

# I Really Hope So!

Hebrews 10:23

Reality Carp 11.16.o8

## 2 Things we need to keep in mind

1. The application part of Hebrews (1:1-10:18)
2. The context of Hebrews
  - a. Persecution
  - b. Personal Loss (10:32-34)

## This last week:

- Attacks against Christian Churches
- The SB County Fire (and others)
  - The simultaneous sense of **public opposition** and **personal loss**

It is into this very sort of context that the Holy Spirit in Hebrews gives us these points of application

- A very real and effective protocol for times like these

## V e r s e s 1 9 - 2 5

In these verses we have hidden the great Triad of Christianity:

- You know what it is from that famous passage in 1 Corinthians 13 (v. 13)
  - **And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**
    - These **theological virtues** (a virtue is theological if it has God as its object) are usually understood in their connectivity in this way:
      - There is no **love** without hope, there is no **hope** without love, and neither hope nor love without **faith**.
- Faith, hope, love
  - **Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith...** (v. 22)
  - **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope...** (v. 23)
  - **And let us consider how to spur one another on to love...** (v. 24)

We have these 3 “let us” statements

- **Let us** draw near to God (v. 22) = **worship**
- **Let us** hold fast the confession (v. 23) = **belief**
- **Let us** consider how to spur one another on and not forsake meeting together (v. 24) = **fellowship**

In difficult times we need to stay in:

- Worship (v.22)
- Belief (v. 23)
- Fellowship (v .24)

These are really the areas where we are **challenged** in difficult times

They often fall in that order. Be careful and check yourself...

## Lets deal with verse 23 today

The importance of **holding fast**

We have this repeated message in this book (in the context of tremendous difficulty) to **hold fast**

- It is presented as the only option! (3:6 and 14)

## Hold fast

- There are 2 different Greek words that convey this idea in Hebrews
  - **κατέχω** and **κρατέω** (synonyms)
    - *to keep secure, keep firm possession of, adhere firmly to*
    - *to remain closely united with*
- Hebrews 3:6 **κατέχω**  
*... Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we **hold fast** our **confidence** and the boast of **our hope** firm until the end.*
- Hebrews 3:14 **κατέχω**  
*For we have become partakers of Christ, if we **hold fast** the beginning of **our assurance** firm until the end*
- Hebrews 4:14 **κρατέω**  
*Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us **hold fast** our **confession**.*
- Hebrews 6:18 **κρατέω**  
*... we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to **take hold** of the **hope** set before us.*

- **to keep secure, keep firm possession of, adhere firmly to**
- **to remain closely united with**

When do you have to **hold fast** to something?

- When your **grasp on** or **nearness to** that thing is challenged!
- What or who challenges the Christian's **confession of hope**
  - Not too hard to guess

Let's first understand what our **confession of hope** is and that may help us understand how it is challenged

**The confession of our hope** (the hope we profess-NIV) (the hope we affirm-NLT)

- The hope that we **affirm, confess, and profess** and Christians
- What is it?
  - It is imperative that you know!

The Greek word used here for hope (ἐλπίς) means

- The looking forward to something **with some reason for confidence** respecting fulfillment
- **Grounds** for believing something good will happen

In our culture the popular phrase "I **hope so**" is really just thinly veiled pessimism.

- This has nothing to do with the Christian idea of hope.
  - **Confidence, grounds, reason**

Hope has to do with the future

- In Christianese we would say it is **eschatological**
- An aura of anticipation

Hope is contrasted with despair

Throughout history hope in the future was not characteristic of the pagan world.

- The word itself was seldom used.
- Burial inscriptions reveal no **confidence** regarding an afterlife.
- The best one could do was face death without fear or regret.
  - Cf. Paul acknowledges this pagan reality in:
    - Ephesians 2:12  
**remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.**
    - 1 Thessalonians 4:13

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do **the rest who have no hope.**

- 1 Thess. 4:16-18

**16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

**17** Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up **together with them** in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

**18** Therefore comfort one another with these words.

- The hope of being united with those that have gone before!

The Greek realization of hope was (and a common one today) was driven by what man considered to be his own possibilities.

