

## Romans 8:23-25 - The Christian Hope – 18 Dec 2011

Can I ask you, to turn your Bible, to the book of Romans 8, we have been going through this book and so, let's look at Romans 8, today and just, 3 verses for your consideration. I believe the Lord today, has for us a message about hope, the hope for the child of God and Romans 8:23-25, tells us

And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

So we are going to consider today, the hope of a child of God, the Christian hope.

This week, I had a lunch appointment with one of our brothers here, I was there earlier and I strolled along the Singapore River and I chanced upon the sculpture and I believe, many of you working in the CBD area, would be familiar with the sculpture. I won't say where it is, neither will I say, who sponsored this, but when I look at the sculpture, I was intrigued with a big bird, with a big feet and a wonderful bronze sculpture. I looked closer and focused on the plaque and this is what it says:

Fernando Botero

This word signifies the joy of living and the power of optimism.

I would tell you again, the organization, I have blanked it out. The, so and so believed that so long that there is peace and optimism among its people, Singapore would continue to grow and prosper.

Botero, Fernando Botero believes, that the nation of Singapore requires, hope, a certain form of optimism and can I say, that is not only true for Singaporeans, it is also true for the people of God. We are made, to desire and live in hope and God wants us to realize our hope in Jesus Christ, today.

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I want to share with you today, about the Christian hope.

Do you realize, there are 3 fundamental characteristics of a Christian. Three things, 3 things is given to us in 1Corinthians 13. They are:

1. Faith,
2. Hope,
3. Charity, or love.

Faith, hope, charity, the 3 fundamentals characteristics of the Christian life. Often times, in churches, you hear about faith, we also hear about love, but maybe, we may not have had much about hope. So, this morning, I am excited to share with you about the Christian hope. The Bible tells us, in verse 24 of Romans 8, for we are saved by hope. Maybe, this is an unfortunate translation in the King James version, but it is probably better to translate it as such, For we are saved in hope.

For we are saved by grace, through faith, into hope. I'll salvation is one that is characterized by hope, because, they are so many things that God has destined us to have, that is not yet realized today. You are saved for something that is beyond this age, you are saved for things beyond what we can see. So, our salvation is by the grace of God, through faith, in the finished work of Jesus Christ and that leads us, into a glorious hope, we are saved in hope.

I want to consider a few things with you this morning, as you look at Romans 8. They are 3 things, we are going to look at the meaning of hope, what does it really mean, the explanation. 2. We are going to look at what are the specific things we can look forward to, we can expect, number 2, expectations. Thirdly, I am going to share with you, what are the effects, these have, the understanding of hope have in your life, today, the expression of it. So, in a very simple way, let's consider the Christian hope.

#### 1. Explanation.

Let's look at the explanation of hope. If you grab an average guy off the streets and you ask him, hey, what is hope? This man, or woman, would probably say to you or used the word hope in this way. I think, I hope for being a rich man, I hope to be a rich man, I hope to be well from my diseases, I hope that I will successfully complete my studies. In other words, what this man hope for, is maybe a wish, a desire, but he is not very sure whether this will come true or not, because, this man of the streets, and does not have a basis or foundation or a guarantee. How do you know you are going to get rich, how do you know you will get this car, how do you know you will be able to buy this house. It is a wish, a desire, maybe even a dream, but it has no foundation and no basis.

But, for a Christian man or woman, the Christian hope is not without foundation, is not without basis, there is a certain guarantee to it. The Christian hope, is a confident expectations, I know it will come. Why?, Because I know the guarantee, I know the basis, I have a solid foundation. You say, what is the foundation of a Christian's hope. The Bible tells us, hope comes from the Word of God. I can have hope, because God promises it, in His Word. Notice, in Romans 15:4

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

This is not wishful thinking, this is not dreaming, this is not a pie-in-the-sky, this is real, I know it will be realize, because the Scriptures say so and therefore, I have a confident expectation. Again in Col 1:5

For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel;

That Christian man or woman has a solid foundation in the Word of God. It is not a dream.

