

“Hope”
Rom. 5:1-5

--CEFC 1/5/19; 3/14/04
--cf. NEFC 11/17/96 on Rom. 5:1-11
--Eden, Cambridge 1985 on Rom. 5:1,2
--Creekside, G'ville, 1984 on Rom. 5:1,2

Topics: Hope

“Abandon all hope you who enter here.”

In Dante's *Inferno* these words were displayed above the gates of hell:

“Abandon all hope you who enter here.”

They capture quite well what makes hell so hellish—

It's not just a place apart from the presence of God,

a place of punishment and pain,

but it is a place without hope.

Hell has no outlook for improvement,

no chance that things will ever get better,

no prospect that this present condition of divine absence,

of hardship or pain

is only temporary and actually is a part of a much bigger purpose or plan
that will eventually issue in something good and beautiful.

“Abandon all hope you who enter here.” /

What is it that makes depression such a dreadful affliction? —

It is the feeling of hopelessness that grips you.

All is dark—there is no light beckoning you to press on and persevere.

There's simply no reason to get up out of bed in the morning.

And this hopeless despair of depression is the most common cause of suicide.

That's why it's been said that a person can live about forty days without food,

about three days without water,

and about eight minutes without air—

but only one second without hope.

Perhaps you've seen or heard of terminally ill patients

who die soon after some major family event—

a wedding, a birthday, or Christmas.

It was the anticipation, the hope, of those events that kept them going.

Jerome Groopman, professor at Harvard Medical School,

in his book *The Anatomy of Hope: How People Prevail in the Face of Illness,*

writes that for his patients, hope has proved as important

as any medication he proscribes or procedure he might perform,

“Hope, I have come to believe,” he writes,

“is as vital to our lives as the very oxygen that we breathe.”¹

We need hope.

It is essential to life itself. /

But where is hope to be found?

What is set before us to give us reason to press on

even when everything inside us wants to give up?

I’m not talking about something as trivial as our next meal, or a holiday celebration,
or some form of entertainment

like tomorrow night’s championship football game.

I’m talking about something bigger than that—

a hope that encompasses life itself—

what it means, what it’s for, where it’s headed.

Bertrand Russell, the out-spoken British atheist of the last century,

was devoted to a philosophical naturalism that denied the supernatural.

In that framework he described his bottom line like this:

“All the labor of the ages,

all the devotion,

all the inspiration,

all the noonday brightness of human genius,

are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system. . . .

the whole temple of man’s achievement

must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins.

Only within the scaffolding of these truths,

only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair

can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.”²

Some “firm foundation” that is!

But if they really thought about it,

that is exactly what many people must think awaits them—

nothing but a hopeless end.

Utter annihilation is the best they can hope for.

Now, people may talk like that,

but they can’t really live like that.

So they hide from such a conclusion

and distract themselves with the trivial hopes of day-to-day living.

For we all need hope, something to hope for.

It’s like the story of a long and rough Atlantic crossing

where a seasick passenger was leaning over the rail of the ocean liner

turning several shades of green.

A steward came along and tried to cheer him up by saying,

“Don’t be discouraged, sir!

¹ (New York: Random House, 2004), p. xiv. (cited in Morgan, ed., *Heaven*)

² from his *A Free Man’s Worship*. (Cited in *Illus. Unlimited*)

You know that no one's ever died of seasickness yet!"
 The nauseous passenger looked up at the steward with baleful eyes and replied,
 "Oh, don't say that!
 It's only the hope of dying that kept me alive this long!"

We need hope,
 and the Bible teaches us that Christians ought to be full of hope—
 real hope, eternal hope.

Peter begins his first letter—

**"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
 In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope
 through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead . . ." (1 Pet. 1:3).**

Paul prays for the Ephesian Christians that

**"the eyes of their heart may be enlightened
 in order that they might know
 the hope to which God has called them . . ." (Eph. 1:18)**

He reminds them that at one time they were separate from Christ,

"without hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

But no more!

Now, he says we are to be **"joyful in hope"** (Rom. 12:12).

And in our passage this morning, he says,

"we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

Does that describe your life?

Do you have a "living hope"?

Are you **"joyful in hope"**?

Do you have a hope big enough to encompass all of life—

a vision of the future that inspires you to live

with purpose and perseverance?

