

Women & More

The Allure of Hope

Lesson 24: **April 23, 2015**—*trust*

Scripture provides the charm, the allure, the enticement and the major source for gaining hope: Romans 15:4 “*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*” Our hope is increased as we have to endure and so we fasten ourselves upon Scripture—God’s every word! In these sacred words we learn of our Savior—his precious blood shed for our sins, and His righteousness alone which allows us to stand before the throne of God clean! On ‘being clean’, Charles Spurgeon said, “I am clean” through Jesus’ blood and through the Spirit’s work. Let not the hope of perfection then (in glory) make us content with imperfection now. **A good hope is a purifying thing.** The work of grace must be abiding in us now or it cannot be perfected then.”

“It was but yesterday that I could read my title clear;” said Spurgeon.” “Today my evidences are bedimmed, and my hopes are clouded.” Remember 1 Samuel 16:21 says of David, “*Saul liked him very much.*” But then in chapter 18 verses 8-9 jealousy is born, and Scripture reads: “*Saul was very angry and from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.*” We know that from that moment on David’s hope of living free of Saul’s jealousy was dashed. It sent him into the territory of the Philistines to play the role of a madman. Joseph endured the same jealous rage from his brothers, and we can see in both cases how God had a plan!

Hope thrived in Eden until it was dashed by evil: Remember that while God made woman, man slept! *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* says, “With great skill the author presents these three participants as the ‘heads’ of their race: The snake, on the one hand, and the man and the woman on the other, as two great nations embarking on a great struggle, a struggle that will find its conclusion only by an act of some distant ‘seed’ or ‘offspring’.” The ‘seed’ is Jesus!

Whatever a man trusts in is his god; and whatever master a man chooses will master that man. We know that Daniel’s master was God; he trusted in Him: While Daniel slept with the lions, Darius was sleepless in the palace (Daniel 6:18). We must give up idols—1 Thessalonians 1:9. Greek: meta noiya = repent. No repentance = no redemption. Three strikes and we’re out: **If**

1. we die before the age of accountability—that didn’t happen; if
2. we kept all the commandments in thought, word and deed—impossible—that won’t happen! But if and when
3. we come to Jesus and receive His payment for our sin, forgiveness and we live for Him! This is our only hope—*Jesus*—and what a hope!

A reading in *Our Daily Bread* said that true wisdom starts with a heart full of *faith* (trust)—not a head full of facts. **Talking to ourselves about God:** David asked and answered himself three times in Psalm 42:5, 11 and 43:5—“*Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.*” And in Psalm 119:147 he said, “*I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.*” “Have you the two virtues which David had?” asked Spurgeon, “the **outward walking in integrity**, and the **inward trusting in the Lord**? Are you resting upon Christ’s sacrifice?”

Deception is described in 1 Timothy 4:1-2 and 5:29 “*The spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons 2Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.*”

5:29 “*The sins of some men are obvious, **reaching the place of judgment ahead of them** (woe!); **the sins of others trail behind them.***” In a 2010 concession speech, Massachusetts’ democrat, Martha Coakley quoted someone who said: “Sometimes it’s more important to travel hopefully than to arrive.” That may sound good, it obviously did to Coakley, but it has no substance—it’s empty and void—and will leave the adherer to it in hereafter-disaster; in hell!

Example: When some claim that the word of God is a myth or mere superstition, we need to know that the Bible doesn’t match up with the definitions of those words: **Myth** is defined as **1** : a legendary narrative that presents part of the beliefs of a people or explains a practice or natural phenomenon (nope, that doesn’t describe the Bible—*mine*) **2** : an imaginary or unverifiable person or thing (nope, that doesn’t fit God—*mine*); and **mythology** **1** : a body of myths and *esp* of those dealing with the gods and heroes of a people (not the One and Only true and living God—*mine*). And **superstition** is **1** : beliefs or practices resulting from ignorance, fear of the unknown, or trust in magic or chance **2** : an unreasoning fear of nature, the unknown, or God resulting from superstition (not from Scripture—*mine*).

THE CURE for the malady of myths and the sickness of superstition is in Proverbs 2:1-5 “*My son, **if** you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, 3and*

***if** you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4and*

***if** you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,*

***then** you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.”*

Proverbs 2:12-15 “*Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, 13**who** leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways,*

*14**who** delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil,*

*15**whose** paths are crooked and*

***who** are devious in their ways.”*

Psalm 31:24 “Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.” Matthew Henry said, “The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.” 1 Corinthians 16:13 “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be (women) of courage; be strong.” And in speaking about the Proverbs 31 woman, he said, “But, if men be unjust, the thing will speak itself, ‘her own works will praise her in the gates’, openly before all the people: She leaves it to her own works to praise her, and does not court the applause of men. If her relations and neighbors hold their peace, her good works will proclaim her praise.”