Another passage, Hebrews 6, it's a long passage, but I just want you to focus on the yellow words here:

Promise, oath, two immutable, or two unchangeable reality, that you might have hope.

Heb 6:17,18

Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

Hope, of a Christian, is found in the Scriptures. I can be certain, I can be confidently, expecting God to fulfill His Word, because He said it in the Bible, that's my guarantee, that's my foundation.

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There was a conversation, between two doctors, two oncologists, cancer specialists and they were discussing, about the success rates in treating cancer. One of them,

lamented, and said, hey, I don't understand, we both use the same kind of protocols, we give the same medicine, over the same period of time, according to the same frequency, but why is it, that your success rates a 74% and my success rate is only 22%. We use the same medicine, we use Etoposide, we use platinol, we use oncovin and we use hydroxyurea, same medicine, same duration, but why, that the difference in success rates.

The other doctor reply, you see, we all use the same medicine, but you tell them, we are giving them EPOH etoposide, platinol, oncovin and hydroxyurea, but I tell them, I give them HOPE. The Christian life must understand our hope and it is not just wishful thinking. The Christian life, hope is also spelt BIBLE, Bible. What does God say about my future? If He says this, I can be confidently expecting it, to be realized, in my life. And a Christian's hope, is found in The Word and it is not what you see today, it is not what you see today.

The Christian's hope, it's about things you have yet to see, you have yet to experience, alright. Why, because the Bible tells us in verse 24, hope that is seen, is not hope. If you already have it, it is not hope. Maybe, today, you say, I hope I will have \$1,000,000, but if you already have \$1,000,000 in the bank, it's not hope. You can't hope for something which you already have and Paul is saying, hope that is seen, is not hope. You hope for that which you see not. So, what Paul is saying here is this, your salvation is amazing, your salvation is in hope. God has saved you for greater things to come and you can be confident about it because He has promised it in His Word.

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Does it mean then, that I have nothing today to know about God's salvation, or I'm saved for great things to come but does it mean, there is nothing great today? No, there is, that's why Paul says in verse 23, we have the firstfruits of the Spirit. The term, firstfruits, is interesting. What is firstfruits? In Jesus time, in Israel's times, whenever, they have a crop or they have a harvest, the first batch, the best ones, the biggest, juiciest fruits, are first offered to God as the firstfruits. It is a token of appreciation, it is also a token to say, Lord, this is the firstfruits I give unto You, in acknowledgment that all that comes, really also belongs to You. And Paul uses the term, firstfruits here, with regards, what God gives to us, today.

Our salvation, is so great, but in this life, He gives us first a taste of it, the firstfruits, the firstfruits of the Spirit. I can't imagine this, suppose, some of you are great cooks

at home, ladies here, you are well and your husbands and your children are just, eagerly anticipating your masterpiece and they could smell the beautiful aroma from the oven, they have to first taste, the first whiff of the fragrance and aroma, but they no, that is not all there is to it, they is great the stuff to come and they are awaiting, a waiting for the time you bring out the roast lamb of leg, leg of lamb, lamb of leg. (Laughter in the congregation). You bring out the roast meat and you can enjoy, you can sink your teeth into the succulent meat. You have a first whiff, but you are longing for more.

When Jesus comes into your life, when you receive Him by faith, when you turn from your sins, and say, I will follow Jesus, He is my God, He is my Lord. When you turn from sins unto Jesus Christ, there is firstfruits of the Holy Spirit in your life. God gives you a pledge, they Bible uses the word, an earnest, if I may say, the first installment, or the down payment of your salvation and what is it? The presence and the power of the Holy Spirit in your life. You have a joy, you have never had before. You have a peace, you never have before. You have a holy desire you never have before and throughout your life, you see that God is enabling you to live, more and more holy lives. That is, the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit, you can taste it, you can see it, you can experience it and it is real and even though that is great, you know that's not all there is. After having the firstfruits of the Spirit, the Bible says, you now groan within yourself, you say, I want more. It's like that man, waiting outside the kitchen, he smells the roast leg of lamb and says, "Darling, is it ready, when is it ready, I want to eat, I am hungry."

