



## Rooted Series Part 4

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Rooted in The Church - January

Throughout the month of January, we have worked our way through our series entitled, “Rooted”. We discussed many factors of being a Christian and being rooted in the Church, Being Rooted in Christ, and Being Rooted in Love and Today I want to continue our series with our emphasis today on being Rooted in Hope. Please turn in your Bible to the Book of Romans chapter 5, beginning in verse 1; we will be reading through verses 1-5 this morning.

## Please Stand for the Reading of God's Word

Romans 5:1-5, "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup>Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup>and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup>and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

(Let Us Pray... You May Be Seated)

Notice with me the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 5:4-5, "Character produces Hope, and Hope does not put us to shame" Church family, we have a Hope today that does not put us to shame and Hope has a Name! Love has a Name! Victory has a Name! Redemption has a Name! And His Name is Jesus! And it is Jesus who is our everlasting Hope!

The Apostle Paul declared in **Philippians 2:5-11**, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by

becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Ladies and Gentlemen, every person who has ever lived, is currently living or will ever live will have to bow their knee; either on this side of eternity or on the other side. Either in this life or in the next... And it Christ's glorious life, cruel death, and victorious resurrection and ascension that gives us Hope in this Life and in the Life that is to come! Many pray for miracles but I would like to suggest that many of us are a living miracle if we were all willing to stop and think about it.

The fact that you are still here is a miracle; the fact that you survived the highs and lows of life is a miracle; the fact that Christ loved each and every one of us enough to be willing to meet us in the muck and mire of our unregenerate state and save us by His Blood, fill us with His Spirit, and Call us unto Himself is a miracle that far too many of us overlook. Miracles in our lives are released by having our lives Rooted in Hope. If we are Rooted in Christ then are Rooted In Hope... So point #1 this morning...

Point #1 - Sometimes the Greatest Miracle of being Rooted in Hope is still having a Praise to give when no one is aware of the Price you had to Pay to get it!

- a. In the Gospel of Saint Mark 14:3-9, the text records the following story, “<sup>3</sup>And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. <sup>4</sup>There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the ointment wasted like that? <sup>5</sup>For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they scolded her. <sup>6</sup>But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>7</sup>For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. <sup>8</sup>She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. <sup>9</sup>And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”
- b. A few points in this text that I would like to point out; first off, notice the self-righteous indignance of those at the table who ridiculed this woman for her act but they themselves were eating

at the table of a man who was a Leper which was strictly forbidden by community code per the Law of Moses... Notice the hypocrisy!

- c. Secondly, their reference to the ointment being worth 300 denarii; one denarii was the daily wage paid for a day laborer. But in their arrogance, they missed the point of the act. One denarii was the wage paid daily to men who were day laborers which tells me that, she being a woman, it took her much longer than 300 days to save up enough money to buy something that expensive to then in turn come and pour it upon the head of Christ. It is very possible that it took this woman years to save that much to do so. Those at the table minimized her act of worship and tried to use the poor as a bargaining chip to hide their true intentions! They did not see the true value of her act because they saw the cost of the Oil being offered but not the cost of the Worship being offered.
- d. Church Family, there is a price to be paid for a Praise that has Worth! There is a price to be paid for a Praise that has Eternal Value! A cheap Praise is birthed from a cheap experience! A powerful Praise is birthed from a painful experience! To have a Praise that touches Heaven, you must be willing endure the Pain of keeping your Praise when matters of the Earth overwhelm you!

- e. If you want a Praise that has value then you must first value the Progenitor of Praise; the Progenitor of Praise is standing on the Promises of the Word in spite of the Problems in your World.
- f. The Apostle John declared in the **Book of Revelation 4:9-11**,  
“And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.””
- g. And like the 24 Elders, my crown was built to be cast upon the ground! We, as Christians, will receive a Crown of Life that Jesus spoke of in Revelation 2:10 and that Crown is fashioned by our willingness to endure suffering, attacks of the devil, imprisonment for our Faith, testing, tribulation, and difficulties in this life! And even death as Martyrs for the Testimony of Christ! A Praise that has value is birthed when we choose to stand on the Promises of the Word in spite of the Problems in this World.

- h. And like the woman with the Alabaster Flask, I choose to still have a Praise to give when no one is aware of the price I had to pay to be able to lift my hands this morning!
- i. So often what you see when I lift my hands is a sacrifice; as the writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 13:15, “Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of Praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips that acknowledge his name.”
- j. My Praise is valuable because my Praise is birthed out of Sacrifice and Sacrifice is Painful! I Praise through my fears, through my doubts, through my mistakes, through my tears, through my brokenness, through my loss, through my grief, through my questions, through my circumstances, through my pain, through the accusations, through the rumors, through the gossip, through the backbiting, through the pain of betrayal; you will never know the true value of my Praise because you will never know the price I had to pay to keep it. And like this woman and just like you, no one knows the true cost of your Praise because no one knows the true story of the pain that you had to endure to keep your Praise.
- k. And for many of us, the fact that we still have a Praise to give is a miracle in itself....

1. Sometimes the Greatest Miracle of being Rooted in Hope is still having a Praise to give when no one is aware of the Price you had to Pay to get it and for others, the Price you had to Pay to Keep It!

