fight on. Two weeks later, the boy revealed that, yes, it was indeed the teacher's visit that brought about the complete change in his attitude and he says it's because he came to a very simple conclusion and he expressed it as such. They wouldn't send a teacher to work on nouns and adverbs with a dying boy right? And he was right, in

a sense, because of that hope, the teacher represented, this boy decided to live on and to fight on. We all need hope.

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Maybe your severely burned, you are hurt in life, your husband has left you, your wife is hospitalized with possibly no prospect of recovering, maybe you have failed in your job, you are in financial crisis, maybe you have even thought about suicide and giving up on life altogether or maybe you have given up or wanting to give up on your Christian walk and relationship with Jesus. God's will is that we would find that hope in Him.

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There's nothing more devastating than a hopeless life and there's nothing more glorious and exciting than a life full of hope and, so this morning looking at the Cinderella of the trio, Hope. What is hope, what is hope in the Bible? Well, when we talk about hope in this world, we generally refer to it as wishful thinking. Generally, this is it. I wish I will be be more handsome, wishful thinking. I wish I'll be richer, wishful thinking, because you have nothing. No, one promised you use such things. I wish that the economy would improve. Again, those are wishful hope, these are wishful thinking, but the biblical understanding of hope is not just about a wish, it's not just you are banking your desires on something that is uncertain. The biblical understanding of hope is a certain confident expectation, so let me begin with this, faith is looking up towards God, love is looking all around you; just looking at the needs of others and hope is that forward dimension where you look ahead and this hope, looking ahead is not just wishful thinking but hope is a confident expectation, it's not a wish. It's being sure about it. It's having assurance within your heart, so that you will say, I hope, it doesn't mean I wish, but I know, I know for sure, you say, I know for sure what ? Hope is a confident expectation of all the good promised in Jesus Christ.

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Now, that this definitions settled in a minute. I will try to break it down, a bit so that you get more of the meaning. But this is what hope is, God wants you to have a confident expectation of everything good that is promised in Jesus Christ.

Noticed that this hope is rooted and founded in Jesus, nothing else. It says in Romans 15, In verse 12, the preceding verses of the text you are are looking at, it says

and again, Isaiah says The root of Jesse that refers to Jesus by the way, the root of Jesse will come even He, Jesus, who arises to rule the Gentiles in Him will, the Gentiles hope. The Gentiles refer to you and me who are non-Jews and the Bible is saying the world can hope in Jesus Christ. So the hope of the Bible is rooted in Jesus. Why, because of Jesus , death, resurrection, to save us from our sins, and so, we have this song that goes like this.

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My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus blood and righteousness,
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus name,

The hope is that confident expectation of all the good that is promised in Jesus. Why, because He died on the cross for me, and He rose again for me, He is my living Savior, I serve Him, He is my Lord, I am confident, I wholly rest on Him. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness, so He gives us a hope in Christ and it is very specific folks. Now, there are many churches, or many people would say ah, because of Jesus, He will bless you in your business, your health, you will never get sick, you always be rich, now I don't see that in the Bible, you got to be biblical here.

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What does the Bible promise, as the good that is found in Jesus Christ. Three very specific things. Number 1. The Bible says in Romans 8:20 and 21, that creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption, now, hope is looking forward to that great day when Jesus returns and when He returns all the good, He will bring comes to reality and one of the good, we're talking about is when creation is set free from the bondage of corruption. This is a world that is enslaved to corruption, it cannot get out of corruption. If you have a slice of apple, you put it on to the dining table, I guarantee you, unless you do, unless you soak it in salt water and so on, it will turn brown. If you have a car and you spray with water and you stipped of the paint, it will soon be rusty. Any food that you leave out, unless it's laden with preservatives, it will decay. It is the norm of this world, because the whole world is subjected to bondage, to corruption. Everything breaks, everything decays, everything rust, everything, because this whole earth is subject to corruption. We have earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, you say why, don't be surprised! This is a world subjected to corruption,

but the Christian hope is this, when Jesus comes, He is going to create a whole new cosmos, new heavens and new earth, where it will never, ever be decaying, or breaking down again, it is utopia. Now all of us in our hearts, we long for a thing called utopia, that's why you go to Maldives and and Hawaii, you want to have a little taste of what a perfect environment would be like. You don't have to go for a holiday anymore in the future. Everywhere is a holiday and everywhere is going to be glorious because Jesus by His finished work on the cross, purchased it for us. A world that is liberated from the clutches and the ravages of sin.

