

Hope

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[0:00] Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for the Lord Jesus. We thank You that He not only died for us, but He rose again for us.

! And that in His resurrection, we have new life. Because sin and death no longer have mastery over Him. They no longer have mastery over us either.

So we are alive in our living head and so we thank You. We have very little idea of what that is going to mean in the last day and in forever and eternity.

But Father, I pray that You would prepare our hearts and give us grace to see what it means to be alive in Christ Jesus. And how that should fill us with hope and make us to overflow with thankfulness.

Lord, will You strengthen us in our faith as we were taught? Lord, will You root us deeper in Jesus Christ and build us up higher in Jesus Christ today?

[1:17] Lord, we confess our weakness. We confess our need. Lord, will You bless you in our hearts and we bless you in our hearts.

Will You give us grace to put aside the cares of this world and to really rejoice in what You've done for us. Will You be with us in this hour, in this classroom?

Will You be with the other students, the children as they are learning? Will You be with the teachers? And Father, wherever Your name is exalted and wherever Your word is preached, we pray that You would be there and attend that word with strength and power that Your kingdom would come and that Your will would be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And so we look expectantly to You and ask that You would answer us for Jesus Christ's sake. And it's in His name I pray. Amen.

Amen. Today is actually the last day in our series on the book, A Quest for More. I'm skipping a few chapters and we're going to be coming to the last chapter and it's on hope.

[2:46] Last week we talked about groaning and today we get to talk about the end of our groaning. And the end of the matter is better than the beginning.

And so we're going to talk about hope and then at the end of this class we're hopefully going to try to tie everything up and see what we can take away from just this whole series. So let's do some review first.

Kind of warm up our minds and think about what we talked about last week and as we move into what we're going to talk about this week. Last week we used the story of Kat.

Do you remember that? The lady who, she was a Christian. She lived in this small town. She was very happy with what God had been doing in her life. She was very happy with just how things are going in general in her life.

And we said that we can become too easily satisfied at certain points in our life when everywhere we turn it seems like life is good.

[3:52] Everything is going our way and we're happy with it. And that was the problem. Because Paul is very clear in Romans chapter 8 that the Christian life is to be a life of groaning where we're longing and yearning for something.

So let me ask you, how is it that instead of groaning, like Paul said in Romans chapter 8, we become very comfortable in our lives where we're satisfied with what's going on?

What's going on in our hearts at times like that? What have we done in our hearts? Pride. What do you mean?

We just take credit for what I have done in my life. Great is that in Paul's life.

Amen. Right. Kat did not have a very good idea of her condition, really.

[4:58] She very well could have been saved, but she had been just satisfied with what she's accomplished so far. What else could we say?

What else is going in our hearts at times when we're just so easily comfortable? Yes, Dave. One of the common themes of her love stories is no matter what's going on, no matter how bad it is, you are with the person you love, and everything is good.

And no matter how good things are going, if you're not with the person you love, then you're doing good. So I'm not fully with Christ in my heart.

I'm not satisfied with something that's going to be wrong. I got a great title and everything. So, in this, if I'm following what you're saying, basically, in this world, we do have Christ in a certain extent, right?

But we don't have him fully. He is still in heaven, and we're on earth. And so, we can't be satisfied, ultimately, because the lover of our souls is not with us.

[6:15] We're still like the bride waiting for her bridegroom to come. Very good. Yeah. Let me ask you, if your eyes are open to what God's doing in this world, can you be satisfied with the way things are going?

What do you think? Does that question make sense? If you know that God is, God's plan is to redeem this whole cosmos, the whole world and everything in it, and things are so, things are not what they should be, can you be satisfied with the way things are?

Finally, just everything is so good. Yeah, Lou. Absolutely not. Okay. It's fun here to be a witch. It's fun here to try for a long time.

Not to be a witch. Set it back around. Set it. Go home and everything. Go on. Hey, you can get out there. Yeah. We've kind of lost sight.

I think Kat lost sight of what God had, the reason God had saved her, was to be an ambassador for him in this world. And she had taken it, and she had become basically a citizen of this world.

[7:37] And so she had everything that she longed for in this world, and she didn't have any eyes for what God wanted in her life. She wasn't thinking about God's agenda and God's priorities.

She had basically shrunk her life down to just her comforts and her joys, and she had everything that she wanted, and so she was satisfied. We examined, like, our little kingdom satisfaction under three headings.

