

HOPE

(HEBREWS 2:14) SINCE THE CHILDREN HAVE FLESH AND BLOOD, HE TOO SHARED IN THEIR HUMANITY SO THAT BY HIS DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM WHO HOLDS THE POWER OF DEATH-- THAT IS, THE DEVIL (VS.15) AND FREE THOSE WHO ALL THEIR LIVES WERE HELD IN SLAVERY BY THEIR FEAR OF DEATH.

SLAVERY TO THE FEAR OF DEATH

Fear of dying; fear of what happens after death; fear of being separated from those we love because of death; fear of facing a perfectly Righteous (+R) God; fear of LOF

- a. Man was not designed to die – perpetual life in the garden
- b. Man cannot deal with the implications of death – can't see beyond the grave
- c. For helpless man, death is the ultimate problem – can't be solved by man
- d. The fear of death causes despair, dread & a sense of hopelessness
- e. Christ has freed us from slavery to the fear of death – now we can have hope
- f. Believe that God is good and holds the future for those who trust in Him.
- g. God is going to make everything work out right for us in the end

Freedom from Slavery to the Fear of Death → Hope!

1. DEF – ELPIS – CONFIDENT EXPECTATION ABOUT THE FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

- What we hope for is what we expect to occur at some point in our lives
- We take specific actions in life expecting specific results – marriage
 - § Hope / expectation is about the future – (ROM 8:24) FOR IN THIS HOPE WE WERE SAVED. BUT HOPE THAT IS SEEN IS NO HOPE AT ALL. WHO HOPES FOR WHAT HE ALREADY HAS?
 - § Expectations come from our beliefs – Rom 15:13 – what we believe is likely to occur from our choices make up our expectations.
 - § Our beliefs & expectations are the content of what we think will bring +H.
 - § Our beliefs & expectations motivate strategies to achieve our hopes & dreams
 - § Our strategies are our life plan to get us to where we want to go – comes out of what we believe will bring +H in our lives.
- How we handle relationships; types of relationships we choose (Paul); spiritual life; career; finances; geography

2. THE OBJECT OF YOUR FAITH/EXPECTATIONS DETERMINES ITS VALIDITY

False Hope – placing your faith / hope in man and the things of this life

- Job 8:13-14 the hope of the godless will perish
- Job 31:24 make gold your hope or put confidence in wealth – iniquity
- Job 8:14 those who forget God, their hope is in the strength of a spider's web

(JEREMIAH 17:5) THUS SAYS THE LORD, CURSED IS THE MAN WHO TRUSTS IN MANKIND AND MAKES FLESH HIS STRENGTH, AND WHO'S HEART TURNS AWAY FROM THE LORD.

- False hope is the expectation that man or things of this life can make you +H
- False hope comes from believing the world's lie of life w/out God.
- False hope pursues the things of this life for +H – wealth as security
- False hope will always bring utter disappointment – cursed is the man

Godly Hope – placing your faith / hope in God and the things of eternity

(LUKE 12:33) SELL YOUR POSSESSIONS AND GIVE TO THE POOR. PROVIDE PURSES FOR YOURSELVES THAT WILL NOT WEAR OUT, A TREASURE IN HEAVEN THAT WILL NOT BE EXHAUSTED, WHERE NO THIEF COMES NEAR AND NO MOTH DESTROYS.

- Ps.31:24 those who trust in the Lord will strengthen their hearts
 - Psm 42:5 hope in the Lord quiets the disturbed soul
 - Psm 38:15 hope in the Lord receives answers to prayer
- A. The Lord always delivers what He promises – He is able to deliver
B. Hope in the Lord may not seem sexy but it is certain
C. It is important to be realistic about what God is promising
- Jn 16:33 He does not promise to protect us from all the evil things in this life – He promises the strength to overcome all the evil in the world.
 - Eph 4:31-32 He does not promise relationships w/out disappointment – He promises to strengthen our capacity to love w/out conditions and enable us to forgive.
- D. Hope in the Lord never ends in disappointment

(ROM. 5:5) 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.