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So if you want spend all your money going holidays, but I'm contented not to go holidays and to wait for the Utopia that is to come. But not only is the world around you going to change. Some of us who struggle with weight gain, weight, whatever spare tires, pimples, dropping hair, diseases, let me tell you good news, all the good promised in Jesus includes all that, without the need for plastic surgeon. It says here and not only the creations, so, the good things, God is promising, is not only just the world being changed, but that we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Sometimes you're so spiritual, you say, I don't care about the body, no, no, God cares about your body. In fact, He makes it very clear in the Bible that you will get a new body, a body where you will never suffered from gout or arthritis, a body that you never have alopecia, there is loss of hair, your teeth will not be dropping, you will not have wrinkles, you have a perfect body, always tip top condition.

I wonder why people go for weight training and you know, you, you spend so much effort, but at the end of the day, mine will be the same as yours. (Laughter in the congregation). Why, what's the point, we will all come to the same state of perfection, whatever it is. Now, I don't want to take care my body to live long. I don't want to irresponsibly shorten my life and fail in that sense, but really, you don't have to envy someone who has six-packs, eight-packs, whatever. I think you haven't your's, I don't know whether got packs or not. But, it is going to be perfect, it's just perfect, glorious, flawless, no pimples, nothing, and it is a glorious incorruptible body. You'll never break down. It will never break down, COE can be renewed year after year, year after year, year after year, it doesn't need to change and that the body, God promises us. And so many of us labor for things that don't really matter, but whilst we yearn for utopia, whilst we yearn for a glorious painless body, that's not the main thing. I think the main thing is found in verse 2 of chapter 5, where Paul says, I, we can rejoice in hope, what? Hope of what, hope of the glory of God. Now this is the real deal. What

do you mean by this is the real deal, I think, number 1, we would be like Jesus, like God, we will be glorious. You know, we we live such tormented lives here, in a sense, because, I want to serve God, I want to honor him, I want to live a pure life, but, like Paul would explain in Romans 7, O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death. He, he struggles it, he wants to please God, but, he, he, he slips into sin.

But this struggle, this titanic lifelong battle with, with the flesh, would one day ceased and you will be perfect, pure, sinless, never a sinful word, never a sinful thought. Can you imagine to the child of God, a man was so has been redeemed by Jesus, what this really mean. It's glorious, I will be perfect. I don't look perfect, I know I'm not perfect, I am far from it. But there will be a day where there's this remarkable release from the temptations of sin and I will live that pure life. I, I, I hope for the glory of God.

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Secondly, I think, the hope for the glory of God is not just about the personal glorification. But it's that increased capacity to admire, a door and to worship and to know God for who He is. Do you know that there's something amazing about you and it is this, you have a voracious appetite. No, I'm not talking about your buffet capabilities, your voracious appetite is the appetite for joy and splendor and beauty. It is insatiable in this world, it is insatiable. You can have the biggest house in the world, you can have the fanciest car in the world, but there is always still going to be that void. You can be like Solomon, having a thousand wives, but there will still be a huge void. Why, because, you are made with an insatiable appetite, an appetite that can only be satisfied in God. You see, you are made in the image of God, you are made to worship Him, we are made to know Him and nothing apart from God can truly satisfy your soul. Doesn't matter whether you are Christian today are not a Christian, that's who we are as man, we are made for God. On this longing, this yearning, this, this wanting to climb the corporate ladder, this desire to earn more money is rooted in the reality that I want something that the world can never give. But there will come a day where that longing will be satisfied, there will come a day, where we will be able to see God for who He is, and drink in His glory and splendor and that's what we call the joy unspeakable, because you have that confident expectation of all the good, promised in Jesus Christ, Utopia, glorified body and a glorious, glorious life long, eternal drinking in and experiencing, knowing the glories of God. I don't know what I'm saying, that's a reality, I have not been there, I have

not tasted it. I can only say, because God says it's going to be joy unspeakable, I believe it will be, and I long and I look forward to that day.

