

Advent: Hope

[1Co 13:11-13 ESV] 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

I. Intro

- A. HOPE IS ALIVE!
- B. Hope is Not a Strategy
- C. Hope is not "A" Strategy, its the only strategy: Jeremy Weber, Army War College
- D. Jeremy Weber: "Yes, hope – standing alone, unmoored to any concrete action or contingency plans – is not a strategy. But we would do well to remember that when it comes down to it, hope is not just a strategy; it is the only strategy America really has, and it should spur us to action, instead of remaining paralyzed by endless, realist, what-ifs. When the signers of the Declaration of Independence put their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor on the line against the greatest military power on Earth, they certainly had no guarantee of a successful outcome. They did what they thought was right – what they had to do – and then they prayed and (yes) hoped for the best. Eleven years later, the Framers of the Constitution attempted an experiment unlike any other: government by the governed. They had no assurance this experiment would work out. As Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote 132 years later, the Constitution "is an experiment, as all life is an experiment. Every year, if not every day, we have to wager our salvation upon some prophecy based on imperfect knowledge.""
- E. Hope was alive since the promise of messiah was made, and remains alive today.
- F. Hope is what we have, and it brings joy!
- G. Hope:
 1. We HOPE in Christ
 2. We Hope in rescue
 3. We Hope in return
 4. We hope in faith with confidence!

II. Text

- A. Verse 11: GROWTH
 1. The Christian Life is about growth and life
 - a) We die to self, to be made alive in Christ
 - b) This is by FAITH, and faith begins to grow based upon what God does to prove himself
 - c) When you realize God can be trusted, faith grows up into Hope! Expectation
- B. Verse 12: REVELATION
 1. We don't know everything right now
 2. We don't have all the answers to all the questions, we see in a mirror dimly
 3. But through our expectation and experience we begin to see more clearly, and then there will be a day when all is made clear!
- C. Verse 13: REMAIN
 1. When everything is reduced to the basics of life with Christ, we see that faith, hope, and love matter above all things
 2. As long as we live, faith, hope, and love remain steadfast
 3. Faith: Certain of that which is unseen: Faith in the unseen God
 4. Hope: Another way to use the word translated as hope (elpence) is expectation. There is great expectation in a maturing faith walk.
 5. Love: our love grows as our faith and hope grows

III. Points

- A. Hope in the rescue from Messiah

1. [Luk 2:8-20 ESV] 8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. 10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" 15 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. 17 And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.
 2. All of heaven erupted in praise at the announcement that MESSIAH HAD BEEN BORN!
 3. This is the proper response to the news of Christ, HOPE IS ALIVE!
- B. Hope in the returning King Jesus
1. Our GREAT HOPE is in Christ's soon return
 2. [Tit 2:11-15 ESV] 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, 12 training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, 13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. 15 Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.
 3. Just as all heaven erupted in praise after generations of anticipation, today we wait with expectation and hope.
 4. Do you have hope today?
 5. Do you know someone that needs hope today?
 6. Here is your assignment:
 - a) Reach out to those you know need to experience the refreshing relationship with Christ!
 - b) Reach out to those who have yet to respond to the gospel.
 - c) Invite people to attend church with you, to have coffee with you, to see your joy.
 - d) Its time to set aside everything holding us back and reach out to out friends.
- IV. Close
- A. Hope and Joy can be restored
 - B. Find peace with God, and share peace with God