Do you remember what those were? She was satisfied with basically three things that she should not have been satisfied with. Do you remember what those were? I'll give you a clue.

The first one was physical pleasures. Remember, she had her garden and her husband, and, you know, she had this nice house, and so she was satisfied with those things. I'll just go over them.

The second one was she was satisfied with the halfway finished work of redemption. She was saved, and it was like that was good enough. There was no fight in her for more holiness, and there was no fight for this world.

[8:50] God's plan is to restore this whole world, and she could care less about those things because they don't affect her little kingdom. And then the third thing was casual surface relationships.

Remember, she had all these friendships, but they never went below the surface. They were about sports and what her kids were doing and what was on TV and things like that, which are good.

But if all our relationships are only at that level, then it shows that we don't have God's heart and mind involved in our relationships.

We're not thinking about what He wants from our friendships, what He wants from our relationships in this church. And Kat was just like that. She was happy just talking about surface issues because that was good for her.

And she didn't care what God wanted her to do in any particular relationship. And that can become us so easily. We become too easily satisfied with, you know, these sort of good relationships that we have.

[9:58] And yeah, those kind of issues, they're important to talk about. But God has saved us for more than that. And so groaning is to be a part of our everyday lives as we wait for our adoption as sons, as we wait for the redemption of our bodies.

And so we're going to groan because we haven't received the full inheritance that God has promised us. We have a down payment, but we don't have the whole thing. We have the Holy Spirit, but we're still waiting for our complete inheritance.

And so we don't groan because we don't have any hope. The purpose of our groaning is because we do have hope. We're longing to see what God is going to do for us.

And so there's only two kinds of people in this world. People that are holding on to a soon-to-be-disappointed hope. And people that are living with a valid reason for that hope.

So you've either attached your life to a hope that will ultimately fail. Sooner or later, it will fail. Or you've attached your hope to something that will not disappoint you.

[11:18] So you've either attached your hope to the little kingdom and its cares and its concerns and the way it's going. Or you've attached your hope to the big kingdom of what God is doing in this world.

And so you've either attached your hope to the promises of this world and what you can do, what you have planned, or you've attached your hopes to what God has planned in this world.

And so the wonderful news is today that if you have attached your hope to God and to his kingdom and what he is doing in this world, then your hopes will not be disappointed.

And if you think about that, that is phenomenal. Because everyone else out there in the world has attached their hopes to something that ultimately will fail.

They're living for things that will disappoint them. And God's kingdom provides a hope that will never disappoint. So disappointment is common in our lives, isn't it?

[12:30] If we think about it, you don't have to order a book on how to live the disappointed life. You don't hear preaching about four ways to disappointment or three ways to live a disappointed, damaged, unproductive life.

See, because disappointment is the stock and trade of this world. This is what we deal in. You hold on to something and it falls apart and you become disappointed. You look to a leader and they fail you and you're disappointed.

You look to a job and it fails you and you're disappointed. You look to a spouse to give you meaning and purpose. And guess what? They fail and you're disappointed. And as we're learning in Ecclesiastes, God has subjected everything in this world to frustration.

So no matter where you turn, there is this problem. There's this gut-wrenching problem that I'm living in this world where everything is falling apart and everything is rotting away faster than I can hold on to it.

And it's rotting away faster than anything that I can do with it. And so our disappointment, it comes.

[13:50] Disappointment comes when we tie our hope, when we unite our hope to something in this fallen world. So whether it's a person, a job, a movement, a political leader, or whatever it might be, when we tie our hope to something in this world, then we are disappointed.

And that can be on the big level, and then that can be on the everyday interpersonal level. Listen to the example that Paul Tripp gives.

Ben and Emily sat before me so incredibly energized and hopeful. They gazed into one another's eyes so intently that it was hard for me to get their attention.

In fact, I think there were moments when they forgot that I was in the room. And they were in my office for premarital counseling, but I don't think they really thought they needed it. They were jumping through the hoop of counseling so their church would allow them to use their facility for the ceremony.

They professed to be deeply respectful and committed to one another. Emily said their communication was excellent, and they had been pretty successful at solving the problems that had come up between them.

[15:07] As Ben and Emily sat tightly together, hand in hand, and with big smiles on their faces, because I was afraid for them. They were putting so much of their personal sense of well-being, meaning, security, and hope in the assurance that the other person would pull it off.

