

Romans: Unashamed; the righteous shall live by faith

Romans 15:8-13 Ppt 41

MPS: **Hope is our companion that anchors our soul**

OPEN

- **The book *Pilgrim's Progress* has been** printed and read more than any other book in history only second to the bible.
- **Written by John Bunyan**
- Nov 1660 arrested for preaching the gospel as an unlicensed minister it ended up a twelve-year imprisonment cutting him off from his family and church;
- The narrator of the book explains that he fell asleep in the wilderness and dreamed of a man named Christian, who was tormented by spiritual anguish. A spiritual guide named Evangelist visits Christian and urges him to leave the City of Destruction. Evangelist claims that salvation can only be found in the Celestial City, known as Mount Zion.
- John Bunyan names nearly every character in *Pilgrim's Progress* so that the moment you hear the name, you instantly know exactly what spiritual reality or danger that person represents—like neon signs that preach the sermon before they ever open their mouths.

Christian and Hopeful in Pilgrim's Progress

- They had been walking along the River of God - the **River of God** symbolized the refreshing, life-giving way of obedience to God's Word,
- "Their way followed along the bank of this river. Christian and his companion, Hopeful, walked it with great delight. They also drank of the water of the river, which was pleasant and refreshing to their weary spirits."
- Christian and Hopeful grow weary by rocks and hard to walk places and they noticed a smoother path running parallel—**By-Path Meadow**. Tempted by ease, they leave the firm riverbank of God's commanded way and step onto the soft, deceptive grass. Soon a storm arises, the meadow floods, and they stray far from the River, only to be captured by **Giant Despair** and locked in **Doubting Castle**.
- The giant secured them in a very dark, nasty and stinking dungeon in his castle. He locked them in a cage suspended from the ceiling, withheld food and water for several days, and beat them repeatedly.

- One day the giant, when he saw they were in extreme pain because of the wounds he had inflicted the day before, he told them, “Since you are never likely to get out of this place, your best alternative is to make an end of yourselves. You can use a knife, noose, or poison. For why should you choose to live seeing life is filled with so much bitterness?”
- Christian was like, this place is misery, I’d rather be dead in the grave than alive in this dungeon. “Shall we accept the giant’s advice?”
- Hopeful (Bunyan’s depiction of Hope) says – this giant doesn’t have authority over God, His word or us - my brother, let us be patient and continue to endure. The opportunity may come that could provide us with a happy release, but it shall not be by our own murders.”
- “What a fool I have been to lie in a stinking dungeon like this, when I could just as well walk free! I have a key in my pocket next to my heart called Promise that will, I am sure, open any lock in Doubting Castle.”
- “That is good news, good brother; pluck it from your pocket and try it,” Hopeful said.
- So Christian and Hopeful unlocked every lock and door that hindered them, and they hurried on until they came to the King’s highway. Once again they were safe, because they were out of the Giant’s jurisdiction.
- I’ve been in that cage and maybe you have been too – maybe you’re there now. At some point you will be and you will need hope as your companion to anchor your soul.

Hope is our companion that anchors our soul

***Vs 8** For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,*

Romans 1:16 (ESV) 16 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.*

***Vs 9a** and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.*

- God keeps His promises not because He is indebted to His creatures but because of His mercy and faithfulness.

PROMISES for us TODAY:

1. **Eternal security & unbreakable union with Christ**

“My sheep hear my voice... I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”

— John 10:27–29

2. **He will finish what He started**

“I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

— Philippians 1:6

3. **All things work together for your good**

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

— Romans 8:28

4. **Nothing can separate you from His love**

“For I am sure that neither death nor life... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

— Romans 8:38–39

5. **He will never leave you or forsake you** “Be strong and courageous... for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

6. **Victory over sin and death is already yours**

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

— 1 Corinthians 15:57

“Sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”

— Romans 6:14

7. **Every spiritual blessing is already yours in Christ**

“Blessed be the God... who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”

— Ephesians 1:3

8. **Future grace: a new body and no more tears**

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more...”