As we begin this new year,

I thought this would be a good to focus on the compelling hope

found in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But first I think we should take a moment to clarify

what kind of hope we are talking about,

for the word "hope" can be used in all sorts of ways.

Hope can be used to describe a **naïve optimism about life.**

The optimist is one who is sure that every day in every way

things are going to get better.

That's not the hope that the Bible offers us at all.

Tomorrow will not necessarily be better than today.

All your plans will not necessarily work out.

You won't be exempt from conflict in your workplace or your family

or cured of every disease.

There's no promise in the Bible that you'll get rich.

In fact, most often, hope is talked about in the context of suffering, as we'll see.

Biblical hope is not just some naïve optimism,
 nor is it merely **some vague and uncertain aspiration**,
 some fond wish for the fulfillment of some desire,
 like, I hope the Redskins do better next year—
 a very uncertain hope, indeed!

Biblical hope is not just a vague aspiration;
 or a fond wish for some desirable outcome.

Biblical hope is different.

The hope the Bible talks about is a certain conviction about the future—
 And it can be certain because it is grounded in a particular person
 and it is directed toward a specific end.

Listen to these verses from the Psalms--

Psa. 130:7 **O Israel, put your hope in the LORD,**
 for with the LORD is unfailing love
 and with him is full redemption.
 Psa. 147:11 **the LORD delights in those who fear him,**
 who put their hope in his unfailing love.
 Psa. 62:5 **Find rest, O my soul, in God alone;**
 my hope comes from him.

As the prophet Jeremiah puts it,
 the Lord himself is "**the hope of Israel**" (Jer. 14:8; 17:13)

Our hope is not in ourselves and our abilities to make a bright future;
 our hope is not even in some vague belief
 in the arc of history bending toward justice.
 Our hope is in the Lord and his unfailing love;
 our hope is in his gracious promise to redeem a people for himself.

Biblical hope can be certain
 because it is grounded in the unchanging character of God.

And in the New Testament that gracious, redeeming character of God
 is revealed supremely in a person—
 Jesus Christ.

So Paul can speak of Jesus Christ himself as "**our hope**" (1 Tim. 1:1).
 Jesus is our hope both as the ground of our hope and as its goal.

God has revealed his saving purpose in Jesus Christ—
 In his glorious resurrection, he has conquered death,
 and he has ascended into heavenly glory—
 entering into the heavenly sanctuary
 as both the high priestly offerer and the sacrificial offering on our behalf
 to bring us to God.
 And he is now alive forever to intercede for us.

The book of Hebrews describes this gospel work of God this way:

**"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul,
firm and secure" (Heb. 6:19).**

Biblical hope is not a vague wish—
it is solid, it is dependable, it is certain—it is like a immovable anchor.
It is firm and secure,
for biblical hope is grounded in the unchanging character of God himself.
Biblical hope is a future faith in God's promises for his people,
a future destiny already realized in Jesus Christ.

Our hope is in the Lord—as he has revealed himself in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is whom we hope in,
but what is it that we hope for?
What is the content of Christian hope?
Paul in his letter to the Christians in Rome
would answer that question with one word--*glory*.
Rom. 5:2--"**we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.**"

Or he says later in Romans 8--
"**I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing
with the glory that will be revealed in us**" (Rom. 8:18).
and he says in the last verse in that passage--
v. 30--"**those God justified, he also glorified.**"

And it was that word "glory" that introduced that theme of this passage in v. 17—
"**Now if we are children, then we are heirs --
heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ,
if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.**"

Glory—It's a wonderful word, isn't it.
What comes to your mind when you hear that word?
Perhaps images of **praise and honor** associated with athletic victory
as those NFL players lay their bodies on the line
in the hope of Superbowl glory.

Or perhaps that word suggests **beauty**--
as when we say, "What a glorious day!"

But Paul is using the word "glory" here to summarize and somehow to capture
the totality of the riches of the goodness of God
that he will one day bestow upon his beloved children.
It is the inheritance that he will share with them--
and the key to understanding what it means is found in one little expression--
where Paul says that we are "**co-heirs with Christ.**"
This blessed inheritance, the riches of his goodness to us,
will take the same form as that which he bestowed upon Jesus Christ.

We will share in the very "**glory**" which God the Father gave to his own Son.

And that glory will not simply be revealed "to us" but "in us"--
actually transforming who we are.