When a Christian man, having tasted of the blessings that the Holy Spirit brings into your life, you are hungry for more, you groan for more, you lament, when is it coming. And you know, it will come, because, your hope is the confident expectation based upon God's Word. You know you are saved for more than what you are experiencing today.

Can I wrap it up in this definition, I have not checked it in theological books, but this is what I think, hope is what I learned in Romans 8, "Hope is the confident expectation of the full riches of salvation, guaranteed to us in God's Word." That's what it is; it's that confidence expectation, of what? the full riches of salvation guaranteed to us in God's Word. That's what hope is.

So now the question is pastor, what can you really hope for? I know, we are groaning and and yearning for something, but can you specify exactly what we are going to enjoy and inherit? Well, let me say, it can be encapsulated in one word, I

think, one word and the word is "Perfection". Perfection, I can look forward to perfection. You say, perfect what? Perfect joy, perfect joy, joy that will never be diluted, joy that would never be corrupted. You have perfect joy, because the Bible says there will be no more sorrow, no more tears. I think that will be perfect glory. I will be glorified together with Jesus Christ. Perfect glory, no more sin, no more potential for sin in my life, no more susceptibility to temptations. No more sin. I think there's perfect knowledge, we shall know Him, as we unknown, the Bible says. Perfection, perfect communion, because there is now no more sin, that separates us from God. So, in one word, I say, "Perfection".

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Perfect joy, perfect communion, perfect glory, perfect knowledge. Is this what the Scriptures teaches? I think so. Look at Romans 8:17

Rom 8:17

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Added by Pastor: you are heirs of God, heirs are people who will inherit something great in the future, not yet, but in the future. The Bible says, you are an heir of God. Some of you want to be an heir of Bill Gates, you dream that you can be Bill Gates' heir, quite formidable. But if you multiply, Bill Gates 1000 times, you will not come close to what it will be, when you realize, you are an heir of God. God is far, far, far, far greater, richer than Bill Gates. And the Bible says, you are an heir of God and if that is not clear, it says, you are a joint heir with Christ. A joint account, means, both parties have equal rights to all there is in that account. If Jesus be poor, I am poor, if Jesus be rich, I am rich, if Jesus has all, I have all, I am a joint heir with Christ. That's the future I can look forward to, I can look forward to being glorified together with Him.

Now, when will that come, when is this time? Is it today? No, hope, its not now, it can come to the next moment of course, Jesus can come anytime but, till he comes, it is hope. And therefore, we are all looking for this blessed hope. Christians, we look for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ. He paid for all that, on the cross, 2000 years ago, all that is paid, it is finished. What is finished?, Not only the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit in you, but your perfection, your glory, your joy, the new heavens, and the new earth, all that is done, paid for. But the entrance into that, the enjoyment of all that, is only when Jesus comes again, that's why, there is a need for hope.

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I hope for the day, I look forward to that day when I will be glorified, I look forward to that day when I will never sin, I look forward to that day when I will be in the heavens, the new heavens and the new earth. I share with you last week, about this new world, it is a glorious world isn't it? No more corruption, no more sin, no more futility, no more decay. Durians are different I think then, compared to now. I just had a durian this morning and I was reminded, again that durians, in the new heavens and the new earth, shouldn't have thorns and it should not be so difficult to open and I think, the seeds should be very, very small, along the flesh, you could almost suck it all in, and you won't get choked. I think so, the new heavens and the new earth is it perfect, glorious place for the perfected saints to live in. That, is what our salvation entails or, or involves.