— Revelation 21:4

“We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

— 1 John 3:2

9. **He hears and answers prayer according to His will**

“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”

— John 15:7

“This is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.”

— 1 John 5:14–15

10. **Strength for every situation**

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

— Philippians 4:13

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
— 2 Corinthians 12:9

11. **Peace that surpasses understanding**

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
— Philippians 4:7

12. **He is coming back for you**

"I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."
— John 14:3

- Paul now quotes series of passages from three sections of the Hebrew Scriptures—**the Law** (vs 10, Deut 32:43) **the Prophets** (vs. 12, Is 11:10), **and the Writings** (vs. 9, 11, Psa 18:49; 117:1)
- This represents the unanimous testimony of the entire OT to God's intention to include the Gentiles with His people Israel in His worship and under His reign.

Vs 9b *As it is written, "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name."*
Quoting (2 Sam 22:50; Psa 18:49)

Vs 10 *And again it is said, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."*
Quoting (Deut 32:43)

Vs 11 *And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him."*
Quoting (Psa 117:1)

Vs 12 *And again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope."*
Quoting (Is 11:10)

- Root of Jess - A way of referring to Jesus as the descendant of David

Vs 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.*

- **Abound** = "to overflow, to exceed, to go beyond normal measure, to be present in abundance, to super-abound."
- **Hope is our companion that anchors our soul**

1. What is hope?

- What hope isn't: It's not a wish or desire (hope the Dawgs win the natty, hope it doesn't rain out our picnic)

“Biblical hope” refers to an “expectation”—a future certainty, Certainty of God’s promises.
it’s oriented toward the **future** – It WILL happen – truer even than ‘the sun will rise’
It’s grounded in the **past** – we have been justified.
Faith looking forward –
And its **PRESENTLY** an anchor for our soul

Hebrews 6:19–20 (ESV) 19 *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*

- Hope is the present reality of a future certainty that anchors our soul.
- We ALL NEED hope!
 - a. Maybe like Christian in Pilgrim’s progress, you’ve gone after an easier life leaving gospel community behind, maybe prayer and the Word – and now you are:
 - i. Adultery
 - ii. Divorce
 - iii. Chasing the wind of success – now I’m here I’m miserable, or I lost what’s most important by chasing what is temporary
 - b. Maybe, you are in despair simply because life has been tragic, difficult, and very rocky.
 - i. The diagnosis,
 - ii. the death,
 - iii. the loss,
 - iv. the job,
 - v. the broken relationship,
 - vi. the financial mess.
 - vii. The mental/emotional state
 - viii. The uncontrollable fear

2. What keeps us from hope?

- a. **Unbelief:**
 - Joy & peace feed hope and hope feeds joy and peace producing a cyclical abounding of all three.
 - The opposite is also true... discontentment and turmoil robs hope then hopelessness increases discontentment and turmoil.
 - We can end up in Doubting castle

- Anything that lures us away from the river of God – his ways and worship, will lead us to unbelief and doubt – that’s when the negative feedback loop starts and we abound in despair.
 - Not your circumstances – but unbelief
- b. **Unfocused:**
- Distracted from worship, a complacency toward the Word and worship – if hope feeds off joy and peace and joy and peace come from believing the promises of the Word, then if we don’t have the Word active in our lives, joy and peace get depleted... hope is not fed so hope withers.
- c. **Unrepentant Sin - the Gentiles might glorify God for his *mercy*.**
- When hope diminishes, we are like a ship at sea in a huge storm with no anchor – the wind and waves becomes what drives your life.
 - What is hope? **Hope is the present reality of a future certainty that anchors our soul.**
 - What keeps me from it? **Unbelief, unfocused and unrepentant**