3. HOPE IN THE RESURRECTION ULTIMATELY RESOLVES ALL PROBLEMS OF THIS LIFE.

The resurrection of Jesus both surprised and motivated the disciples – changed them

- Eph 2:12 the unbeliever has no hope in the future after death
 - 1Thes 4:13 unbel grieves without hope – believer can grieve with hope
 - Rom 15:4 hope in the resurrection comes from the Holy Scriptures
 - Eph 1:16-19 eyes of the heart enlightened to know the hope of His calling – eternity
 - Col 1:5 hope laid up in heaven taught in the gospel – what we can expect in heaven
 - Heb 6:18-19 lay hold of the hope of God's promise – anchor of the soul
- Must take hold of the hope by believing the promise of God

(1 PETER 1:3) PRAISE BE TO THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST! IN HIS GREAT MERCY HE HAS GIVEN US NEW BIRTH INTO A LIVING HOPE THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD,

(1 PETER 1:18-21) KNOWING THAT YOU WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH PERISHABLE THINGS LIKE SILVER OR GOLD FROM YOUR FUTILE WAY OF LIFE INHERITED FROM YOUR FOREFATHERS, (19) BUT WITH PRECIOUS BLOOD, AS OF A LAMB UNBLEMISHED AND SPOTLESS, THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. (20) FOR HE WAS FOREKNOWN BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, BUT HAS APPEARED IN THESE LAST TIMES FOR THE SAKE OF YOU (21) WHO THROUGH HIM ARE BELIEVERS IN GOD, WHO RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD AND GAVE HIM GLORY, SO THAT YOUR FAITH AND HOPE ARE IN GOD.

- The resurrection has destroyed the power of death – 1Cor 15:55-56
- Everything left unresolved in this life will be forgotten in eternity – no more tears
- All sin / evil and its results will be left behind in eternity.
- All believing loved ones will be with us in eternity – perfect relationships

(Rom 7) Paul discusses the ongoing inner conflict in the bel's soul. In despair he closes the chapter with "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord".

CASE STUDY:

Jay, a 39 year old Christian white male; middle income level; store manager; married with 2 children; in good health. Comes to counseling with complaint of feeling depressed and hopeless. Activating event appears to be his mother's death 2 years prior. Since her death he feels he has slowly sunk into a down phase in his life. He wonders if this is depression.

In the course of discussion he recalled a very old scenario from when he was 4 yrs old. I remember when my maternal grandfather died. I was walking through the line to view the body holding my mother's hand. When she looked down into the casket, she broke down and wept with what felt like despair. As I recall she could not be comforted and it seems like she went through a depressed phase after that. What I remember was that she interpreted her father's death as a tragedy that she refused to get over.

I know that at that time of her life that she and her family were not believers. She didn't get saved until I was in high school. It makes sense that she would have felt his death was tragic and went into despair. What he couldn't process was why & how that had affected him. My mother was saved and I know I will see her again and yet I still seem to feel desperate about her dying.

- **Connection:** when he was 4 years old, he saw his mother's reaction to her father's death and accepted her interpretation of what his death meant. Death was a tragedy and meant that person you loved dearly was lost to you forever. In spite of his later salvation and belief in the resurrection, he still held that the death of a loved one was tragic.
- **Solution:** He had to reject his early conclusion about the meaning of death that he learned from his mother. The death of his believing mother was God's way of bring her home to be with Him and that one day soon, they would be reunited and be together forever to never be parted again.

Jay was operating on what the bible calls the slavery that comes from the fear of death. His fear was not about his own death but the death of those he loved.

(Hebrews 2:14-15) Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil--(15) and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

(1 CORINTHIANS 15:24-28) THEN THE END WILL COME, WHEN HE HANDS OVER THE KINGDOM TO GOD THE FATHER AFTER HE HAS DESTROYED ALL DOMINION, AUTHORITY AND POWER. (25) FOR HE MUST REIGN UNTIL HE HAS PUT ALL HIS ENEMIES UNDER HIS FEET. (26) THE LAST ENEMY TO BE DESTROYED IS DEATH. (27) FOR HE "HAS PUT EVERYTHING UNDER HIS FEET." {PSALM 8:6} NOW WHEN IT SAYS THAT "EVERYTHING" HAS BEEN PUT UNDER HIM, IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE GOD HIMSELF, WHO PUT EVERYTHING UNDER CHRIST. (28) WHEN HE HAS DONE THIS, THEN THE SON HIMSELF WILL BE MADE SUBJECT TO HIM WHO PUT EVERYTHING UNDER HIM, SO THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL.