



Christ Our Hope

Key idea:

Christian hope ultimately rests not in circumstances, human abilities or righteousness, power, technology, wealth, or leaders, but in Christ Himself.

Key text:

1 Timothy 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Key points:

1. Our hope is specifically found in Jesus Christ, not in circumstances or our own abilities.
2. Hope is essential for human well-being, motivation, and endurance in life's challenges.
3. There are many false sources of hope that we can be tempted to rely on instead of Christ.
4. Christ is our hope in both life and death, and this hope is grounded in His work on our behalf.

Discussion Questions:

1. Bret mentioned the Stockdale Paradox. How does this concept relate to Christian hope? How can we maintain hope while still facing difficult realities?
2. Reflect on the Heidelberg Catechism's first question and answer. How does this summary of faith provide comfort and hope?

3. Bret mentioned several false sources of hope (circumstances, personal skills/ righteousness, power, technology, wealth, leaders). Which of these do you find most tempting to put your hope in? Why?
4. How does the idea of Christ as our hope differ from these false sources? What makes it more reliable?
5. In what ways does our culture promote false sources of hope, and how can we resist these influences as Christians?
6. How can we maintain hope in the face of suffering or adversity, as exemplified by figures like Job or the Psalmists?
7. The teaching emphasized that hope helps us endure. Can you share an experience where hope in Christ helped you persevere through a difficult time?
8. How does the reality of death challenge or strengthen our hope in Christ?
9. Discuss the statement: "Christ is our hope in life, in death, and for all eternity." What does this mean practically in your daily life?

Practical Applications:

1. This week, try to identify moments when you're tempted to put your hope in something other than Christ. Practice redirecting your hope to Him in those moments.
2. Memorize Romans 15:13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
3. Memorize the first question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism: What is your only comfort in life and death? That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that all things must work together for my salvation, and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, from this day forth, to live unto him.
4. Share your hope in Christ with someone who may be struggling this week. How can you encourage them with the truths from this sermon?
5. Spend time in prayer, asking God to reveal any false sources of hope in your life and to strengthen your trust in Christ alone.