

The Christian Life Lesson 3 2Q 2009

Hope

SABBATH

Read memory text – what hope do you have? From where does your hope arise? Or what is the basis of your hope? Why is hope important?

- How many of you heard this saying: “Where there is life, there is hope.”
 - Actually, it seems that is not correct; it is other way around: “Where there is hope, there is life.”
 - Psychology Department of Duke University in North Carolina conducted an experiment in the late 80s to test this hypothesis. In one container researchers placed a rat for whom there was no apparent possibility of escape. He swam just a few moments, 4 or 5 minutes to be exact, and then ducked his head to drown. In the other container they made the hope of escape possible for the rat. It was not easy but it was possible. That second rat swam for many hours (37 to be exact) before finally it ran out of energy and drowned. This experiment demonstrated that it is not "As long as there is life, there is hope." That experiment proved that, "As long as there is hope, there is life."

Read first two paragraphs, “The twentieth century...” – thoughts?

What has God promised us through Jesus?

- Eternal life?
- Freedom from sin?
- Assuaging of the Father’s wrath?
- Payment of our legal debt?
- A new heart and right spirit?

- Healing in the inner man?
- Christlikeness of character?
- Forgiveness?

Was God's forgiveness promised through what Jesus would achieve, in other words did Jesus come to do something in order for God to be able to forgive, or was God forgiving so He sent Jesus to bring us His forgiveness and reconcile us to God? Do we need more than God's forgiveness?

Matthew 26:28

- This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. NIV
- For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. KJV

Does this text offer hope? What hope does it offer? Does the hope it offer change depending on the version we read?

Is it offering legal pardon or something else? Is it offering transformation, cleansing, renewal, rebirth, recreation? Is Christ offering us the hope that through His victory we can experience sin in us going into remission? Is He offering us the hope that our sinful hearts can be cured, cleansed, renewed, regenerated?

Is this a different hope than the hope Christ providing us legal pardon with His Father?

The word translated "forgive" or "remission" is:

- **859 ἄφεσις** [*aphesis* /**af**-es·is/] n f. From 863; TDNT 1:509; TDNTA 88; GK 912; 17 occurrences; AV translates

n **n**: noun or neuter

f **f**: feminine

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as “remission” nine times, “forgiveness” six times, “deliverance” once, and “liberty” once. **1** release from bondage or imprisonment. **2** forgiveness or pardon, of sins (letting them go as if they had never been committed), remission of the penalty.¹

The word translated “sins” is:

- **266 ἁμαρτία** [*hamartia* /ham·ar·tee·ah/] n f. From 264; TDNT 1:267; TDNTA 44; GK 281; 174 occurrences; AV translates as “sin” 172 times, “sinful” once, and “offense” once. **1** equivalent to 264. 1A to be without a share in. 1B to miss the mark. 1C to err, be mistaken. 1D to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honour, to do or go wrong. 1E to wander from the law of God, violate God’s law, sin. **2** that which is done wrong, sin, an offence, a violation of the divine law in thought or in act. **3** collectively, the complex or aggregate of sins committed either by a single person or by many.²

What difference does it make to understand the meaning of these words? Are there other Bible texts that shed light onto this?

GK Goodrick-Kohlenberger

AV Authorized Version

¹Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. G859

n n: noun or neuter

f f: feminine

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AV Authorized Version

²Strong, James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. electronic ed. Ontario : Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996, S. G266

- For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. John 17:3

The word translated save is:

- **4982 ἐκσώζω, σώζω** [sozo /sode·zo/] v. From a primary sos (contraction for obsolete saoz, “safe”); TDNT 7:965; TDNTA 1132; GK 1751 and 5392; 110 occurrences; AV translates as “save” 93 times, “make whole” nine times, “heal” three times, “be whole” twice, and translated miscellaneously three times. **1** to save, keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction. 1A one (from injury or peril). 1A1 to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health. 1B1 to preserve one who is in danger of destruction, to save or rescue. 1B to save in the technical biblical sense. 1B1 negatively. 1B1A to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment. 1B1B to save from the evils which obstruct the reception of the Messianic deliverance.³

Other texts?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph – thoughts? Do you agree fear is rising? What is the relationship between fear and love?

Fear and love are inversely related, as fear goes up love goes down, when love rises fear goes down. Perfect love casts our fear.

v v: verb

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What are sources of increasing fear in society today, why is there so much, what impact does it have on us?

- Explore fear circuitry of the brain
- Explore consequences to body and brain when this circuitry is imbalanced
- Explore factors which inflame fear and impair pre-frontal cortex ability to calm fear centers
 - Diet
 - Sleep deprivation
 - TV/Music
 - Breakdown of families
 - Over-controlling parents/punitive interventions
 - Abuses of various kinds
 - False concepts of God taught in church
- Explore consequences of unabated fear on relationships and society
- Where fear increases love decreases. Satan's goal is to increase fear and decrease love.

Third paragraph speaks of greed, what impact is greed having in our world today?

- Global warming
- Degradation of food supply
- Damage to environment
- Damage to economy
- Damage to public good will and trust

The quarterly states, "But whatever happens, we have hope through Jesus." Do we have more than hope? Can we have more than hope? Can we have confidence, assurance, certainty?

- "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷ Nation will rise

against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of birth pains. Matthew 24:3-8

When a woman goes into labor are the pains the worst at the beginning? Does she want to stop and wait another nine months? While she knows pain is coming is there a hope that overrules the pain?