Spurgeon again: “Thou lookest within, and thou sayest, ‘There is nothing acceptable here!’ But look at Christ, and see if there is not everything acceptable there. Thy sins trouble thee, but God has cast they sins behind His back, and thou are accepted in the Righteous One.” Psalm 25:21 “May integrity and uprightness protect me because my **hope** is in you.” 1 Peter 3:5-6 “For this is the way the holy women of the past **who put their hope in God** used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.”

Exodus 14:13-15 (Moses answered the complaining Israelites and God answered Moses) “Moses answered the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ¹⁴The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.’

¹⁵“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why are you crying out to me? **Tell the Israelites to move on.**’”

Habakkuk 3:17-18 “**Though** the fig tree does not bud and
there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,
¹⁸**yet I will rejoice in the LORD,**
I will be joyful in God my Savior.”

The ‘fig tree’ in Habakkuk is Israel—HAPPENING NOW: ► Isaiah 41:14-15a “Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I myself will help you, declares the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. ¹⁵See, I will make you into a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth.”

The covenant at Sinai was God’s plan to restore his blessing to the human race through the descendants of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 2:24), and it failed not because God’s plan failed, but because Israel failed to **trust** God and obey His will—just like Adam and Eve. But God’s promise to restore the blessing will ultimately succeed and God will give Israel a heart to trust Him.

What God permits, faith can joyfully accept: great faith equals the ability to suffer and endure trials. In a sermon about life's problems, John Hagee said, "How you conduct yourself in the problem will determine how long you stay there. How many of us have failed the spiritual third grade for the third time? **We have confused motion with progress!** The broken clock is right twice a day. We are to keep our eyes upon the *One* who promised." It is about trusting God to be *Who* He is and expecting Him to do those things that only He can do because of *Who* He is, as Joe Williams verbalized to us many times. And Spurgeon said, "So surely as the stars are fashioned by His hands, and their orbits fixed by Him, so surely are our trials allotted to us: He has ordained their season and their place, their intensity and the effect they shall have upon us."

Revelation 3:8 (God has placed before us an open door)—Oswald Chambers said, "Perseverance is more than endurance. It is endurance **combined with absolute assurance and certainty** that what we are looking for is going to happen." Hebrews 6:19 "*We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.*" We must be sure to know the Truth—what Jesus is, what Jesus did and what Jesus said—rather than what we feel!

1 Peter chapters 1-12 tell us that we can know our salvation is secure. And on that basis of security we can rejoice in trials, because we have the following:

1. an assured identity;
2. we have a hope (firm conviction 1 Peter 1:3-5 in the present) (Romans 5:9 for the future) and Jeremiah 29:11 (for all time in-between);
3. an inheritance (Ephesians 1:14 and 18);
4. we have a glorious joy (1 Peter 1:6-9); any suffering on earth is short—compared to eternity, and
5. we have a marvelous salvation (1 John 2:3-4).

Proverbs 23:18 "*There is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.*" Trust in God is not gambling; sincere **trust in Almighty God is a sure thing!** What He has promised that will He do, always—six questions to ponder:

Do we trust in Jesus' atoning death to save us?

Do we trust what is true is really true?

Do we trust God is in complete control?

Do we trust God will do everything He said He would do?

Do we trust God loves us?

Do we trust God's every word—even when it's frightening?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "Only those who obey can believe, and only those who believe can obey. Peter has to get out of the boat before he can believe."

“‘While there is life there is hope,’ the physician says, possibly adding, ‘While there is hope there is life.’ Hope has healed more diseases than any medicine,” said Henry van Dyke. And Spurgeon said, “He gives them two heavens—a heaven below in serving Him here, and a heaven above in delighting in Him forever.”

♥The true story is told of a California family who went mushroom picking one weekend. They ate the ‘shrooms’ and even gave some to their cat, who became sick. So that they would not get sick, the family went to the local emergency room and had their stomachs pumped—which is not a pleasant ordeal—been there, done that. When they returned home, their cat had given birth to nine baby kittens. Psalm 119:114 speaks of God’s word as our source of hope. Billy Graham in *Nearing Home* encouraged us to travel home with hope, and said about 2 Peter 1:5-8—“Impact those around you with hope.”

Hebrews 10:23 *“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.”* Are we to hold on because we’re good holder-onners? No. We are to hold on to the hope we profess, **because the one who promised is faithful!** God will keep His promises! Trust means a firm belief and complete confidence in God and His word, and it is a choice. Psalm 40:4 *“Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.”*

→There is stern warning about abandoning our faith—our trust in God—in 2 Peter 2:20-22 *“If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, **they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.** 21It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. 22Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit,’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.’”*

In the very last chapter of Job 42 in verse 12 it says that the LORD blessed the latter part of Job’s life more than the first (the end of a thing is more blessed than the beginning as Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 7:8 *“The end of a matter is better than its beginning and patience is better than pride.”*) With everything that he had endured, the persecuted, but praising prophet said these words in Job 19:25-27—*“I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. 26And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh **I will see God;** 27**I myself will see him with my own eyes**—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”*

This epitaph for Mr. Peas could easily represent any and all believers:

Peas is not here; He’s just a pod

Peas shelled out, and went to God!