

Romans 12:12

“Rejoicing in Hope”

So good morning, it is so good to be back with you today, Pastor Tim and Maddie had to go out of town today and so Laury and I get the opportunity to spend time with you today; there really is no place like home!

We are continuing in our study of the book of Romans, Pastor Tim is all about discipleship, that is so important to him and the book of Romans is really all about discipleship.

So lets look at our subject passage;

***Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.
Romans 12:12***

Hope is an amazing quality, if you think about it you can go from tired, discouraged and withdrawn in just a couple of seconds to energized and grateful to be alive. It all depends on whether or not you have hope. The thoeer thing about hope is that it is not constant at the same level, it comes and goes.

Sometimes I have a lot of hope and other times I have little hope and its not hard to tell which condition I am in. you only have to spend a little time with me to know where my hope level is at. My hope level is evident in my attitude and the way I look. Hope is the way I see things, hope is an assessment of how I view a particular situation, it is what looks real to me at the moment. Either I believe something good is going to happen or not.

So it is to a group of people that are facing some real tough times that Paul says. “in hope, rejoice!” he was reminding them that the hope and the joy hope produces is vital to persevering in hard times.

Without hope, you will run out of the energy to keep going!

So;

1. What is Hope?

It is real easy to confuse hope with faith, they are deeply related but they are not the same thing. Both hope and faith are founded on God's word but you could say that;

Faith is the grace to act and hope is the grace to wait.

Faith guides my actions in the moment, by faith I do this or that, by faith I obey what God has told me to be confident that He will do all He has promised He will do, but hope opens my eyes to see the unseen, to see God's heart towards me, to see Him in action around me. Hope helps me to see that what God says, He will do...

I have hope that God and His plans are always for my good.

For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope Jeremiah 29:11

2. Where do I find hope?

Hope naturally comes from the mind of the Spirit.

For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:6

Hope is not something I generate up by trying to be positive, hope is something I "see" it is NOT just something I believe. Hope comes because God opens the eyes of my heart and I see the truth, it is right there in front of me. Hope changes the world I see, hope causes changes the world I live in, it changes the way I view the problem, my self and the way I view God's heart towards me.

Hope happens in the twinkle of an eye, God opens my heart, I see, not gradually but "right now!" the Spirit helps me to see circumstances the way God sees them.

Faith grows; hope is opened eyes! I see what God is going to do, discouragement or the lack of courage drops off and I see and know God has a plan and it is good.,.

Faith grows, hope is opened eyes...

I find hope in a revelation of Jesus Christ! Im

3. Seeing the future.

In this passage Paul was pointing the people to the hope of eternal life, and he wanted them to keep their suffering in perspective, and it is the same with us. Keep what you are going through in perspective...

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Romans 8:18-25

To us, all the problems we have pale when compared to what we have in the resurrection and eternal glory waiting for us. In hope we trade the pleasures and treasures of this age for the new bodies and eternal joy in heaven.

I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. Acts 24:15

in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, Titus 1:2

teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ Titus 2:12-13

Jesus put it this way; ***Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be Matthew 6:19-21***

Hope understands that in the most intense suffering, it is temporary, it will soon be cast aside when we step into the presence of God...

4. Seeing the unseen.

Now we don't just hope for when we get to heaven, we hope that God's goodness will break out in to this world also, in our marriages, our health, our finances...

Without hope we would despair!

***I would have lost heart, unless I had believed
That I would see the goodness of the LORD
In the land of the living. Psalms 27:13***

And then he said;

***Wait on the LORD;
Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen your heart;
Wait, I say, on the LORD! Psalms 27:14***

This is an example of someone who received hope because showed him the unseen;

Now the king of Syria was making war against Israel; and he consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place."⁹ And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that you do not pass this place, for the Syrians are coming down there."¹⁰ Then the king of Israel sent someone to the place of which the man of God had told him. Thus he warned him, and he was watchful there, not just once or twice.

¹¹ Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was greatly troubled by this thing; and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?"

¹² And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedroom."

¹³ So he said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan."

¹⁴ Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

¹⁶ So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2 Kings 6:8-17

5. The power of hope.

Hope is so powerful, that hope that understands, that sees what God is doing can take us from the grip of depression and grief, this hope can enable us to stand in the midst of difficult circumstances, in our marriages, in our finances...

The greatest enemy of people who are depressed or hopeless, is that this will never end, there is no hope, no way out, my misery will never end. But hope assures us that we can be blessed by God, our circumstances are not the ruler of our life, that the power of God is not effected by the economy or the very things I see with my natural eyes. I may not be exempt from what is happening around me, but there is a greater reality that is at work around me, that blesses me, gives me peace and causes me to have a hope that makes no sense.

So where do we find this hope? It is gathered in private worship;

¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Ephesians 5:18-20

It is in the presence of God that the Spirit corrects our thinking, that our world is turned right side up, it is the constant presence of the Spirit that brings us victory in the face of adversity, recognizing the flesh will always have problems, but in the presence of God there is peace and an understanding that my life is in His hands...

And there we rejoice that God is doing something very good.