3. How do I get hope?

*Vs 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.*

Steps

1. **Settle on the truth that there is no hope apart from God.**

Realize there is no hope without God – He is the God of hope

2. **Own your sin**

Acknowledging sin will open the door for hope. Until you name it, you can’t deal with it. That’s the danger of overlooking what the Bible calls sin. “I don’t have a problem, what I am doing or what I did isn’t all that bad (minimize sin); everyone is doing it” I don’t see a problem with watching porn, flirting with opposite sex when I’m married, addiction to pain meds – call it what it is so hope can abound! The negative feedback loop is discontentment, turmoil and despair – where despair abounds. Confess, forgiveness, repentance, back to the river of God – yeah, its stony there, but its God’s way and its where you find joy, peace and abound in hope that will anchor your soul until your last day.

3. **Believe God’s promises**

The God of hope speaks words of promise. Hope is merely faith looking forward.

4. **Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit**

5. **Abound in hope**

Romans 5:3–5 (ESV) *3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 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.

Have you drifted from the River of God, looking for an easy path only to be caged up in Doubting Castle and abused by the Giant of Despair?

- For once, don't listen to your inner cynic – that voice has been sabotaging you for years.
- Don't listen the lies of your enemy – that you can't come forward with your sin and hangups
- Don't listen to the world that tells you that you are weak – abounding hope isn't your weakness, its your strength
- Listen to the voice of God, from His word, made understandable by His Spirit – joy, peace, hope is yours and you have the key to unlock them.

CONCLUSION

Hopeful and Christian cross the river

- At the end of part one (part 2 is about Christian's wife and kids with their journey) Hopeful and Christian finally approach the celestial city (heaven, paradise) but there is a fast flowing, deep river between them and the gates of the city – the river symbolizes death.
- "Upon entering, Christian began to sink and cried out to his good friend, Hopeful. **'I'm sinking in the deep water! The billows go over my head; all his waves go over me!'**"
- Then Hopeful said, **"Be courageous, my brother. I feel the bottom, and it is firm."**
- Christian cried out further. **"Ah, my friend, the sorrows of death have totally encompassed me! I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey!"**
- Hopeful attempted to comfort him, saying, **"Brother, I see the gate and men standing nearby to welcome us!"**
- **"Be courageous. Jesus Christ makes you whole."** With that Christian broke out in a loud voice and said, "Oh, I see him again! And he tells me, When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you" (Isa. 43:2). Then the two pilgrims both took courage, and the enemy became as still as a stone, until they had crossed over.

Even in death...Hope is our companion that anchors our soul

- All because the God of hope became man, and we believe this God-man lived a perfect life, died a sacrificial death in the place of his people,
- His death was the darkest hour for His disciples. The promised Messiah was dead, His kingdom apparently lost. With the Resurrection, that despair turned to hope.
- He rose from the dead with an incorruptible body, ascended into heaven, and is going to return the way he left to judge the world and usher in his kingdom.
- Believe those promises from His Word and be filled, overflowing, with joy and peace that feeds blows up hope in you by the power of the spirit.

RESPOND AND REFLECT

1. Communion

“In a moment, we will partake in communion together as a sacred act of worship. Please follow the instructions when we get to that time of our service.”

2. Pursue Baptism

“If you’ve responded in faith to Christ today and desire to follow Him in baptism, we’d love to walk with you. Please fill out a connect card or visit our connect desk after the service for more information on taking this step.”

3. Give

“As an act of worship, we invite you to respond through giving. You’ll see a slide on the screen(s) with three ways to give: [online giving, offering boxes, or text-to-give]. Please follow the instructions on the slide to contribute as God leads you.”

4. Prayer

“You may pray in your seat, you may come forward to the altar, or meet with our prayer team at the back of the auditorium. Or you may be prayerful during our musical worship - pray and sing.

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS:

1 Are you in a place (or have you been before) where hope seems to be diminishing, not abounding?

2 How do you get back to the place where HOPE is your companion that anchors your soul?

3 Take time to pray for any in despair in your group and remind them of God’s promises (There is a list of 12 here in the notes)