

Colossians012129-041711
Bridge of Hope
April 17, 2011

“The Call of Hope”

Today we are going to continue to learn about the call of hope as we turn our attention to basis the of hope. Real hope is founded on or in something that can sustain it. To place hope in something that is unfounded is nothing more than just a wish. It is like saying “I hope it doesn’t rain today.” Does hoping that it doesn’t rain in the spring have any real foundation in Northeast Ohio? There needs to be a foundation to our hope so there can be something true or real about it.

So what we are saying is that what you place your hope in is the important thing. Now some people place their hope in their employment. Some place their hope in government. Others put their hope in education or possessions or bank accounts. There are some people who place their entire hope in family or significant relationships. Are these things bad? No, they aren’t bad, but we should not place our hope in them. Unfortunately there are many people in this world around us who place their hope in all of these things.

Then the next question we need to ask is “What or in whom should we place our hope?” Or, “Should we go the way of the stoics and refuse to place our hope in anything?” The stoics live their lives in the state of hopelessness expressed through a heart of apathy. They say “Whatever is going to happen will happen and I can’t do a thing about it so I won’t get too excited about anything happening and I won’t get too disappointed when things don’t happen. I just won’t hope for it and that will make it easier to live with.” Is this any way to live? It is just as hurtful as placing your hope in the wrong thing.

The only place any of us can safely place our hope is in God. Yes, it is in Jesus Christ. He is our hope. There is a line in a verse of scripture that we quote often when talking about hope and sometimes I wonder if we really understand what we are really saying. And then I wonder if we actually believe what we are saying. It is in book of Colossians found in the New Testament of the Bible. Let’s take a look at it.

Colossians 1:21-29 (NIV) *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*

Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

From verse 27 of this text we get the phrase that is said so often, Jesus . . . “the hope of glory.” Today I thought it would be good on this Palm Sunday in talking about the call of hope to focus on The Hope of Glory. So what exactly does the statement, the hope of glory, actually mean?

Paul said that the hope of glory is Christ, more specifically; he said that it is Christ in you or as some say Christ among you. The hope of glory is Jesus Christ in your life. It is when we go from knowing what Jesus said to do to actually doing it; living it in our life. It starts with the truth about Jesus; He is the Messiah, our Savior, King, and Lord; Jesus Christ is God! And then find it’s completion when that truth is lived out in our life. The hope of glory is when Jesus lives in and among us. It is recognizing that through His Holy Spirit Christ lives among us.

And so, the hope of glory is really about Christ in or among you. There are two different aspects of Christ in you that we want to look at. This week we will talk about Jesus transforming our life as an individual. It is personal. It is real. It is Christ in you the hope of glory. Next week we will take a look at Christ in you in Community as we look at Hope for Life. Let’s get started and take the next few moments to talk about this in terms of what Paul was thinking when writing to the church in Colossi.

The Hope of Glory is **CHRIST IN YOU – THE PERSON**

- **What does it mean to say “Christ in you?”**
 - To answer this question it seemed that the best way would be to simply tell the story from the scripture itself.
 - Romans is a great book for explaining what Christ in you actually means.
 - What we are going to do is skip across the book through some specific passages so that we can get a good picture of what Christ in you as an individual person looks like.
 - If you really want to understand this you will need to go home and read the book of Romans.
 - Let’s get started with . . .
- **Romans 3:23-25 (NLT)** *For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood.*
 - Christ in you starts with understanding that you have sinned, in acknowledging that your life falls short of the standard that God has set.
 - Christ in you then humbles yourself and accepts Jesus as your sacrifice and that you are made right through Jesus.
 - It is knowing that His sacrifice provides for your sin and you are made right through it.
 - Christ in you then means what we read in
- **Romans 6:19-23 (NLT)** *Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be*

slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy.

When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the obligation to do right. And what was the result? You are now ashamed of the things you used to do, things that end in eternal doom. But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Christ in you understands what you used to be and how you used to be a slave to the sinful things you did. Things you are now ashamed of having done.
 - Christ in you recognizes that you are now free from the power of sin; you are free of the very thing that used to draw you to the foolish things you lived.
 - It means that you no longer are enslaved to sin.
 - Christ in you embraces the idea of becoming a slave to righteousness so that you are able to do the things that lead to holiness and the eternal life you desire.
 - It is not a forced enslavement, but a voluntary submission so that you can obtain the free gift of eternal life.
 - Christ in you means that you understand that the cost for sin is eternal death and that God's gift for those who believe in Jesus is eternal life.
 - Christ in you does not mean you are perfect but that you are forgiven and through this forgiveness you have learned to live what we find in . . .
- **Romans 8:1-11 (NLT)** *So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.*

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

- Christ in you means that even though you have sinned you have also been set free and no longer are condemned by the sins you have committed.
- Christ in you means that you have now chosen a different way to live and that is to live under the direction of the Holy Spirit with whom Christ has sealed your life.

- Christ in you means that the sinful nature no longer dictates how you are to live as you now live according to what the Spirit of God says.
- Christ in you means that you have exchanged the sinful nature that you came to Jesus with for His nature which is revealed to you through the scripture and empowered to live in your life by the Holy Spirit.
- When we talk about Jesus the Hope of Glory we are really talking about the transformation of your life as we see Christ in you. You are changed and sanctified (made holy) and are being conformed into the likeness of Jesus.

Conclusion: Here is what we are saying on this Palm Sunday as we talk about Jesus, the Hope of Glory. When the followers of Jesus stood along the path and celebrated His arrival into Jerusalem they didn't understand what was about to happen in the hours and days to follow. All they knew was that Jesus had presented a different way of living and they believed what He had taught them was right. The people throwing out cloaks and laying down palm branches didn't understand what they really needed was Christ in them. What the people in Jerusalem thought they needed was Christ leading them. They were tired of the Roman domination. They had become weary from a law driven faith that was impossible to live out. And Jesus presented freedom and life and love; He presented hope. He could lead them!

The people along the path didn't understand the sacrifice that would be required so they could be empowered by the Holy Spirit to actually live the way Jesus talked about. They didn't know that what they really needed was Christ in them.

Christ in you is about living life in the new way that Jesus said to live. It is a life who responds to the call of hope. Jesus called His disciples to live, He called them to hope found in Him. It is the kind of life that the apostles called the early church believers to live. A life that was different from what they had lived before, a life directed by the hope found in Christ.

On this Palm Sunday we call you to shed the apathy of the stoics and embrace the hope that is found in Jesus Christ who is our hope of glory.