But today, we learned something else, because, in verse 23, we see here, not only do we have that perfect joy, perfect glory, perfect home, called heaven and earth, the Bible tells us, I will also have the redemption of my body. Some of you, I'm very disappointed with your body, right? For man, you start to see a layer of tire, I am starting to have it and it is very hard to control. I groan that it will be shed, but it will not be shed, I have resigned myself to it. Some of you are very disappointed with the pimples on your face, the wrinkles that appear. You are groaning every day, because every morning, you wake up, aiyoh, very painful. Aiyoh, very tired. You are, you are tormented, in a sense, in this body. You wish, you could change it.

Let me tell you something, you can change it and it will be changed, if you are a believer of Jesus Christ. When He comes, we will be given a new glorious body. You know, this body you have, the Bible says, he is a tabernacle. The word tabernacle, is a tent. You pitch a tent, because it is for a temporary dwelling. I went to East Coast Park yesterday, I see lots of tents. I suspect, nobody stays there for long. You pitch a tent for one or two days, or two nights and thereafter, you pack up and you move. Tents, are not intended for permanent dwellings. The Bible says, the board you have now is a tent. One day, you will shed this fleshly robe and God will give you a new glorious body. Paul says, I am burdened, you know, I am burdened, not for that we would not, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

2Cor 5:4

For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

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He says, he sees a decay, a dying in his body and he is looking for the day, it will never die, he will never get tired, he will never be weak, he won't have to say, huh, so tired, I need a cup of coffee. Some of you, need a cup of coffee, but in those days, or in the days that is to come, you won't need that; perfect, no weakness, but a body of power, of immortality, of incorruption. But I think, this body, this new body, is not only one of power, but it is one of purity. You see, this body we have today, is one that in a sense, has a potential to sin. The flesh, still dwells within this body. That's what Paul says,

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body, from the body of this death?

Rom 7:24

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

You see, when he came to Jesus, he knew that he is a new creation. Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new. The Bible says, I am crucified with Christ. Dead, the old man is dead, nevertheless, I live in the life, which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. I have a new life, it is in this old body. But this new life is totally new, it loves God, this new life, pursues God, it does not sin, it does not desire sin at all, so, why do you sin? Because there is the flesh, the wicked tendency is still in our body.

If you want to think of it, it's like this, it's like a holy seed in an unholy shell. That's what we are right now, there is a holy seed in us, in this unholy shell. So, Paul laments, he groans, oh, I wish one day I will be set free from this body of death. And there will come a day, when Jesus comes, God gives you a new, glorified body, no potential to sin. Wow! I can't even understand what it is like, that I would still have to make choices in life, but my choices are always going to be right, always going to honor God, I will never sin, no potential to sin, whatsoever.

So, this is what you look forward to, this is what the Christian hope is about. It is a confident expectation of the full riches of the salvation that God promises in His Word. It includes perfect joy, perfect glory, perfect abode, perfect life.



How many of you are ACS boys, Anglo Chinese School boys, anyone? A few. Don't have to be ashamed, I am going to say something good about it. (Laughter in the congregation). ACS, has a motto, what is a motto. Wah, you all very familiar with the motto all right, anyone, knows, Chinese High motto? Wah, not bad, there are some intelligent people around. Well, ACS motto is "The best is yet to be". It's a great motto, but let me apply this to the future. It's not about now, I think, they apply it as the boys and young men, you have a better future to come, the best is yet to be. But let me tell you, as a Christian, really, the best is yet to be. When Jesus comes, all will be changed. You won't be subjected to corruption, won't be subjected to sin, perfect joy, perfect communion with God whom we desire. That's what you hope for. That's the Christian hope.

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I come finally, today, knowing these realities, how will this impact your life today. I mean, you can sit here and, ah, dream and hope for the future, that's good. But, will that also, percolate down and trickle down and impact your life? Absolutely! How? What does the Bible say? The Bible says in verse 25

8:25

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

So, what hope does it inspire, patience. Patience, for what? If you look at verses 17 and 18, it is patience, in the midst of suffering. Oh, God has wonderful, tremendous inheritance, waiting for you in the future, but right here, right now, the Bible does tell you, we would enter the kingdom of God with much tribulation. There are sufferings for the present time. Does it mean that we escape suffering? God, take away all my sufferings, I don't want that, no, God says, if I give you suffering, this is what you need to do, you need to focus and realize, that I have great things with that for you in the future and right now, you can be patient through it and not around it. Patience in suffering. Patients in suffering.