- Expectations and hopes become man's own projection of his future.
- This concept (though it may bring false or fleeting hope to some) leaves others hopeless.
  - Their expectations and projections can bring only **fear.**

Christian hope is different

- It is not something we create or bring about or can do
- It is entirely dependent upon the Gospel!

Christian hope is not gained by looking around the world or to others for grounds for optimism

There is no need for the Christian to look around at all because our hope **was and is and is to come—Jesus!**

1 Timothy 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of **Christ Jesus, who is our hope**

Colossians 1:27

...God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

1 Peter 1:18-21

**18** 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.**

- Our hope is in Jesus Christ and the Gospel of God
- *Our future hope is based on Christ's past and current work*
  - **It is grounded in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, enthronement, and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ**
- We look forward in hope to the accomplishment of our redemption

Christian hope is

- An attitude in which we dare to commit ourselves to what is beyond human control

Christian hope is not based on our **experiences**

- Because our hope is based on what is beyond human achievement or control
- **It is learned**—it is learning about God and His work
  - It is learned by understanding how **finite** all our perception is and that the fullness of our life in God is yet to come

Christian hope is not based an **emotion**

- It is a habit of will

Christian hope has an **object**

- 1 Peter 1:13  
Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope** completely **on the grace** to be brought to you at the revelation **of Jesus Christ.**

Christian Hope is according to **grace**

- 1 Peter 1:13  
Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, **fix your hope** completely **on the grace** to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Christian hope is **communal**

- Ephesians 4:1-6
  - 1** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,
  - 2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,
  - 3** being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
  - 4** There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in **one hope** of your

calling;

**5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

**6** one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Christian hope looks forward a future **inheritance** heaven

- 1 Peter 1:3-5

**3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

**4 to obtain an inheritance** which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

**5** who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Christian hope climaxes in the Lord's **coming**

- Titus 2:11-13

**11** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

**12** instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

**13** looking for the **blessed hope** and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus

Christian hope is **purifying**

- 1 John 3:2-3

**2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

**3** And everyone who has **this hope** fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Christian hope should be **evident** and will be **challenged**

- 1 Peter 3:14-16

**14** But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed and do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,

**15** but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to **give an account for the hope that is in you**, yet with gentleness and reverence;

**16** and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

### Christian hope can **increase**

- Romans 15:13  
Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will **abound in hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Ephesians 1:18-19  
**18** I pray that the **eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that** you will know what is **the hope of His calling**, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,  
  
**19** and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

Christian hope, whether related to the return of Jesus or our heavenly inheritance, is not to be regarded as a form of **escapism**.

- It relates to the plans and promises of God, not the fears and failures of men.
- It is according to grace and not ourselves
  - Gives it confidence and constancy

Christian hope is not a consoling dream of the **imagination** which causes us to forget our present troubles.

- Christianity calls us to confront our present troubles with both the help of Christ and the hope of heaven as **armor and artillery**.

As Hebrews 10:23 says:

- We are to **hold fast** to the confession of this hope
  - **to keep secure, keep firm possession of, adhere firmly to**
  - **to remain closely united with**

**Again**, when do you have to **hold** something **fast**?

- When your **grasp on** or **nearness to** that thing is challenged!
- What or who challenges the Christian's **confession of hope**

### What challenges our **hope**?

- Walking by sight and not faith
  - Romans 8:24-25  
**24** For **in hope** we have been saved, but **hope** that is seen is not **hope**; for who **hopes** for what he already sees?
  - 25** But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

- Trusting and resting in temporal things
- Failing to have an eternal perspective
  - 1 Corinthians 15:19  
If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.
- Circumstances
- Secularism
- Religion
- Satan

We need to be able to say what the Psalmist said:

- Psalm 71:5  
For You are my **hope**; O Lord GOD,  
You are my **confidence** from my youth.

### Without wavering

- If the confession waivers it is because the confessor has waived
- To waver is to be **undecided** between two opinions or courses of action
- To be **without wavering** means:
  - Not bending, not giving way, steady
  - Unwavering hope = a good testimony

Why would we be we be wavering or undecided. Bending or giving way??

### For He who promised is faithful (the object of our hope)

- Our hope is built upon the faithfulness of God, and not in any way upon any thing in ourselves
- God's past record is your future assurance!

Hebrews 6:19-20

**19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast** and one which enters within the veil,

**20** where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.