

Christ Our Only Hope
Romans 15:1-13

Rom. 15:1 ¶ We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Rom. 15:2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

Rom. 15:3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me."

Rom. 15:4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Rom. 15:5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,

Rom. 15:6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. 15:7 Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Rom. 15:8 ¶ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,

Rom. 15:9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles,
and sing to your name."

Rom. 15:10 ¶ And again it is said,
"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."

Rom. 15:11 ¶ And again,
"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples extol him."

Rom. 15:12 ¶ And again Isaiah says,
"The root of Jesse will come,
even he who arises to rule the Gentiles;
in him will the Gentiles hope."

Rom. 15:13 ¶ 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.

Introduction: The Children's Sermon

- What is Christmas about?
- Why did Jesus come?
- Did He stay a baby?
- Where did Jesus End His life on earth?
- Did He stay dead?
- What does "Hope" mean?

hope | hōp |

noun

1 a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen : *he looked through her belongings in the hope of coming across some information* | *I had high hopes of making the Olympic team.*

• a person or thing that may help or save someone : *their only hope is surgery.*
• grounds for believing that something good may happen : *he does see some hope for the future.*

2 archaic a feeling of trust.

- **Elpis (Elpizo):** *To expect; to anticipate (usually with pleasure)*
- Christmas can be a discouraging time, reminding us of sins grip, our failures and real loss. There is hope.
- We are reminded at this time of the hope of those expecting Christ to come the first time. As well, we are reminded that as surely as He came the first time He will come again. **(DOUBLE FOCUS: We hope for His return for HE IS OUR HOPE!) – YOU'LL SEE THE INSEPARABILITY BETWEEN HOPE AND SCRIPTURE**
- Our FOCUS today is on the Christ of Hope who has come and will come again.

The Context for Hope: Real Life in Real Community (vv.1-2)

- A) Hope has a face
 - a. The Strong (must not take pleasures in themselves)
 - b. The Weak (to be built up into Christ – not self-pleasure)

- B) Hope bears fruit
 - a. **Phil.2:4-5**, *“4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*
(BY EXPRESSING HOPE IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY YOU PUT ON DISPLAY THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST)
 - b. Pleasure of Others

The Basis for Hope: The Scriptures (vv.3-4)

- A) Christ exemplifies Hope
 - a. God’s Will Above All
 - b. **Phil.2:5-11** ABOVE (Great Condescension – Incarnation) FOR REDEMPTION...
 - c. Pleasure in Sacrifice (Ps.69:9-10) – Also quoted in **John 2:17** (TEMPLE CLEANSING) – FOR HIS SUPREMACY
 - i. Reproach of Shame
 - ii. Reproach of Sin

- B) Christ is the point of Scripture
 - a. Relevant Now
 - b. Learning to Practice
 - c. Increasing in Hope (in light of any weakness or suffering)

The Power of Hope: God’s Pleasure (v.5)

- A) God grants all we need (FLOWS OUT OF SCRIPTURE)
 - a. **2 Peter 1:3,4**, *“3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”*
 - b. Evokes Trust

- B) God’s pleasure is unity in Christ (all other bases is a lie)
 - a. This is Agreement of Love (CHARITY)
 - b. Not Unanimity or Uniformity

The Purpose of Hope: God’s Glory (vv.6,7)

- A) God Wants our Unity so that He is Glorified
 - a. This does mean unanimity
 - b. As we center on Christ is should have the resounding “amen” of our lives.
 - c. Removing the focus of lesser things, to corporately set our minds on Christ
 - d. Central to right Christology

- B) God is Glorified when Christ is Treasured Among Us
 - a. Exemplified in our Action toward one another
 - b. If we hope in Christ, we know Christ is our only hope. As our only hope, we know we must walk as Christ did. To Treasure Christ is to be more likened to him.

The Satisfaction of Hope: Jesus Christ (vv.8-13)

A) Fulfillment

- a. **Romans 9:6-8**, “**6** But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, **7** and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”
8 This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.”
- b. Scripture
 - i. **V.9** - 2 Sam.22:50; Ps.18:49 (SONG OF VICTORY OF YAHWEH OVER BABYLON)
 - ii. **V.10** - Deut.32:43 (SONG OF MOSAIC COVENANT)
 - iii. **V.11** - Ps.117:1 (NATIONS ALWAYS IN VIEW – QUOTING ABOVE)
 - iv. **V.12** - Isa.11:10 (“BANNER” JOHN 3:14)
- c. God’s purpose – Glorifying

B) Provision

- a. Design has ALWAYS been for the nations
- b. Their end is praise (should be our end in giving the world Hope)
- c. No Hope outside of Christ
 - i. V.12
 - ii. **Eph.1:11-12**, “**11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, **12** so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.”

C) Treasuring (v.13)

- a. Realize Hope has a source: God
- b. Realize Hope is marked by Joy and Peace
 - i. When we lack Joy we show that our Treasure is elsewhere

- ii. When we lack Peace we show that our Trust is Elsewhere
- iii. What we see here is this: When your hope is realized, you will have Joy and Peace (CHRIST HAS COME AND HAS FULFILLED THE PROMISES OF SCRIPTURE AND IF YOU ARE HIS, YOUR HOPES SHOULD BE REALIZED. BUT ARE YOU LACKING JOY AND PEACE – CENTER YOUR HOPES BACK ON CHRIST IF YOU ARE HIS. IF YOU’RE NOT HIS, CEASE STRIVING FOR WHAT WILL NEVER FULFILL AND FIND YOUR HOPE IN CHRIST FOREVER!
- c. Realize Hope is realized through believing in Christ
- d. Realize Hope is empowered by the Holy Spirit and designed for abundance

Conclusion

- Realize that we often attempt to falsely satisfy this Hope during the Christmas season.
- First, Find your Hope in Christ alone by treasuring Him above all things, marked by Joy and Peace.
- Second, Express your Hope in Christ in the lives of others in the local church through unity.
- Third, Share your Hope in Christ with others by telling them the gospel unto belief.
- **GLORIFYING God by TREASURING Christ above all things and REACHING others that they may find lasting joy in Him!**