Their hope rested in the belief that the other person would not disappoint them. Six months later, they were in my office again.

But this time, Ben and Emily were not sitting so close. Their smiles on their faces were gone. They had faced a shocking reality that each was married to a sinner.

And they had made poor choices, and they had experienced broken promises. Unresolved conflicts had left a legacy of hurt that now made their communication difficult.

Their issues weren't huge. They were the garden-variety weeds of life in a fallen world. But the thing that stood out to me was that their hope for their still-young marriage was gone.

[16:22] So, we could probably, if you think about it, you could probably think of how, even if you're married, you've experienced some of that disappointment.

Because when you go into it, you assume that that person is going to be something that they, that you think they're going to be, and that they're going to be able to pull this thing off. And it doesn't happen. And that's just one example. Ben and Emily had put their hope in each other, and their hope failed.

And it's not just relationships that disappoint us. We change jobs, hoping that that new job will provide us with satisfaction.

And it fails us. And if you're married, you can admit to the bathroom mirror when no one else is around that your spouse wasn't everything that you thought he or she was going to be.

[17:25] And so maybe it's, maybe it's Grace Fellowship Church. You came from a different church, and you came here, and you're all aglow. I finally found the perfect church. And then you hang out long enough, and you realize that we're not perfect, that we're sinners too.

And then there's the shock of disappointment. And so none of that is strange or peculiar to you. Disappointment is a regular part of our lives. Friends disappoint us.

Pastors disappoint us. Churches disappoint us. Our spouse disappoints us. Our children disappoint us. Our government disappoints us. Our society disappoints us. And we disappoint us.

So everything in this world disappoints us. And the problem is, that is precisely, all those things, those are precisely the things that the little kingdom runs on.

So if you're living for the little kingdom, you're living for something, that those things will go the way that you want them to go. So we want our families, and our government, and our bodies, and our churches to get in line and do what I think they should do.

[18:36] And then, so, the little kingdom naturally, inevitably, disappoints us. And that's the bad news.

And this is the good news. And this is where the beauty of God's kingdom is seen. That it does not disappoint us. So turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 5.

We're going to read the first five verses. And in this passage, Paul is celebrating God's grace in our lives.

And he's celebrating what all that means for us. And he basically is going to say, and you're going to see these, hopefully, that there's three implications for God's grace.

We have peace, we have access to God's grace, and we have hope. And so see if you can see these three things in the passage. And then, after we've read the first five verses, we'll discuss that hope more specifically.

[19:38] Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance.

Perseverance, character, and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.

So I hope you saw peace and access to grace and hope in that passage. So let me ask you, what is the ground, the foundation, of our peace?

You can see that in the first verse there. What is, what's our ground? Jesus Christ. And how do we, how are we attached to Jesus Christ?

[20:47] Right. Okay. So, our peace with God is resting on this foundation of, I have been justified, I have a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

And so, our peace is resting on what Jesus has done for us. So therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, if we put that together, our right relationship with God through Jesus gives us peace. So our peace is resting on Jesus.

Now, Paul next, he mentions access to this, to this grace that now, that we stand in. What is the ground of that access to grace?

Faith. Very good. Faith in who? There's, it says, through, through Jesus Christ. And so, there's the two things again.

[21 : 54] We, we have faith and we're, our faith is laying hold of Jesus Christ. And as we're attached to Jesus, we walk into this beautiful room and it's called grace.

and now we're standing here and God grants us favor. And so, there we're standing in the favor of God and he is favorably disposed towards us.

And so, if we have needs, his heart is going out to us. So, that's the access to grace. So, now let me ask you, what do you think the foundation of our hope is then?

it's not mentioned in this passage, but, what do you think it is? Jesus Christ. As we have faith in Jesus Christ, then, we have hope.

And so, maybe you're saying, I know that. You know, my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. And, maybe this is old news.

[22 : 59] But, I think we need the reminder again. Because, we're living in a world that so easily disappoints us. And we need to be pointed back to the way that we can actually have hope.

So, let's think about hope a little bit harder for a couple of minutes. What is hope? Can anyone give me a good biblical definition of hope?

Mom. Mom. Yes. Roger. Very good. I think, yeah, if you put your two answers together, hope is a confident expectation of future good, isn't it?