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So, this is hope, a confident expectation of all the good. You know this good far surpasses the good that the world wants to give you. The world was to give you money, the world was to give you success in a career, the world wants to give you health. In fact, the church, some Christians, have even agreed with the world, this is the good that God wants to give. You know what, the prosperity, the health and wealth gospel, is really not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because it's exchanging the eternal glories above with temporal, meager offerings of this world. At the heart of the matter is this, the prosperity gospel is wrong, not because it promises too much, the prosperity gospel is wrong, because it promises too little. It is exchanging something of infinite worth, with something that is nothing. And when Christians, drink in that, and if and they set their hopes on money and health, they don't have the true engine of the Christian life, the forward-looking confident expectation of all the good, supreme, glorious, infinite good, promised in Christ.

Let me say this, this hope is so practical. Some of you, pastor, this is such an impractical passage. I mean, you tell me about hope, but it is all in the future, what has it got to do with me today. Well, number 1, God wants you to have hope today. That's His will. That's what Paul prays for, for the Roman Christians, but another reason why this is so important, is because this hope impacts the way you live today. The hope about tomorrow, impacts the way we live our lives today. You see, he says this, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, the joy and peace of a Christian is not divorced from hope, is not. In fact Luther says it very absolutely.

"Not in works, not in any other thing, but purely, look at how absolutely he puts it, he is real guts to say it this way, I think. He says, but purely in hope, the heart of man rejoices, the one who seeks to find joy apart from this hope, will labor much, but will labor in vain. He is saying this, the world today is chasing for joy in every other thing. Women, money, careers, he says it is all in vain. You never really have a joy, but only the man who rejoices in hope, could truly rejoice.

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It means that when he goes through pain, he can rejoice. It means that when he goes through catastrophes he can rejoice. Why, because he has a source of joy that is independent of the world that is around him. There is a source of joy from within.

This is not strange. Paul himself said in Romans 12:12 " Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." Strange mix of terms, isn't it. That I can rejoice in hope and be patient in suffering, in tribulation. In essence, he saying, there is a way for you to go tribulation and yet be rejoicing. And the key is hope. You remember this verse in 2nd Corinthians, where Paul says , "We are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." Ha, what is this? I didn't get it wrong. We are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Ha, what is that, how can I be sorrowful and rejoicing. Paul, can you get your ideas straight. No, I'm correct, I do not say wrongly, I can be sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. Wow, you see, Paul, sorrows in his circumstances. I mean, he has gone through a lot. For anyone to say to Paul, Paul, please lah please, wake up to be sorrowful, it's okay, you do not understand Paul's pain. Paul went through a lot. He's being a real, he is not denying the pains of those circumstances, but Paul is not devastated. Paul is overwhelmed. In the midst of those sufferings and pain, he says, I rejoice, I don't rejoice in the circumstances, but I rejoice in what is to come. I rejoice in hope. Wow, in your deepest pains, you can have joy.

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This is a mystery that only the Christian man can understand, really, really, and if you have never tasted of it before, long for that day where you will be able to rejoice even through tribulations. You say the word tribulation is a very severe word. It's not just difficulty, it is extreme difficulty. The word tribulum, a Latin word, describes a piece of wood, under which they are straps, not straps, but sharp objects and bits and this piece of wood is placed on to wheat and the farmer as it were stands on the tribulum, this piece and he is pulled along by the animal and when the animal pull him across, the tribulum now crushes over the wheat. Why, so that it will separate the husks from the grain. That is the idea of tribulum, it's something crushing, it's something destroying, it is saying, when I go through the tribulations, the tribulum's of life, I may be crushed, but I am not overwhelmed, I rejoice.

The Christian man can say, when my son dies, I'm sorrowful, but I rejoice in hope. I still believe in my God and I rejoice in Him. It's when my children, are raped, that I will still to be able to say, I rejoice in God. It's when your wife leaves you and he will still to be able to say, I can rejoice in God. This is a supernatural thing folks. The world can never say, I rejoice in pain. The Christian man can, because he has something the world doesn't have, hope in Jesus Christ. It changes everything, changes everything. I'm not here to give you a message to say you know, I know economy is bad, but guys hope in God, economy get better. I am not here to tell you a message. I know your spouse's sick and so on, just believe in God, she will get

better. No, I'm not giving such lame, empty promises. I don't have them from the Scriptures, but this is what I have, I can pray that we can have hope, in the darkest, deepest pits, that though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil. That's amazing.

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This hope does not only allow you to live in joy and peace, this hope allows you to have the motivation to change your life, to sanctify your life. If you don't have hope, you are slack in your Christian walk. But because I know Jesus is coming, He is coming for me, he who has this hope, in Him, purifies himself.

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He wants to live a Godly life because he knows Jesus is coming, he is not unsure, you know, should I really be a good Christian, no, he is so confident, he is so assured, it changes the way he lives. The Bible tells us, in hope, we become, God gives us opportunities to be witnesses. This is a world that is hopeless by the way, if you still get it, believe this is all right, there are many people who have smiling faces, but there's empty hearts, because this is a world without hope, and when a people without hope sees a people full of hope, wah, how come the boss scold us like that, you can still be so happy, wah, how can you go through such a catastrophe, and, and you still say you believe in God, can I ask you a question, what is the reason of the joy? Then Peter tells us this is the opportunity and indeed this is what you need to prepare for, "Always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asked you for a reason for the hope,"

1Pet 3:15

This is what makes Christians, Christians. Stand out, give a hope, rejoice. And this hope, not only gives you joy, peace, a motivation to sanctify yourself, a opportunity to witness, it makes you very bold, because you know this is real. Christianity is not a myth, it is that it is not a fable, it's not some imagination of someone. Because of Jesus and what He has done, you are confident He is coming and therefore, you are very bold, telling people about Jesus and sharing the Gospel of Jesus. Isn't this the message, the apostles got when they, when they saw Jesus arise into the heavens, the angel say the same way Jesus is taken up, is the same way Jesus will come back. And that, motivated the early church to go everywhere, giving the Gospel. They were very bold. The Christian hope is an amazing one. It is about the future, but it impacts you today, fill you with joy and courage.

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I have spoken much. And really, what I've spoken can be summarized in a song. It's called there is a hope. And I want to share with you the song, the lyrics itself because I think it really captures the biblical essence of hope, well and it goes like this,

There is a hope that burns within my heart,
That gives me strength for every passing day,
A glimpse of glory now revealed in meager part,
Yet drives all doubt away.

I stand in Christ with sins forgiven,
And Christ in me the hope of heaven,
My highest calling and my deepest joy,
To make His will, my home,

There is a hope that lifts my weary head,
A consolation strong against despair,
That when the world has plunged me in its deepest pit,
I find the Savior, there,
Through present sufferings future's fear,
He whispers courage in my ear
For I am safe in everlasting arms
And they will lead me home.

There is a hope that stands the test of time
That lifts my eyes beyond the beckoning grave
To see the matchless beauty of the day divine.

When I behold his face
When suffering cease and sorrows die
And every longing satisfied,
Then joy unspeakable will flood my soul,
For I am truly home

We have members of our church who passed away, recently and I saw firsthand the power of hope. He was in pain and misery, but there was a joy, there was a longing for hope that keeps him going every day. There's something about the word hope isn't it. You may be away from the native country, Philippines, China, America. We all long for hope, we want to go home and you know as Christians, we, this is not a

home. It's not Singapore, it's not United States, it's not Philippines. If you have believed in Jesus Christ, home is right up there, with God forever, your father awaits you. And it is that confident expectation, I will be with Him, because of Jesus Christ that keeps us going on that lifts our weary head and gives us strong consolation in times of despair. May we all find that hope.

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Question now is how can you and I have this hope. Do I have to produce it, where can I buy it, which shopping center sells hope, or is there a way I can make it myself? Well, the answer to you is, you can buy it anywhere, and you cannot make it by yourself because the Bible is very clear, the source of hope is none other than God Himself. The Scripture says,

"May the God of hope, He's the one who gives hope, He is the one originates hope, He Is One who blesses us with hope and if you don't still get it, he says it is by the power of the Holy Spirit. So, hope is not something I buy, something that I produce or something I squeeze out when I am in despair.

Oh no, that would be akin to a drowning man trying to save himself by pulling his hair, it cannot be done. You know what I mean, I mean, you are in despair, and you say, I have got hope, I've got hope, you can't, hope is not what we produce, hope is what God gives. He is the God of hope and He accomplishes this by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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I like what Spurgeon had to say. He says,

"In true believers their hope, faith, joy and peace are all of Divine workmanship, it's not your works. You can't produce love. Yes, you need to decide to love, you to make choices of faith, but even in that choice and that ability to love, at the end of the day, it is not what you did, it's what God by His Spirit enabled you to do.

