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## Faith Hope and Love

We've been talking about faith for quite some time, and my goal all along was to get to hope, and then onto love. Because these three things go together. These three things remain for us now in Christ. And faith must lead to love or it is meaningless. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 that faith without love is nothing. Paul says in Galatians 5:6 that "circumcision and uncircumcision mean nothing, but only faith working through love". Paul says in 1 Timothy 1:5 that the "goal of all of his instruction is love from a pure heart and unfeigned faith".

So we've been heading towards love, which is the manifestation in the earth, through a body, of all that faith has come to see. And hope is our glorious process. Hope is what we've been saved into. Paul says "in hope we have been saved" A hope of that manifestation. Not a hope to go to a place. Not a hope to get things. But a hope of glory – the expression of Christ.

But you can't get to hope, and you certainly can't get to love, without understanding faith. And I can tell you with no uncertainty in my mind that my entire life, up until recently, was lived without even the foggiest notion of what faith, hope, or love really were. And so I could never understand why these three remain.

We've talked about how all things need to be defined by this Person, and our relationship to Him, in Him.

And I don't know if I'm going to spend a lot of time on hope and love right now or not. It may not be the right time. But I do want to at least touch on it this week. And we may spend more time on it.

But I want to say this very plainly. If you've missed faith, then you'll certainly miss hope and love. It just doesn't make any sense. And if you miss the cross, then you'll miss faith altogether. Nothing makes any spiritual sense apart from Christ and Him crucified.

So let me just review, one more time, what we've been saying about faith. The cross has killed you. The cross was a pardon, but it wasn't an "oh, pardon me" situation. You were pardoned because you were killed. You were forgiven because you were crucified. The cross crucified the entire first creation. It didn't destroy it in such a way that it ceased to exist...but it rendered it null and void and permanently cut it off from the life of God. And it doesn't exist in Christ. In Christ, all of Adam was crucified, dead, and buried.

2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:17ish – "when one died, all died". John 12 "when I am lifted up, I will draw all men to Myself". We're all going down together.

And then, those who are born again, are actually BORN AGAIN. They are given an entirely different life altogether. They are born again. Born from above. Your body was born into the world. Your body was born into New Jersey. But now you've been born into Christ. You've been born from above, born of the heavens.

The substance of the heavens, Christ Himself, has become your very life by new birth. Scriptures says that you are now seated there, raised up with Him. You are now **on** the earth, but **in** Christ. You are now in the world, but not of the world. You are now seated in heavenly places, though for a time you will be in an earthen suit, an earthen vessel, an earthen tent.

But the tent is not what you are. And that's not where you really are. Remember the cave-man analogy. I'm gonna give it to you one more time because I know some people still haven't heard it.

#### GIVE CAVE MAN ANALOGY.

Now this man has been taken out of one habitation and placed into another. And faith is the seeing of where He now is. Faith is the spiritual seeing of a place where he already is. Faith isn't sitting in the cave trying to believe you're in a house. That's called "a waste of time". Faith is seeing the house where he is with the eyes of the heart as the Spirit unveils that house.

The Spirit of God is revealing to this man where he is. And, for maybe 75 years, this cave man will wear his cave-man suit while he's in this house. But then he will drop the suit (the death of the body) and be entirely of the house.

Now, if you were to see a man sitting in a house, but by everything he thought, felt, acted, and said, you could tell that he still thought he was in a cave. You would have to say to that man that he was full of imaginations.

And this is what I tried to say last week. Imaginations are anything at all that are not according to faith. Imaginations are anything you think that is not true of you because of who you are in and who's in you. Those are imaginations.

And I'm not saying that the cave is imaginary. But you are not of the cave. No, the cave is not imaginary, but for you to think that you are there, to define yourself by it – THAT is vain imagination. The cave is very real for those who live in the cave. The earth is all there is for those who are of the earth. But for the person who lives in the house all things have been made new. Jesus says "they are not of the earth, even as I am not of the earth". So, to whatever extent he still thinks he's of the cave IS imaginary. The cave is real, but he's not of the cave. This guy's heart still thinks he's of the cave, but that's an imagination.

- 2CORINTHIANS 10:5 Casting down "imaginations", and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God (*not just a person, but a place where you are now living. The Father's house*) and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;
- ROMANS 1:21 ...mankind became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
- COLOSSIANS 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ.
- Ephesians 4:17 ...no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind

Wouldn't you agree that if you saw someone sitting in a finished house, but still in everything he did, thought, and said he acted like he was still in a cave...wouldn't you agree that that person had an active imagination?

- You might even say that this person needed to cast down some imaginations that exalted themselves against the true knowledge of the House.
- You might even say that this person had become vain in his imaginations.

- You might say that he had been spoiled through vain deceit, the traditions of cave-men, and the elements of the cave, and not according to the House.
- You might even say that he was walking according to the futility of his blinded eyes.

Faith sees a finished house. Faith sees where you are, and what is already done, already real. Faith doesn't make it real. Faith just beholds it and evidences it in the earth.

God already sees you and completely defines you by this house. Everything of the old is separated from His seeing of you. What then is the problem? We do not yet know AS WE ARE KNOWN. And that is why Paul tells us in a couple places that we are coming to know as we are already known. Faith, a spiritual view of spiritual reality, sees all things as they already are. Comes to know as we are already known.

Faith sees a new life, a new creation, a new man. Faith sees according to the judgment of the cross according to the living and the dead. Faith sees where you now are. And we are to grow in faith...grow in our view of all that is real. That's the only growth you're going to find in the Scriptures. You grow in faith. You grow in the knowledge of God. You grow up into Him according to the revealing of Him.

So, what remains for us who have been totally translated out of a cave and been placed into this finished house, been placed into Christ. What remains for us? Well, now its just really three things.

Now remains these three. Pay very close attention to the word "now". It is always used to describe what is now true in Christ. You will often see the writers of the New Testament saying, "formerly this...BUT NOW". But now. Well, now in Christ, for those of us to whom the entire world has been crucified by the cross, there remains these three.

There is faith, the seeing of, the comprehending, the spiritual viewing of all things finished.

There is hope, our glorious expectation that all that is finished in this house, will be experienced and manifested in and through me.

There is love, which is the actual manifestation of all that faith sees, and all that hope expects. And the greatest of these is the manifestation. The greatest of these is love. In fact love becomes the measure of the Man. Love is the measure of all things. We'll get to that, but lets look at hope first.

You know, I'm just going to say this. I wasn't going to say a lot about hope because I didn't want to step on people's eschatological toes. Maybe you didn't know you have eschatological toes. What I mean is...we, as the church, have pushed so much off to some time in the future in some place called heaven, that we've almost entirely stripped the word "hope" of all of its biblical meaning.

There, I said it. Any complaints can be made to Colin Neidert. He told me to say it.

No, but its true. We have put hope far off in "Beula-Land". Pie in the sky. One day in glory. And we haven't seen Christ in us the hope of glory. We've even taken that Scripture and pushed it way off into the future.

Now I don't want to take your pie in the sky from you, if that's what you really want to believe. But I'd rather have you know that you're sitting in that pie right now. You're seated there in Christ right now. And I don't want to get into all of that this morning...because if there's

anything a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian wants to fight over its eschatology, or the lack there of. Eschatology – the study of the last things. I don't want into that fight. I have some opinions, I'm sure you do too.

But one thing that is not an opinion is that true hope is the expectation of the appearing, the experiencing, the manifesting, of something that you already have. Something that you already have and that the Spirit is revealing. A salvation that you have that is ready to be revealed. And that appearing can begin immediately after you are born of His life. You don't have to drop your earth suit first. You're already in the house. This doesn't await the dying of the body. On the contrary, this hope was actually given to us in the body so that there would be an appearing of it in the earth.

Let me just define this term for you. Hope. The biblical definition of hope is almost entirely different from how we use it. We usually use the word "hope" like we would use the word "wish". I hope Aunt Betty won't fall down the stairs again. I hope that one day I'll own a Toyota Hybrid with gas prices the way they are. I haven't brushed in a while, I hope I don't get gingivitis. You see, that is the word "wish".

The biblical word hope has nothing of that definition. In fact, it would be much more accurate to translate the word hope into English as "expectation". In fact, many literal translations use the word expectation for that very reason.

I had heard that several places, and then, the other day, I was studying in one of my Greek textbooks and came across this footnote by William Mounce – one of the premier Greek scholars of the day.

And I quote ~ this word " 'hope' is not a wondering if something will happen, but the 'confident anticipation' of what we know will surely come to pass." It is nothing like "how Elvis fans 'hope' that he did not really die".

So what is our expectation? What is our confident anticipation? What is our hope? Our hope is the glory of God. What is glory? Is it a place you'll go when you die? No. Is it a shiny light that will glow around your head? It is the manifestation of God, the appearing of Christ, through His body. Glory – the expression, the manifestation, the demonstration, the appearing of the Lord in such a way that He can be seen or experienced. That's what we are called to. Our calling is a calling unto glory. And you can't separate glory from the Lord of glory.

Paul prays in Ephesians 1:17 that we would understand the "hope of His calling...which is the riches of glory IN THE SAINTS". Our hope and the Father's inheritance are two sides of the same coin. They are both the increased manifestation of Jesus Christ.

We are like a field that a farmer has planted a crop in. What is the inheritance of the soil? You could say that the crop is. What is the inheritance of the Farmer? The ground that brings forth the crop.

In Him, you find the fullness of your inheritance, which is His fullness. In you He finds the fullness of His inheritance...which is the harvest of Christ. You, the land, are what brings forth the fullness of the crop.

Your inheritance, the inheritance of the land, **is** his fullness. His inheritance is the land which shall manifest his fullness. Does that make sense?

Let me say it again: If you plant a crop in the earth – the inheritance of the earth is the increase of the crop. The inheritance of the farmer is the land that will bring forth that increase.

What does Ephesians 1:17 say? “18 *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the **glory** of His inheritance **in the saints,**”

Brothers and sisters, that is our hope. Our hope is the manifestation of this planted Seed. Do you see that? That is our glorious expectation. Now can you understand why Paul says that the mystery of the gospel is “**CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE (expectation) OF GLORY!**”.

Halleluiah! That is our hope. Now you can still hope that God will give you a nice Toyota. But that’s not the hope of glory. That’s not our glorious expectation. That’s a nice wish.

And coming to understand that will shed some wonderful light on a great number of Scriptures. Like this one that always tripped me up.

Galatians 5:5 “For we through the Spirit, **by faith**, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.” Wait a minute Paul, I thought we already “were the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus”. Wait a minute Paul, I thought you said that “Christ had been made unto us righteousness”.

Yes, but by faith, by growing in the spiritual comprehension of this finished work, we are awaiting a MANIFESTATION of that righteousness. Not just this unseen “status” that I suppose must be true somehow, but a powerful demonstration of righteousness in us who walk according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh.

Here’s a few more Scriptures:

- 1 Peter 1:13 “Fix your hope (expectation) entirely on the grace that IS (that’s the literal tense there) being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”.
- 1Peter 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”,
- Romans 5:2 “through whom also we have the access by the faith into this grace in which we have stood, and we boast on the hope of the glory of God.”
- Titus 2:13 “looking for the blessed hope and manifestation of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”,

So that is our hope...the manifestation of the Seed that was planted. Christ in you, the HOPE of glory. A hope that is ever being realized. An expectation that is turning into manifestation.

And what does that manifestation look like? It looks like love. Love – the nature, character, power, and presence of God. Are there other things that are the manifestation of God? Yes, there is healing, and deliverance, and signs and wonders, but even all of that falls under the banner of love.

God is love. And those who abide in love, abide in God. Love is the measure of manifestation. Love. Not the fickle human emotion. Not nice things. Not taking out the trash for somebody. Not nice words. I’m talking about spiritual substance here. I’m talking about love that no man

can drum up. I'm talking about the love of God poured out in our hearts. And that love can move you to take out trash. But taking out trash isn't the measure of love.

Seeing turns into expectation turns into manifestation. What did I just say? I said faith, turns into hope, turns into love. And the greatest of these is manifestation. The greatest of these is love.

And If I have faith to move mountains, but have not love...I have nothing. Why? Because unless we are manifesting Him who is love, then we are still manifesting him who is nothing. Halleluiah!

Love is the measure of Christ. As Jesus says "they will know you are my disciples because of faith. Nope. Because of hope. No. They will know you are my disciples because of a manifestation of who I am. They will know because love.

1 John says "by this you can know that you are abiding in Him, you love the brethren." The measure of love is the measure of Him.

Again, Paul says

- Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.
- Ephesians 3:17 I pray that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; [and] that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- 2Thessalonians 1:3 I thank God that your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows [ever] greater;
- 1 Tim 1:5 "the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and an unfeigned faith"

Love is the harvest of the Lord. Not "free love" like in the 60's (before my time). Not human love at all. Love – the nature of God, manifest in the earth, manifest as the glory of God in the creation. Love the expression of the planted Seed. Love the goal of our instruction.

And NOW these three remain – faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.