I think we've used that definition before. It is that. don't we mean a little bit more when we say I'm hoping in this than just this thing out here, this confident expectation that this event in the future will happen.

Aren't we saying that I want this to happen? There's this desire within me to see that future good come to me that somehow buried inside this hope inside my heart is this desire to see that future good come to me.

[24 : 28] And it's even more than that. It's saying my life is I need that hope to happen to me. I need that good to come to me. I need this hope to be real. It's not I'm just hoping for pizza tonight.

It's more than that. We've attached our well-being, the meaning of our life to that hope.

We've attached our identity and purpose to it. And so today's Easter and we celebrate resurrection today. And isn't the resurrection from the dead at the end of time the thing that we have put our hope in.

And it's not just something that is out there that we're kind of hoping that it comes to us. We need it to happen. Or our lives have no meaning.

And isn't that what Paul said? If this isn't going to happen then we should be pitied above all men. And if this isn't going to happen then eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die. The whole Christian life is based, is founded on that event.

[25 : 39] And so I desperately need Christ to come back and raise my body from the dead. My life depends upon it. My whole purpose depends upon it.

We need it to happen. And if our hope doesn't come true then our lives have no meaning. And that is the kind of hope that Paul is talking about.

This isn't I'm hoping to save a few bucks this week or I'm hoping for pizza tonight or I'm hoping this happens or that happens. This is life and death hope.

And that is why it's so phenomenal what he says. That hope does not disappoint us. So Paul is saying you haven't tied your hope to anything that will disappoint you in this world.

When your hope is resting on Jesus Christ then it will not disappoint you. So even did you catch that? Even your sufferings you can rejoice in your sufferings because they help you to hope more.

[26 : 50] Don't they? They make they put life into perspective. They give you the character where they reorient you from the hopes that you're putting into this world and they make you put those hopes in Jesus Christ.

And so even our sufferings are good for us. And we know that our hope is secure. We know this inside of our hearts because the Holy Spirit is pouring out the love of God in our hearts.

He's saying God loves you and he is going to make this happen for you. your hope is sure. It's confident. It's sound. And it's not going to disappoint you.

The thing that you desperately need to happen is going to happen because God loves you. And so the ground of our hope is Jesus Christ.

That confidence, that subjective confidence that we have, it comes by the Holy Spirit. Now, what did you guys see? What is the substance of our hope?

[27:59] What are we hoping in? God's glory. And that is so important. We're hoping for the glory of God.

Now, that verse is so little and you can just read right over it. But think with me for a minute. What does it mean that we're hoping for the glory of God?

Flesh that out. Tell me what that's going to mean in our lives. What does that mean? We won't be disappointed.

Okay. Go on. Why? Because he poured out his love in our hearts for the Holy Spirit. And who has given those? Okay. So, what else does it mean?

What else does it mean that we're hoping in the glory of God? What do we want to see come to pass? Mark. We're expecting for God's ultimate will to be accomplished.

[29:10] He will give the bride to his son and be a part of him from him. He will see him face to face. He will be united with our love.

Yeah. That's included in our hope. Because God is going to be glorified in the marriage of the church and Christ. And that is our expectation.

What else? Roger? Roger? I don't know. We're going to do God and we cannot talk to people through that. We're going to know what we're going.

Every need shall bow. My need shall bow. We're going to see him. enjoy him. Like I can't imagine. I don't know him.

He was in the direction of the ability. And my eyes are open to speak on. I don't think I will ever see him.

[30:09] He is who is. And they determine the the form of death of glory. I just don't call it. how to sum that up.

It's yeah. We're going to see him and be like him. Scott.

that's yeah that's the hope that we are longing for.

That we are going to see come to pass. That every enemy will be destroyed. And death will be destroyed. So think with me for a second. Tell me what is it going to mean for God's glory to be over all the earth?

What is that going to mean for the politics? For the creation? For the world that we're going to live in? Is there going to be oppression anymore?

[31:37] There's no more oppression. There's no more poverty. There's no more ignorance.

There's only going to be righteousness. Everywhere I look on that day there will be righteousness and there will be perfection.

There will be perfection in the creation and perfection in me. And that's what I'm hoping for. That God's kingdom is going to come. And his will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And heaven and earth will be one. Won't they? And that is what we're hoping for. So what should we be building our lives around today?