In Philippians 3 Paul talks about awaiting the coming of Christ,
"who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control,
will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

Or in 1 John 3:2--"Dear friends, now we are children of God,
and what we will be has not yet been made known.
But we know that when [Christ] appears,
we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

We are co-heirs with Christ—
destined to share in his glory.

And what is the glory of Christ, risen from the dead,
now in the presence of God the Father?--
what is his glory, but a share in the very glory of God--
a share in his very life and character.

That is the destiny of the children of God--
to share in the glorious life of their Father in heaven--
to know him, to love him, to share in his glorious life.

God's purpose for us, as Paul says in Rom. 8:29,
is to "**conform us to the likeness of his Son.**"

In the beginning God created Adam as his image and likeness in the world,
but through disobedience and sin, that image became tarnished.
"All have sinned," Paul says, "**and now lack the glory of God**" (3:23).

But God sent his Son into the world to rescue us from Adam's curse,
and restore that tarnished image--

Jesus himself is the image of God--
a human being as he was meant to be--
man created to glorify God
by reflecting and even sharing in God's glory.

And by faith we too can share in that glory--
and become all that we were originally created to be and more.

This is the content of the Christian's hope.

This is the overarching, all-encompassing purpose that God has for each of us
that he is working out through his providential care
in every circumstance of our lives.

A share in the very glory of God--that is our hope.

Is that your hope?

If it's not, the Bible offers you no reason to be hopeful about the future.

For this is the hope God offers us

for which we can be certain.

This is the hope that can encourage and sustain us

and enable us to endure as we look to the future—
it's the hope of God's glory.

But the question is--
do we have any good reasons for believing anything so marvelous?

For you can have a **false hope**.

We have those all the time, don't we.

They say nothing in the world arouses more false hope
than the first four hours of a diet.

How many marriages begin with great hope—
the couple pledges their love to one another until death do they part,
and they can't imagine anything coming between them.

But things do,
and the bubble of their hope bursts like a helium balloon.
And without hope in their relationship, the marriage dies.

Can **Christian** hope be like that? a false hope?
a hope that doesn't hold up when the challenges of life
seem to conspire against it?

It can—
It can if that hope is wrongly understood
or not solidly based.

So how can we have a real hope,
a biblical hope,
a hope that can see us through the real struggles of the real world?

Let's turn back to our passage—Rom. 5:1-5.
Let's see how we can have such a hope
and why we need such a hope.

1 **"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith,**
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
2 **through whom we have gained access by faith**
into this grace in which we now stand.
And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

Hope for the future is not where Paul starts in this passage, but where he ends up—
He begins by looking back—
"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith,"

Our hope for the future is based upon what God has already done in the past.

Paul is speaking to these Roman Christians
of their common experience of a past event--

They have been justified,
 and he uses the word "**therefore**" to indicate that
 this statement sums up all that he has been saying in chaps. 1-4 of this letter.

He has been arguing that the whole world
 stands under the righteous judgment of a holy God--
 both Jew and Gentile.
 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
 We all stand under God's wrath;
 we all deserve God's eternal condemnation.

But through faith in Jesus Christ we can be saved from that fate.
 We can be made right with God, declared "not guilty."
 For Christ has taken our sins upon himself.
 God presented his Son Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement, Paul tells us.
 In Christ's death our sins were judged.

As Paul says in Colossians 2:4—
 The certificate of debt consisting of the decrees against us has been cancelled.
 God has taken it away, having nailed it to a cross.

This implies that for the Christian--
 The great and terrible day of judgment has in a real sense
 moved from the throne of God in heaven on the last day
 to the cross of Christ on a hill outside Jerusalem 2000 years ago.
 Sure, a future judgment remains,
 but for the one who trusts in Christ,
 it is more aptly described as a "fruit inspection."
 It deals with rewards, not with one's final destiny,
 for if we belong to Christ our judgment has already taken place.

This provides the foundation for an authentic assurance and certainty
 about where we stand with God.
 In Christ, we have been justified by God's grace—
 we stand acquitted by the judge as we come in faith—
 a transaction has been made.

Do you have this assurance?
 Can you say, by God's grace, "I have been saved?"

This is where we must start in the Christian life—
 our justification in the past through the cross of Christ.

But that is not all that Christ accomplished in his saving work.

Can you imagine asking someone--"How's your marriage?"
 And all he could say was--It was a lovely wedding.
 The bride's dress was beautiful,
 the cake was delicious,

and I got this shiny gold ring as a present.