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Nowhere, in the Bible does it say when you come to Jesus cries, God is going to take away all your problems. No, the Bible promises you, I will be with you through your problems, but He doesn't take away your problems. They say kind of ejection seat mentality among people today, if I come to Jesus, and when there are problems, I want to press a button and get out of the problem. Not always. God has tremendous,

beautiful reasons for us to go through trials. It humbles you, it grows you, it increases your hope, it enables you to be compassionate to comfort others, who may be in the same shoes. It allows you to taste and experience, in a little way, the suffering of Christ. Tremendous reasons. And the Bible says, for the light affliction, which is for a moment, but for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The sufferings we go through today, increases our capacity to glorify God and to enjoy Him for evermore. Ho, that's why Paul says, keep there, stay under, hypomone, the word patience, stay under, don't be too quick to get out of it. But the motivation to stay under, the hope, the confident expectation of the full riches of our salvation, guaranteed to you, by God. It will all come to you, one day, when Jesus comes.

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Anyone of you knows where this is? This is a photo, taken some time ago, any idea, where this is? Okay, I know, you know, because you stay near there. Not, Bouna Vista. Wah, you guys are very good. This is Ulu Pandan, that's right and right now, it is turned into a campus site. But, this is where I had my second stint of Army training. I put it up, because it looks like a jail, don't you think? (Laughter in the congregation). It felt like prison to me, I've said it many times, publicly, I disliked, national service. This was hard for me, because, I was already married, I was already working and I think, I was 24, 25 years old, when they called us back into the Army. There, we had to cut our hair, we had to fall in, we had to wake up at 5 AM everyday, go for jogs and runs, get shouted at and treated like little boys again and it was painful. I couldn't go home, Mondays to Saturday, I got to stay in camp, I want to go out into civilization, but I can't. Oh, but this place, offers great hope. Why?, Because, Ulu Pandan camp, is unique, in a sense, they don't have a high barricade, it's just a natural fence and you can see beyond your camp into civilization. You can see the condo opposite you, you can maybe catch a glimpse of Jelita, which is a shopping center, small shopping center, where there is a Pizza Hut and just a few bus stops down, you know, there is Holland Village. You are so close to civilization, you look at it, and you say, alright, it's okay, I will tahan (colloquial for bear with it ) here, from Monday to Saturday, I will be out on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. And so, whilst I am in the Army camp, it is painful, but I can still take it, because I know, once a week, I can get out unless I am confined for stupid things. (Laughter in the congregation). But, imagine, someone tells you, you will be in the prison of your life, for all eternity. I think, I would rather die. If you told me, I am going to be in this camp for the rest of my life, I think I would rather die. But I know, it's all going to end every once a week.

My friends, your sufferings in this life, are not for eternity, it's momentary. If you compare it with eternity, it's like vapor, gone like nothing. So, be patient, while you're right here, because God has prepared for you great things to come. Maybe today, you're going through great suffering and you're wondering why, you're saying, Lord, let me push the ejection seat button, I want to get out of it and if I don't get out of it, I get angry with you, God. My friends, be patient, all right, be patient. You are in this trial, because, God hates you, or loves you any less, He is not condemning you, he's not saying, oh, you sin, here, I'm going to give it real hard to you because I hate you now, no. Great reasons why he should give you suffering. By all means, check your heart, because He may be chastening, He may be scourging you, that you may turn from sin to self-destructive ways. Ask Him, why and if it pleases God to say, like Paul, the thorn in the flesh, stay, for your good. Then, with patience wait for that hope.

