

THE HOPE WE HAVE IN CHRIST

(Sermon Summary)

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Reading: Hebrews 11: 1-16.

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We live in a world that relies on hope. Everyone needs and wants hope. In fact, all human life needs hope.

Often we hope for things that do not really matter that much in the final scheme of things. We might hope it doesn't rain or that our football team wins or that the Amazon delivery we are expecting comes tomorrow. Or more importantly we might hope to find a wife or a husband, or that our children will do well and be happy. At the moment we are hoping to be able to pay our utility bills. People need hope amidst all the fears they have about the world at the moment with wars and the cost-of-living crisis. In those fears people hope there will be answers that are found.

As Christians we know that we cannot put our hope in doctors or banks or governments. For Christians, their hope is in Christ alone. David knew where to put his trust. When he came against Goliath, he showed that he put his trust in the Lord (1 Samuel 17:45). Elsewhere he showed that his trust was in God (Psalm 20:7).

The Christian only has one hope and that is in Christ alone. In Hebrews 11:1 we see that hope comes by faith. The whole chapter lists those who lived by faith and were the great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1). When it speaks of 'substance' (11:1), it talks of something solid or immense. It means that we have confidence in it (See Hebrews 3:14). It is a conviction that we have that is not easy to describe but we know because we know! Faith is that solid conviction in what we hope for. What we hope for has a present and future reality. Paul speaks of hope in Romans 5:1-2. In Romans 7:15-25 he acknowledges that he is a wretched man but relies upon the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew what was warring within him and the things he did that were displeasing to God. But he had the assurance to be able to thank God for Jesus Christ.

We are confident that the Lord will be part and parcel of our lives now in the present. This faith is not something we can conjure up or that can come from within ourselves. It is the gift of God. We have not actually seen the cross. It is something unseen to us, but we believe in it with conviction. With eyes of faith we see it. We have not seen God. We have not seen the risen Christ. We have not seen the Holy Spirit. But we believe in God. We know it is true and that God exists. Christ died on the cross and we believe and trust in Him. We know that our Redeemer lives. In Christ alone is all our hope.

So what are we to do with this hope? Are we to keep it to ourselves? Or just sit and talk about it? We have a duty to share it. In fact, we will not be able to stop ourselves sharing it. We cannot help but speak of Him. We see people living in despair everywhere around us. We see people running around without a clue what they are doing. We live out our hope before them.

We have full assurance that what He has done for us, He is able to do for others too. He can do the same for our neighbours, our family and our friends. Christ can save today. If He can do it for us, He can do it for anyone!