Surely there is more to a marriage than a wedding.

But how many people when asked about their Christian life

only tell you about their conversion "X" number of years ago.

They prayed a prayer, or got baptized,

or had some experience of Christ's presence and forgiveness—

but it's as if nothing has happened since then.

What a sad testimony that is.

Sure, there's got to be a time when we put our trust in Christ

and make his death our own—

a time when we are justified in God's sight.

But there is much more to the Christian life than that.

Becoming a Christian is not just getting a free ticket to heaven

any more than a marriage means just getting a ring.

No, in each there's a new relationship to enjoy, and so Paul goes on--

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith,

we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,"

We have peace with God--

Here we move from the legal doctrine of justification

in which God is seen as our Judge

to the relational doctrine of reconciliation

in which God becomes our loving Father.

What a change has taken place in our relationship with God!

In Rom. 5:10 Paul says we were God's enemies.

We need to appreciate this—

our sin was not just the transgression of some impersonal company policy

or of the institutional laws of the state.

Our sin was a personal offence against God himself.

But through the work of Christ we obtain not just an uneasy truce

but the real restoration of fellowship

as the source of the hostility (our sin)

has seen dealt with once and for all and has been put away for good.

The judge steps down from the bench

and offers us his friendship and love and even adopts us as his own children.

Closely related to this, Paul says,

"we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

through whom we have gained access by faith

into this grace in which we now stand."

We have access into this grace—

this position of being in God's favor, of being loved by him,

of having his mercy showered on us--of being his child.

It is a free access;

it is a bold and confident access to the Father through Christ (Col. 3:18).

Access—that word evokes the thought of the privilege of being introduced
into the presence of someone in high position.

In the world of corporate business, the question is,
Who has access to the CEO?

In the world of Washington politics, the question is,
Who has access to the President?

But what a privilege we have—we have access to the King of kings!
Where once that access into the holy presence of God in the inner most Holy of Holies
in the temple of God was limited to Israel's high priest—
and for him only once a year.

But now through our union with Christ, we are exhorted
to "**draw near with confidence to the throne of grace,**
that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."
Now that is a privilege beyond imagination!

We have peace with our God--and free access into his presence through Christ.

But do we take advantage of it?

Do we enjoy that new relationship with our Father
which is available to us in Christ?

Do we cherish that peace that is ours,
that peace that surpasses all understanding
as we know that the sovereign God of all the earth—
the all-wise and all-powerful King--loves us like a father?
Again I say--what a privilege!

We have been justified in the past—

Now we enjoy peace with God in the present.
That is the basis of our hope for the future.

But you may well ask—

why should this future hope be so important,
when the Christian life offers us so much right now?
Peace with God is magnificent— isn't that enough?

Haven't we learned that it's not the message of some future heaven
that speaks to modern men and women—
that's just pie in the sky.

What matters is the here and now--the immediate.

Didn't Jesus say that he came that we may have life in all its abundance—
meaning and self-fulfillment as we live our lives.

Isn't that the heart of the Christian message?

Why should we bother about some future hope
when we can enjoy such comfortable Christian lives now?

That's a common way of thinking, especially here in the comforts of the West,

but the attitude of Paul is amazingly different.
He rejoices in hope—“**we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.**”

Later he speaks of groaning within ourselves
as we eagerly wait for the blessed hope of the appearing of Jesus Christ.
For, he says, “**we have been saved in hope.**”

Why this difference?

Why does Paul feel the need to speak this way
when we often don't?

Why is this future hope often downplayed in teaching on the Christian life?

Two crucial points of confusion have often caused us
to have a distorted view of the Christian life
which in turn has caused us to lose sight of the importance of our hope.

1) First, though we are given peace with God,
peace with God does not equal peace with the world.

The world--though loved by God, is never said to love God.

In fact, the world is the domain of the devil.

It consists of the structures of fallen humanity—

its cultures, institutions, and values which stand in opposition to God.

Jesus before his death--John 16:33--“**In this world you will have trouble.**”
or in Jn. 15:18,19--“**If the world hates you realize that it has hated me first.**”

**If you were of this world the world would love you
but because you are not of the world but I called you out of the world.”**

In 1 John, we read, the person who loves the world is an enemy of God.

Certainly, we live in a world with signs and glimpses of God's beauty and truth—
but the world is also full of injustice, and hatred
and rebellion against God and the values of his kingdom.
Didn't the world crucify the Son of God?