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Your child may be sick, you may have lost your job, family is breaking up, what do you do? The Bible says, put on for your helmet, the hope of salvation. It's not about your salvation that you have right now, which is justification, but it is about the salvation that is to come, your glorification. It is guaranteed, alright, it is guaranteed because God says, "Whosoever he predestinates, them he also called, and them whom he called, them he also justified, and them whom he justified, they also will be glorified"

It's guaranteed, so as you go through pain, as you go through pain, remembered the hope, promised in Jesus Christ, the full riches of your salvation. So, what does it do for me, hope,

1. Patience in suffering.
2. When you have hope, it gives you a pursuit of sanctification. It helps you today, to be more like Jesus.

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself. Ho, you put, being like Jesus at the priority of life.

1John 3:3

And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

You see, knowing the hope that is to come, changes the way you see things, changes the things you value, changes the way you live your life, because, you know this will be going to pass away. Some of you today are living for the freehold property you long to have. Ha, I want to buy this big house. No, freehold property in this world, it all goes, it all goes away one day, it will all dissolve away. You know, according to the Bible, this world, passes away and the last, thereof, but he that doeth the will of the Father, abides forever. So, when you realize your great hope in Jesus Christ, it changes the way you live your life. It reminds you, that you are just a stranger and pilgrim on this world, on this earth. You're just passing through. Imagine, today, you're going to a different country for a holiday, which you go there and buy a house? Which you go there and set up a company? Which you go there and set up a family? No! Why, because I'm only here for two weeks.

Christians live their lives today, as if this is the place I am going to be forever. No! Your life is in a far better place. So, today, would you really have this hope to purify yourself. You say, I want to be like Jesus. There are people today, who tell you Christianity is about living for the here and now. No! So, where is hope, hope is about the future. It's not aggrandizement today, it's about the future.

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Look at this man, Moses. Did Moses have hope? Great hope because he had great faith. Faith and hope is related. It says in Hebrews 11:24

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

I think, he could be the next king, Pharaoh, but he said, I do not want this. Ha, you don't want to be the king, of the greatest nation, probably of those times. Yah, I don't want. I refuse, even if you give it to me, I do not want it, why? Because, he chose to suffer affliction, with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He has made a choice, why? Because, he is esteemed, he reckoned, he considered, he sought the reproach of Christ, he knew Christ, he knew Christ, greater treasures, than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect, unto the recompense of the reward. He valued his hope. By faith, he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured, he endured, hypomone, lasted, is seeing him who is invisible. He look forward.

Hebrews 11:24-27

Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the

pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

If you are living for the here and now, something is wrong with your Christianity. The hall of faith, the hall of faith, in Hebrews 11 is filled with saints, who lived with their eyes to the future. Abraham, look for that heavenly city and he did not receive it while he was in this life, he did not. And so, was the case for Sarah and for many many, who went through the same path of faith. They were sawn, they were torn, they were stricken, they were persecuted, but they all had recompense, respect, unto the recompense of the reward. It changes the way you live, my friends.

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But lastly, can I say this, hope, not only allows you to be patient in suffering, does not only give you a pursuit in your sanctification or being more like Jesus. I think, it gives you a passion in service. It changes the way you serve, when you remember the hope, God has for you.

There is a tourist, who went to Italy and he went to a very nice garden, beautifully kept and as he went there, he saw an old man, taking care, tending to this garden. He asked him, sir, how old is this garden. He says, about 25 years. Who does it belong to? Well, it belongs to my master and my master alone. Who takes care of this place? Well, it is very much myself, only me. And, how long have you been doing this? 25 years. Has the master, come back to see this garden? Yes, in this 25 years, 4 times. When was the last time, 12 years ago. Wow, that's amazing, sir, you keep this garden so spick and span, so clean, so nice, how do you do it. Is it because you expect your master to come back tomorrow? The garden is say, no sir, not tomorrow. I keep this garden clean, spick and span, because I do it expecting him to come back today, not tomorrow.

