

Sermon Series: Living with Hope in a Broken World

To be used with: The Culmination of Our Hope

Sermon Title: Sustained by Hope

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:5b-11

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study “*The Culmination of Our Hope*,” this sermon seeks to remind believers that our current condition is not our final destination. The hope we have through Christ will have its fulfillment when we see Him.

Introduction: Sometimes while reading a story or watching a movie, we cannot help wanting to have an idea of what is coming at the end. We may glance at the last few pages of a novel or look up film spoilers online. While some of the mystery is removed, we may appreciate having the assurance that everything works out in the end.

The apostle Peter offers believers a glimpse of the future. This glimpse certainly is not a spoiler, but instead enriches our lives today. As Peter repeatedly emphasizes in his letter, we can trust that God is with us now and has secured our future. Having insider knowledge about the future should affect how we behave in our present circumstances.

1. Adopt a posture of submission. (v. 5b-7)

Recognizing that God is in control of everything relieves us of the need and desire to be in control of everything ourselves. While this notion may conflict with our egos, God wants us to live in dependence on Him. We are called to live lives characterized by submission.

As Christians, we should act humbly toward one another and toward God. Just as Jesus tied a towel around Himself to wash His disciples’ feet (John 13:4-5), so should we also clothe ourselves in humility in our interactions with fellow believers. Ultimately, this behavior demonstrates submission to God as we resist the urge to place ourselves above others. We need not worry about how this will affect us. Instead, we can place our worries in God’s hands.

2. Be on guard against the enemy. (v. 8-9)

Releasing control of our lives to God does not mean that we have no work to do. In the Christian life we will face attacks from the devil, who is opposed to the will of God. We cannot become complacent in our position, but rather, we must remain alert. Spiritual warfare is real and we must dress ourselves for battle (Ephesians 6:11-17). The enemy seeks to destroy us by paralyzing us in fear of him and by tempting us to sin.

God has prepared us for the battle, however. We can stand against the devil by standing on our faith. This faith is rooted in God’s Word. Jesus defeated Satan’s temptations by using the Word (Matthew 4:1-10) and we can as well.

3. Commit yourself to God's protection. (v. 10-11)

As Christians, we have nothing to fear. The problems we face, as large as they may appear, are no match for the power of God. Our God truly is an awesome God. He is the source of all grace and everything that is good comes from Him (James 1:17). He has saved us and given us an eternal reward through Christ. In eternity we will finally understand the extent to which His goodness outweighs the bad things we have experienced.

God preserves us along the journey of our lives and will complete His work in us when we reach eternity. Our responsibility is to trust Him in the meantime. Our God is sovereign and all power belongs to Him.

Conclusion: The eternal hope that we have as Christians should affect our behavior today. Our lives should be marked by humble service of one another and confidence in God's ability and willingness to care for us. Even attacks from the enemy are no cause for alarm because God is with us. We can entrust every aspect of our lives to Him.

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