So, it is a miracle know, so I need act the miracle. But the Bible here is saying, or, Spurgeon is saying, these are all of Divine workmanship, our spiritual raiment, that's clothing that we have, is never homespun, we are divinely arrayed from head to foot."

The Christian beauty, the Christian life, the Christian virtue, if there be anything positive, that adornment is not by us, it's by God.

Really, if you think about it, anything of worth in my life, in your life, is not because we were better, but because God was gracious. In this hope, therefore, it's not what you produce, it's what the Holy Spirit has to do. What does the Holy Spirit do you say. Well, in Romans 5, by the way Romans is such a balanced book. I said hope is a Cinderella of, of churches. We we miss it, we totally don't talk about it, but if you Romans, Romans , you will realized there's frequent mentions of hope. Romans 5, Romans 12, and now Romans 15 and in Romans 5, he says this is how hope is given. He says here, hope does not put us to shame, hope will never be disappointed. Why, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. So, what this means is this is how hope is formed. The Holy Spirit, pours out God's love into your heart, so that you will not just know in your head, though that's important, but you will know in your hearts. It is lavishly poured out into the Christian's heart and in what area is this love rooted in, very clearly, this is verse 5 and if you look on to verses 6 to 8, he is saying this love is poured out into our hearts as we realized how God sent His Son Jesus Christ to die for us on the cross. So, the love of God is experienced as we go to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as you hear the finished work, the saving work, the loving gift of salvation in Christ, the Holy Spirit takes that message, and pours the experiential knowledge of God's love in to your heart. There is the deep assurance, deep convincement, God loves me, He gave me His Son and if He gives me His Son, I have a great hope for tomorrow.

I'm confident, not because of me, but because of Jesus Christ. And so you see this love, poured out into our hearts is what the Holy Spirit does, in order to grant you the experience of hope. Now, does this mean then that you and I would just sit back, relax and say, God gave me hope, God give me hope and you sort of do nothing about it, since it's all the gift of God. No, that would not be a balanced look into the graces that God wants to give.

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You see, he also says in Romans 15:4 that: "It is through the encouragement of the Scriptures that we might have hope."

So you say this is quite complicated, it's really not that complicated, if you think about it. God uses the Bible, He gives you the Scriptures and as you look into the Scriptures, you should make a beeline for the Gospel of Jesus Christ, see Christ in the Word. I mean, Christ Himself says, the Bible is written of Me. And if you see Christ , His love for you and what He's done on the cross, as you see that through the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, so works in your heart, and pours out that love within your

soul and as you read and as the Holy Spirit works within you, hope arises from within.

Notice, this is the balance. It is not my reading that earns hope. But if I do not look in the Scriptures. I do not hear Scriptures, there cannot be overflowing hope. You say, this is so complicated. Okay, let me give you an example. Let's say love, can we really love as Jesus love by ourselves. The answer is no, because love is the fruit of the Spirit, but I need to walk in the Spirit and He gives you the fruit therein.

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But another simpler illustration is this, I am a, I'm a very fair guy, I want to be taller, dark and handsomer, okay and, and, and I realize I cannot make myself dark by myself. I can't sit in this chair and say, Jason get darker, get darker and if I tried very, very hard, I will still be the same skin tone. How do I get darker, may I ask? I get out into the sun. Now, what makes me dark? It's the sunlight. But if I do not place myself in the sun, I will not get dark, as simple as that. You say, I want to have hope and you keep yourself hiding in the room, not exposed to the light, you will not have that hope. But if we are like myself, going out into the sun, if we are to open the Scriptures and let the light of the Scriptures shine upon us. It is a Holy Spirit then, that take the Word of God and causes you to be hopeful, to be full of hope.

I want to say this to you, you say, what is this all about. This is what it's all about, as you go through the deepest pains, maybe some of you are right here, right now going through the deepest pains, the temptation of every one of us is to avoid the Scriptures. When you are in pain, you don't want to read the Bible. You are sort of angry and maybe even upset with God, so you want to run away from it. Let me say this, that may be the last thing maybe you should do, because it's in the deepest pains that you need to put yourself in the sunshine of God's Word, that the Holy Spirit can produce that joy of hope within. And if you today are not going through pains and sufferings, can I ask you also to read the Scriptures because you need this seasons of relief, to be built up in your hope so that when you enter those seasons of sufferings, you are more ready for it. I like what Piper had to say. He said this ." Often when we need hope most, we have the least ability to read the Bible, that's what I've shared with you. For most of us, God gives us seasons of relief and seasons of suffering. The seasons of relief, are the times when you should use all the means, God has given, to prepare you for the seasons of suffering. It gets practical here, I can't produce hope, the Holy Spirit can, but I am responsible to use the means of grace, that I may have preparation in times of pain and endurance as I face them right here, right now.

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God wants you to abound in hope, he wants you to, because this is what marks us out as His people too. Like I said, this is a world that cries out these words, "There is no hope, until the you, they see you, they see you full of hope, they see you enjoy, even though you go through sufferings and they ask you why. At that time you know, you're fulfilling Jesus Words where we are the city set on a hill and our light so shine forth.

When people are crying out, there is no hope, let us be a people who are living out Christ is our hope. I say to you, hope is a confident expectation of all the good promised in Jesus. This whole message is irrelevant, if you're not in Jesus Christ. My question to you is, are you in Jesus, I'm not asking whether you are in church, I'm not asking whether you are born in a Christian home, I'm asking are you personally in Jesus, because even if you are in the church, in a Christian home, you come for worship services, but you're not in Christ then what you have is not a confident expectation of all the good. But you will have an expectation of all the judgment, the wrath of God against our deserved sins, because you have no Jesus, you have no life.

The Bible says "He that has the Son has life and he that has not the Son of God has not life." I constantly shudder at the thought that many of us may come to church week after week, but we are not in Christ, may it not be the case. I care for your soul and I trust you carefully own soul, so, search your heart, if you are in Christ, and if you could really say the Holy Spirit has poured out God's love in my heart and I have this confident expectation of all the good promised in Jesus.

Let's bow, for a word of prayer. The most important question this morning is this, Do you have Jesus? He's not far away, He is not obscure, He is not trying to make it hard for you to come to Him, He has done it all, He has come to the cross, He's lived a perfect life, and then gave up that perfect life on the cross, as a ransom, as a sacrifice, so that you and I today may have life, through His death, we gain life, through His sacrifice, we have forgiveness. Jesus has done it all and now He has send forth His Holy Spirit. Jesus by His Holy Spirit is speaking to you, do I have the Son, do I have Jesus, this is the question you need to answer.

I really, really, really pray and hope that none of us here would be a church goer all our life. And then on the final day Jesus would say, depart from me, I never knew you. You knew the church, you knew the Christian rituals but you never knew Me, you never believed in Me, you never turn from your sin and trusted in My finished

work on the cross. You were never in Me. Dear friends, there is time for a look at the Savior, turn from your sin and believe in Jesus for salvation and life.

He that has the Son hath life, that is the promise, so what you do is not what you can achieve, it's what you must receive, right here, right now, Jesus awaits. The command of the Gospel is clear, believe, repent and believe and you will be saved.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I also speak to you. God knows your deepest pains, but at the very same time, He has never forsaken you, He will not forsake you, because you do know it in your heart. When He sent forth His Son, you feel the love of God as the Holy Spirit enters your life and works in your life ever so consistently. You know it and I pray today that hope in you will abound, will overflow. You say how, as you expose yourself to the Scriptures, as you read it, as you look at it, as you study it and say, God showed me Jesus and in a very amazing miraculous way hope arises, because that's what the Holy Spirit is called to do, and God wants you to be overflowing in hope that you may be a people filled with joy and peace and courage and boldness so that we may stand and shine as lights in this hopeless, dark and dying world.

This is the Gospel that Christ through His Gospel would change our lives and glorify Him. I pray, Gospel Light Christian Church would live up to that Name by His grace. Be a people of the Word, be a people going for the Gospel, be a people praying, God make Jesus and His Words, so real. I don't want a theoretical, academic Christianity, I want a real one, where I have an intimate relationship with You. And so, dear God, we come this morning, thanking You for amazing things we can talk about, I know this is not fairytales, this is not myths, this is not something we spin out of our own imagination, but thank You we have a sure foundation in the Scriptures, thank You for the Holy Spirit for making this, real and alive, awakened within our souls. I know my words fail, but your Holy Spirit never fails. So, dear God, prosper Your Word, save those who need to be saved, cheer those who needs to be cheered and glorify Yourself through all our lives today. We are thankful and we pray all this in Jesus Name, Amen, God bless.