If you live your life, thinking that Jesus is always going to come tomorrow, you won't serve him with all your heart. Is the expectation, that my Jesus, my Savior can come today, it gives me passion in service. Isn't this what Paul says, be steadfast, my beloved brethren, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know, that your labor, hard labor, alright, this is the parturition work, which means, giving birth, which is kind of a work. Christian service is hard work. Your labor, is not in vain in the Lord.

1Cor 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

And this verse is written in the context of the resurrection. Oh, in the blinking of an eye, at the sound of the trumpet, I would be changed. Jesus, if He comes today, I will be changed, and therefore I will be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. It changes the way I serve, it changes the way, you serve. The hope, it's a glorious day. I can understand why, a Christian life involves faith, hope, love. Give me my motivation as I go through the tough times of life. Refocuses my priorities, reminding me, I am just a stranger and a pilgrim, passing through this life, destined for great riches in heaven with Jesus, my God forever more. Inspires you today, to higher realms of service unto Him. Hope, changes your life.

The question is, how, you and I, have hope. Can I force this out, can I psycho myself, think, think, think, think? Is this what you produce? No, the Bible tells us, in the last verse here, now, the God of hope, why the God of hope? Because, He is the one who gives us this hope and He's the one we hope for. Ultimately, it's not about the heavens and the earth, is not about these things, it's about God, the God of hope, the One, who gives us hope and the One who is our hope, fill you, with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, what? Through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Hope, is inspired by the Spirit of God as He leads us to the certain guarantees and promises in Scriptures. It is that confident expectation of the full riches of our salvation as guaranteed by God in His Word and as realized in our hearts by His Spirit.

This morning, look to the Spirit of God, look to Him to inspire hope in you, as you consider these verses. Look to Him, to change the way you face trials, the way you seek the Lord and the way you serve Him. May the hope of God, inspired by the Spirit, change our church and change our lives.

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Let's bow, for a word of prayer. There is great hope for you, my brothers and sisters in Christ. Don't be shortsighted, life is not just about the here and now. Oh yes, there is a lot about the here and now, that is the firstfruits of the Spirit, there is a mission to be accomplished, there are souls to be saved, but through it all, see farther, see

beyond, see as God sees, because He says, I have destined you to be an heir, joint heirs, with Jesus Christ. You have it all, that are promised to you in the Scriptures. Ask the Spirit of God, to make these truths, real and alive. Not just theory, but that it would infuse every cell of your being, that it will change you as you go through the tribulations.

As you come to the end of this year, you refocus and realign your life, which you place yourselves to holy service, hope of God, for the ...?. Are, but friends, I know that there are some that are in this room today, you hear this message of hope, and you know it in yourself, I have no hope, because, I have not known Jesus, I can't say honestly to myself that Jesus is my Savior and God is my God, I can't say that. And you know that if you can't say that, and all that has been spoken of is not for you. Whilst, Christians have a great hope because of the grace of God, you know you have no hope. This is the only comparatively good life you have, because your future is one of torment and pain. Why?, Because you refused to turn to the true and living God, through His Son Jesus Christ.

Can I plead with you, can I plead with you friends, don't leave without Jesus, He is the gift of God. Why?, So that sinful men like us could be reconciled with Him and worship Him and follow Him. Why did Jesus have to come; so that you may be saved and so that you may have hope. This is the love of God, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for me. By faith, this morning, can I encourage you, to turn from your sins, and commit yourself to Jesus in faith. He that comes to him, God will in no wise cast out. It's not about your hands being raised, is not about you say some words, but hearts today, turn, your hearts make that choice to trust in Jesus. I pray, you will be a people of hope. Father, bless Your Word to the hearts of every single person here, they are so precious in Your sight. Please, dear God, by Your Spirit, have mercy, save us, save Your people. I pray for Your children today, they are downcast, maybe, they are, they feel guilty, defeated, they feel aimless in life. Oh! May the Spirit of God, fresh hope, within our souls and we will be praising You, for the amazing salvation, the full riches, that is to come. Jesus, come quickly, we pray, we ask these things, in Jesus name, Amen. God bless.