

I Have A Dream Speech - Images of Hope that were more true than our reality. Those images made us live differently.

Were going through our All is Well Series. In this series we are talking about the importance of having faith in all circumstances.

Today we are going to be looking at how Faith and Hope work together.

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

- Assurance of Things Hoped For = Faith
- Walking as though something is, even though it is not seen

- Example of Abraham

Hebrews 11:8-10 - By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

- Abraham called to leave his home.
- Walking to an inheritance
- Walking towards a legacy of children
- Walking without seeing it.

- He held onto his hope, and lived in faith that his hope was more real than his circumstances.

- “For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.”

- Those hopes have come to pass. (The Land, Nations - children, and Christ)

How did Abraham realize this hope?

By faith. He trusted God. He kept walking.

How did Abraham keep his faith strong?

Through nurturing his hope, cherishing it, clinging to it. Remembering it everyday.

How did he cherish it? He filled his imagination with the promise of God.

- When we hear the word imagination, we tend to think of what isn't real...

Fantasy vs. imagination (God has given us imagination not just for fiction and entertainment - but it is through our imagination that we can see beyond our circumstances and see what could be.

This is where visions and aspirations live.

In one book I read two theologians, Richard Bauckham and Trevor Hart, has challenged us as believers to nurture our **theological imagination**.

What do I mean by our theological imagination.

We live in a fallen world.

The world we live in...

1 Corinthians 13:12 - For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

We don't see correctly now. Our sight is not right. Someday we will see what is truly real when Christ returns and the world is restored.

But for now, we see in part.

For us to bring God's kingdom we have to have a vision for beyond what we see around us.

One of Pastor Frank's favorite passages is **2 Corinthians 5:7** - **"for we walk by faith, not by sight."**

We aren't living according to the values and circumstances that we see around us. We are living in light heaven and our eternal home.

Our future is more real than our present.

To help explain this I tried to find a graphic that could show this relationship between faith and hope.

- internet skills bad - couldn't find it
- Johanna draws pictures - so, I drew this picture to show the relationship between faith and hope.

Put up Picture and Explain

Revisit Shunammite Woman and Elisha in 2 Kings 4:8-37.

Why does this matter to us?

What is your hope?

Where is your faith leading you?

Are you nurturing your faith with hope?

Are you pursuing your hope with real faith?

Are you situations overwhelming your hope? overwhelming your faith?
(name some situations) Can you see beyond them? Can you put them in the eternal perspective?

My Dad Teaching Me to Swim - Panicked once - takes imagination to gain a correct perspective.

I want to share a couple stories in my life where God has given me an image of hope that I held onto that fueled and directed my faith.

The Haven and Accelerate the Now Campaign. Tell the Process. (Start with Problem. Once I got the vision, I couldn't stop seeing it.) I'm not a great support raiser. (\$29,000+ from Kings Circle and \$749,000)

Our Adoption - 8 years - Hope realized but still holding on living in faith and hoping that he can fully be embedded and fully connected to our family. (make sure to thank the church)

Hypothetical: What if in these I would have an a different level of conviction or not walked with faith that they would be?

Called by the Lord to say:

Do we raise our kids in faith that they will someday be mature godly men and women?

Do we have that hope for them? Can we see it?

If we can't see it, if we don't raise them in faith of it happening, how will it ever happen?

Other issues (sin issues, addiction, relationships, money issues)

There is a spiritual battle for our imagination. We need to protect it.

We need to protect it from our own doubts, from outside voices that want to dim our hope and weaken our faith.

There are so many voices trying to tell us what to hope for or condition us to minimize what is possible in our faith.

We need to protect our imaginations, so we can see from God's perspective beyond what we see in our circumstances.

Today, I want to challenge us to ask God for an image of hope to direct and strengthen our faith. (Music start)

Positive thinking (from us) vs. theological imagination (from God)

Call to come down to pray. Ask God for an image in the circumstance you are facing. Pray partners.

Lead in Prayer.

After a little bit lead a prayer for people to receive Christ.

Hand over service to Kaylee.