



SONS & DAUGHTERS
The Empowering Spirit
Week 5

Opening prayer

Prayer for the persecuted church:

Prayer for a local church:

This morning we pray for our brother Sabo Cortez and Covenant Grace Church.

Closing prayer

Introduction:

The last several weeks we've been focusing on the facts of the gospel, what is now true of you because of what Christ has done. Today, we're going to focus on the experiential

aspect of believing the gospel. We experience the facts of the gospel, things that are true whether we feel them or not, through the Person of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Is your Christian life filled with joy and peace? Or do you live as though your actions will make God or other people approve of you? Do you have an independent spirit? Do you find yourself overly critical and judgmental? Are

you dominated by fears and anxieties? Do you find it hard to forgive others?

Now, if any of the above questions describe you, it's because of this — the great problem of self. When you trust you can do it, you tend to become self-righteous. So, those questions simply reveal the degree to which you've moved away from justification by faith alone (the gospel) to an orphan mentality.

Illustration

What if CPS just removed children from dangerous circumstances and put them in a safe environment and that's it? They didn't actually place them in families, but just placed in padded rooms where they wouldn't get hurt and would be fed. They even might get some toys thrown in. Unless the children were older. Then they'd just remove them and set them out on their own. Is that the help these children need? Or do they need something greater? They need to be adopted into a family.

Some of us think God works like this hypothetical version of the CPS, that He just removes us from the dangers of hell and damnation and then lets us fend for ourselves. In other words, we think like orphans.

Understanding that we are God's children helps us cultivate joy and peace.

Big Idea: The powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit reassures, reminds,

comforts and applies the gospel to our hearts.

Romans 15:13

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.

Through the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit we can abound in hope. Abound — flourish, overflow, to be alive with. Is that the

kind of hope you have? Would you say you're overflowing with hope? So, how do we get there?

First, we have to go back to step one:

1. You only have joy and peace when you trust the facts of the gospel.

The first thing we have to believe are the facts. Paul tells us in Romans that what is true of Jesus is now true of us, because we are now in Christ. How does that give us hope practically speaking?

Romans 6:9

⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

- This is a fact of the gospel? Why did this fill me with joy this last week?

Romans 15:13

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.

2. ■ You can have joy and peace because God is a God of hope.

That's why we can trust Him. But to actually trust God and have hope as you trust Him is to understand His nature and character better and to understand the nature of hope itself.

Job 13:15

**¹⁵ Though he slay me, I will hope in him;
yet I will argue my ways to his face.**

Now, why could Job say that?

I read the other day that one of the most common reasons people who once claimed to be Christians leave the church and abandon faith in God Himself is for this very reason. They feel God has been unfair to them. They had expectations about how God should act and when God didn't act the way they thought He should act, they lost hope. They lost faith.

Whenever you feel that God is not acting the way you think He should, first of all, realize that this is an accusation against God. Second, realize what this might be telling you

about yourself — that maybe you need to understand God better. Maybe your disappointment comes from an inadequate understanding of who God is.

Example:

Think of all the groups throughout history who have predicted a specific return of Christ and gathered to wait for Him, only to be disappointed. Now, the Bible is awfully clear that no one knows when Christ will return. So, when these followers are disillusioned by this

it's because they had a false view of what God is like and what He will do.

Job trusted that God is always fair and just and true. If you're not convinced God is good even when your circumstances are bad, then you will lose hope. And to abandon hope is to abandon God, because He is the God of hope.

Now that we've seen what unbiblical or sub-biblical hope can do, what is biblical hope?

Psalm 78:7

**7 so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;**

First and foremost, biblical hope is anchored in God Himself and who He is. That's first. And because of who He is, because of His nature (God is love, God is just, God is kind, etc.) He does what He does. He does what He does because of who He is.

Now, we can have hope because of what He has done. In other words, our hope is set in the gospel and the gospel is set in the nature and character of God.

Do you have confidence in the facts of the gospel? If so, then you have true solid biblical hope. The gospel reveals who God is and why we can hope in Him with an abounding kind of hope, not a cross your fingers kind of hope. And we can abound in this hope because of the Holy Spirit. We're finally getting to the experiential, hope we experience.

Romans 15:13

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.

3. Only through the power of the Holy Spirit can you abound in hope.

I think it's so easy to forget that even our trust in the gospel is dependent upon the Holy

Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit who cries out in our hearts that God is our Father, that we're His children. That's the Holy Spirit's ministry.

Have you been depending upon yourself to feel that way? Well, you're looking to yourself again rather than trusting the Holy Spirit.

It's the Holy Spirit who allows us daily to fight the lies of the enemy by reminding us of the truths of the gospel. Maybe that's a disappointing type of experience for some of you, but the first thing the Holy Spirit is going

to do is point your mind back to the facts of the gospel. Why is that?

Think of some daily lies you might struggle with, such as being worthy or feeling condemned. What's interesting about feeling worthy or feeling condemned is that they are both the fruit of the same lie.

If you feel worthy that is clearly a sign you're trusting in your own self-righteousness to be accepted by God. If you feel condemned it's clearly a sign that you're trusting in your own

self-righteousness to be accepted by God. And that's the lie — that you can be accepted by God on the basis of your own righteousness.

So, feeling worthy or feeling condemned — both are lies. It's just in the first lie you think you're successful and in the second lie you think you're a failure.

What's the truth of the gospel that fights this lie?

Titus 3:5

⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

Illustration

- *Dead Man Walking Analogy*