Well what's the big kingdom building? What is the big kingdom built around? What's built around Jesus Christ isn't it? And what is the hope that cannot fail?

The hope is that God's kingdom will come his will will be done. And so is your hope are you on the right bandwagon?

[32:49] Is your horse hitched to the right wagon? God is building his kingdom. His glory is going to come. He's going to have glory. And that is what the future holds.

And like Roger said, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. And so now you are either for him or you are against him. You are either working for that or you're working on your own little kingdom.

Either you're hoping in what he's going to do or you're still holding on to your little kingdom and one day that hope he will tear that from your hands and he will throw it away. So what is it now?

Are you scheduling and prioritizing your life around God's glory and what he is doing or are you still holding on to what you want to do? Are you attaching your hope to the kingdom of God or are you attaching it to your little kingdom?

Is it God's glory and splendor that he is going to display through the whole earth and that's what my life is depending on and that's what I'm hanging everything on or am I saying I still want to build my own little kingdom here?

[34:03] See if you are building your own kingdom then your kingdom will fail. One day God will take your kingdom and he will trash it and your selfish hopes will be completely gone and so that

should motivate you if you are a believer to be putting to death that little kingdom to be saying no to yourself because one day it's not going to be there it's going to be gone and one day we can thank God that that rebel kingdom that is inside of each one of our hearts will end and if you're upset about that and if you're upset about the idea of God trampling on your priorities and your agenda then look into your heart are you an enemy of God are you still fighting him if you are Jesus is still waiting the door is still open and you can still get a hold of him and if you get a hold of him and don't let him go then you won't be lost see your hopes your little selfish hopes must die they cannot live with

God's big kingdom they are going to die and just the only question is are you going to die with them or not and brothers and sisters that should encourage you because if you're living for God's glory now then you're living for a kingdom and you're living for a hope that is absolutely secure there is very scary things going on in our world there always has been there always will be but as we look! around there's things that disturb us and God says the mountains tumble into the sea right even if that happens our hope is secure and so your hopes and your dreams and your plans for God's glory in your life and in this world will not fail because one day God's glory will fill this earth and his kingdom will be the only kingdom and so your hope is coming your hope is coming and so in the midst of all the groaning which is still real real you can look forward with hope and our hope is coming but it hasn't come yet and so we wait patiently don't we and so there's always this tension now there's there's hope and then there's patience there's groaning and there's thankfulness and we need both sides we need to have all of them if we're going to find the balance that we need and the way that we get both of those is to focus on

Jesus Christ because only when we are focusing on Jesus when we're keeping our eyes on him the world is put into perspective our lives are put into perspective and so let's dig he is the center of God's kingdom he is the center of what is going on and he is going to be the center of God's glory and so let's lay hold of him and go deeper and deeper into him so we've come to the end what does it mean for you I don't really know how to sum it all up but we're going to I'm just going to ask five questions I'm going to give you five questions to ask yourself as you go from here and to think okay am I living for God's kingdom or am I still living for my kingdom how can I live these things out here's five questions for you to ask yourself question one are you doing the concrete things in your life regularly because you are living for something bigger than your own personal definition of happiness number two do you live aware of the deceptive nature of the kingdom of self because remember it is the costume kingdom it dresses up like

God's kingdom and so you need to regularly examine your motives and how are you investing your time and your energy question three are you dissatisfied satisfied with the broken world that you live and work in every day and do you work for its restoration in whatever way you can question four do you hold loosely to your plans your schedule your agenda your expectations are you always looking for ways to be a part of what God is doing in your circumstances no matter how mundane the moment is so God is working in all your circumstances are you looking with his eyes at what's going on in your life question five do you live with a deep appreciation for the Lord Jesus Christ and the gift of grace that has fundamentally changed your life do you live with a sense of humble privilege that you not only have been chosen to be a citizen of his kingdom but an ambassador as well every one of you if you are saved are an ambassador of

[39:43] Jesus Christ and his kingdom and so if you're going to live as an ambassador you have to live with his priorities in mind so brothers and sisters God is infinitely patient but he's never ever going to accept your little kingdom he's patient with you but he's not going to accept your little kingdom and he's he loves you and he's going to reach into your claustrophobic little kingdom again and again and pull you out and he's going to do it every day until finally his will is done and his kingdom has come and it's going to happen and so we can rejoice and celebrate we're dismissed