**Point #2 - Sometimes the Greatest Miracle of being Rooted in Hope is Wrestling with being Completely Helpless all the while being Completely Hopeful!**

- a. The Prophet Habakkuk in Habakkuk chapter 1 is struggling with the situation of his nation and circumstances of his people!

Notice the helpless pleas of Habakkuk in verses 2-4,

“O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you “Violence!” and you will not save? <sup>3</sup>Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong?

Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. <sup>4</sup>So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.

- b. The bottom line of these few verses is simple... “Lord what are you doing?” Lord are you aware? Are you paying attention? Are you really in control? Do you really have a plan? Do you really intend to intervene? Are you going to do anything to address the situation of my life?



- c. If we are to all be honest today, I would dare to say that we have all asked one of the previous questions in times of despair and frustration. But notice that in spite of Habakkuk's helpless despair that the Lord speaks a word of Hope!
- d. Habakkuk 1:5 - "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told."
- e. Here we have Habakkuk frustrated, questioning and wondering if God is really there and then the Lord responds with a revelatory insight that we all need to cling to today! Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if I told.
- f. Psalm 55:22 - Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved!
- g. There are moments in life that the Lord allows helpless moments which we, as Spirit Filled Believers, should view as an opportunity to generate a hope filled mindset! If you aren't willing to endure the Pressure then you are incapable of embracing the Promise!
- h. The Helplessness of our Circumstance does not negate the Faithfulness of our Christ! Our temporary Circumstances do not alter His Eternal Character!

- i. Notice the Words written by the Apostle Paul in **2 Corinthians 4:7-11** - <sup>7</sup> But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. <sup>8</sup> We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; <sup>9</sup> persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup> always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. <sup>11</sup> For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
- j. We are afflicted but not crushed! We are perplexed but not in despair, we are persecuted but not forsaken, we are struck down but not destroyed! We are the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ and this old Gospel Ship called the Church was built to survive the Storms of Life! Jesus said that **Matthew 16:18**, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” And if Christ is building His Church today then there is no power in Heaven, in Earth, or in Hell that has the power to stop us from accomplishing our mission!
- k. Sometimes the greatest gift God can ever give us is the Gift of Helplessness because it is our Helplessness that forces our dependency on His Faithfulness!

- l. And as Joshua declared to the Nation of Israel so do I declare to you today! Joshua 24:15, “Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”
- m. And as for me as your Pastor and as the Pastor of this great house, The Assembly West Monroe will serve the Lord!
- n. Not a government system, not a political party, not a philosophical ideology, and not New Age theology that undermines the Deity of Christ and Subverts the Power of His Glorious Church! We Will Serve The Lord Almighty!  
Hallelujah!
- o. King David declared in Psalm 24:7-10, “<sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. <sup>8</sup>Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle! <sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. <sup>10</sup>Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory!” And His Name is Jesus!
- p. Sometimes the greatest miracle of being Rooted in Hope is Wrestling with being completely helpless all the while being completely hopeful!

In closing, Pastor Brad will you come...

Point #3- Sometimes the Greatest Miracle of being Rooted in Hope is not when your Prayers are Answered, but rather when they go Unanswered...

a. Let us observe the words written by The Apostle Paul in 2

Corinthians 12:7-10 - “<sup>7</sup>So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. <sup>8</sup>Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup>But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.<sup>10</sup> For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

b. Notice the words of Paul in this text, “<sup>8</sup>Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. <sup>9</sup>But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

- c. The hardest dynamic of Faith to endure is learning to embrace the fact that not all of our prayers will be answered. Every situation will not always turn out how we desired or prayed for it to be. But could Unanswered Prayers be a blessing?
- d. Can it be that some of life's greatest difficulties position us for our greatest revelation of His ability to walk with us through our crisis? An old country song sang by Garth Brooks has a lyric that says, "Some of God's Greatest Gifts are Unanswered Prayer".
- e. And the longer I have lived, the more I've come to realize that sometimes the Greatest Miracle is not when your Prayers are Answered, but rather when they go Unanswered... Not to say that He doesn't answer prayer but rather when He answers it differently than we prayed. When we prayed for a miracle of healing but the healing didn't come. Or when we prayed for a marriage to be restored but it crumbles. Or a child goes wayward and after years of prayer, it seems that they are not closer to Christ than when you first began praying.
- f. But even though He didn't manifest a miracle of healing, you are learning His ever present ability to walk with you through the grief and sorrow of loss, all the while knowing that you could not have navigated the grief without His help.

- g. Or when the marriage crumbled, you learned that He is a restorer to the broken hearted and is able to help you put your life back together. Or when your child is still running from Christ and you have had to learn to turn their wayward ways over to Christ so that you can rest in His Peace.
- h. Perhaps God doesn't always answer our prayers in the exact fashion that we prayed for Him to respond because there are some things in life that you will only learn when He doesn't answer the way you prayed for Him to.
- i. This does not make Him cruel; it makes Him considerate because you would never know Him the way you do now had He always answered your prayers the way you prayed...
- j. The Trials of life and the difficulties we face position us to totally depend on Him. As Paul wrote, "...he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
- k. Church Family, sometimes the Greatest Miracle is not when your Prayers are Answered, but rather when they go Unanswered... Because when He doesn't answer like we asked, rest in the fact that sometimes the greatest miracle is not what you prayed for to happen but rather, the greatest miracle is when He helps you walk through the Fire and you come out the other side with not even the smell of smoke for He truly is the God of Hope...