Bottom pink section states, “Why is it so fruitless and empty, to place our hope in this world or in what this world offers?” My question is, why do so many do it? Could it be because we haven’t told them about a God who can actually be trusted? Is it possible that what the world is offering is actually more appealing than what most of the religions of the world, including much of Christianity, is offering?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph, “The Christian hope...” thoughts? What is it that changes when we accept Christ? Love increases in the heart and fear is purged. How does the life change when this happens? What impact do those changes have on the life?

Read last paragraph, “There are two keys...” thoughts? Believing what? Does it matter in what we believe? I had a patient who believed smoking cigarettes was good for her lungs. Was she free to believe this? In believing this every time she smoked she felt better, “helping my lungs.” But was she? Does it matter? What about spiritually, does it matter?

- “When we speak of unbelief, we do not mean that a person believes nothing. The mind must rest upon something; and when it does not grasp truth, it lays hold of error. All men in one sense believe, and the effect produced upon the heart and character is according to the things believed. Eve believed the words of Satan, and the belief of that falsehood in regard to God's character, changed the condition and character of both herself and

husband. They were changed from good and obedient children into transgressors, and it was only by repentance toward God and faith in the promised Messiah that they could hope ever to regain the lost image of God. Paul had faith before his conversion; but it was not a correct faith. His self-righteousness strengthened his faith that he was doing God's service in rejecting Christ, and he enjoyed a restful satisfaction. False faith as well as true faith will give peacefulness for a time. Paul verily thought that he was doing God service when he was persecuting the followers of Christ and putting them to death. He was sincere in his belief; but sincerity will not make error truth, nor truth error. "When the commandment came," says Paul, "sin revived, and I died." He then received the truth as it is in Jesus, and experienced its transforming power upon his soul. The truth was so firmly planted in his heart that he could say, "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." {RH, January 5, 1886 par. 8}

- "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" Matthew 7:21-23

Who do you think the people Jesus are speaking about "believe" in? What is the problem?

What happens inside our brains and bodies when we believe lies? Inflames the fear centers which drive the fight/flight reaction which impairs immune system, prevents healthy

growth, and shuts down pre-frontal cortex thus impairing spiritual development!

TUESDAY

Last sentence of first paragraph states, “Death is our archenemy, but it is one that will be defeated.” – thoughts?

Which death is it talking about the first or the second? Does it matter? Has either the first or the second already been defeated?

When the Bible says the wages of sin is death, what is it referring to?

Is this death the same as what humans have experienced since Adam’s fall? When Jesus said don’t be afraid of the one who can destroy the body, but the one who destroys body and soul, (Matthew 10:28) what was Jesus saying?

- Is Jesus saying what destroys the body is not our true enemy? What destroys the soul is our enemy?
- Is Jesus making a distinction between those who die the first and second death?
- How did Jesus refer to the first death?

Has Jesus already defeated the second death? What is the basis of life? What is the cause of death? What did Jesus do?

- “This is life eternal that they might know you the only true God and Jesus Christ who you have sent.” John 17:3

Eternal life is knowing God, or being in a perfect, intimate relationship with Him, which means living in perfect love, or in perfect harmony with the law of love, which is the basis for all life.

- 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. Heb 2:14
- This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Tim 1:9,10

Christ destroyed the power of death by revealing the truth and destroying the lies of Satan and He perfectly restored the law of love into humanity by His life and self-sacrificing death. Thus He destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light!

Read third paragraph, “Of course, there are...” thoughts?

Consider a laptop computer with hardware and software and the computer is connected through a wireless connection to a server where everything is instantly backed up. If someone destroys the laptop, what happens if you get a new one, empty hard drive and download all the data from the server?

Resurrection of your computer!

How would you explain to those who believe in consciousness in death and that loved ones are alive with God in heaven at this time?

- Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we **believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.** ¹⁵ According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord

himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸
 Therefore encourage each other with these words. 1Thes 4:13-18

He brings their unique identities, individualities, with Him on the heavenly server and downloads them into newly created bodies and then they are resurrected and live again!

- Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. The wondrous works of God are a mystery to man. The spirit, the character of man, is returned to God, there to be preserved. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. The same form will come forth, but it will be free from disease and every defect. It lives again bearing the same individuality of features, so that friend will recognize friend. There is no law of God in nature which shows that God gives back the same identical particles of matter which composed the body before death. God shall give the righteous dead a body that will please Him. {6BC 1093.2}

Read last paragraph, “We have no idea...” Thoughts? Do we have no idea? No way of conceiving of it? No way of comprehending it? Is it just gibberish, non-sense? Or has God revealed to us truth that enlightens our mind on the principles of His kingdom of love and we have seen that Jesus has conquered the kingdom of Satan and restored love into mankind? Do we have understanding as to how our individualities can be secure and yet we sleep awaiting for new bodies? Do we know all the specific science of how God

creates? No, but do we understand some of the general principle?

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “How can finite...” Thoughts? How did Jesus define eternal life? “knowing God” not by length of time, what significance is that to us?

How will the meaning of time change in eternity?

How many decisions do we make based on time? How many have thought of a career change, but at a certain age there just isn't enough time? How many times have you said, “I just don't have enough time to get it all done?” Will we have those problems in eternity? What might you do with an eternity?

THURSDAY

Read middle section “How does the time aspect mentioned in 2 Peter 3:8,9 impact our understanding of the term *soon* in connection with the Second Coming?”

- But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Thoughts? Does time move at different speeds in different places, a time dilation? Might it actually be that in heaven only a little more than six 24 hour periods have gone by since mankind sinned?

Read second paragraph, “The ultimate...” well said, thoughts?

FRIDAY

Read question 3 and discuss