No, we are assured of peace with God but not peace with the world.

2) And second, though we have peace with God
that does not mean that we will experience **peace with ourselves.**

How can we?

When we became Christians,

we have a new life, new loves, new aspirations, new power,

but we are not automatically transformed into our heavenly bodies

in which we can automatically live heavenly lives.

We find that our desires often conflict with our duties.

Though redeemed, we remain fallen creatures, saved sinners,

and we will die—

and until we die, we shall know something of that inner struggle

of desiring to do what is right

but still finding ourselves falling far short (Rom. 7).
 Though at peace with God, we should be at war
 with the remnants of that old sinful self that still lingers.

Paul saw this clearly—
 The Christian life is a battle.

Do we see it that way?
 Are we too comfortable in our fallen world and in our fallen bodies?
 Have we made concessions with sin?
 Have we signed a truce with the devil?
 Have we lost sight of the fact that the Christian life is pilgrimage
 which will include struggles and hardships—
 as we whose citizenship is in heaven are to set our sights on the celestial city.

The Apostle Paul knew the narrow road that lay before him as a follower of Jesus.
 As a result, he knew that only the certain hope of a new heaven and new earth
 and only the certain hope of transformed resurrected bodies
 free from the presence of sin
 could give us the strength to persevere in this struggle to the end.
 Therefore, we are to look not only to the past
 but also to the future as we seek to live out our Christian lives.
 We need hope if we are to keep pressing on.

Because we have this hope, Paul says in v. 3 of our passage,
**“we also rejoice in our sufferings,
 because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
 perseverance, character;
 and character, hope.”**

The things that can discourage us—our sufferings—
 become for the Christian the very things that strengthen our hope.

Hope is like a muscle—it needs exercise if it is to grow.
 And it is precisely in those times which seem most hopeless
 that our hope is exercised the most.

And in all this, Paul is confident—
 v. 5—**“And hope does not disappoint us,
 because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
 whom he has given us.”**

Again, our hope is grounded in the love of God,
 and that love is brought into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.
 The Holy Spirit unites us to Christ,
 and so he acts as the bridge between
 what Christ has accomplished for us in the past
 and what he will do in us in the future.

The Spirit is the down payment of that future glory,
the foretaste of that glorious feast.

The Holy Spirit "is the present guarantee of a great destiny yet to be entered into."³

"Do you see? God wants us to have hope.

And not just any fond wish, but the hope that does not disappoint,
that is firmly anchored in the past,
and certain to be fulfilled in a glorious future,

but poured out now in our hearts as a foretaste and guarantee."⁴

The Holy Spirit, though his work of bringing God's love into our hearts,
confirms that our hope is real, it is certain, it is solid and dependable.

It won't let us down,
because God's won't let us down.

As one writer put it,

"The Christian's future is as bright as the promises of God."

"We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

And why not?--

You now have "**an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade --
kept in heaven for you,"**

This hope means that God has set his love upon you--

he has adopted you into his family as his own child,
so that you may be an heir of his glorious riches.

You are a co-heir with Christ, a child of the King--

which makes you a prince or princess.

That's who you are--

regardless of what other people may think of you in this world--
you may not get much respect;

you may not get your name in the paper;

you may not have received honors and accolades in this world--

but this hope means that you are somebody of incalculable significance
in the sight of God.

And not only that--

you know where you're headed in life--

your life has a goal, a purpose--

to live in a way worthy of this royal position

to which you have been called.

Your Father in heaven is putting you through training

in preparation for your ascent to his royal throne.

This is what they do with the royal family in England, isn't it--

³C.F.D. Moule, *Biblical Hope*.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Prince William and Prince Harry had to attend school,
 and they had to engage in certain forms of service,
 even the hardships of military service,
 to prepare them for their royal role.

That's what God is doing in your life right now—
 preparing you to rule in his glorious kingdom.

That's what Paul is talking about when he says that
**"God works all things for the good of those who love God
 and are called according to his purpose"** (Rom. 8:28).

For his purpose for you is that you are a co-heir with Christ in divine glory.

He is simply preparing you to enter into his glory.
 He is refining your character,
**"so that your faith . . . may be proved genuine
 and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."**

This is why this hope should cause you to rejoice—
 We of all people ought to be full of hope,
 even when things look dark all around us.

Things can be dark—
 just as they were dark on that first Good Friday afternoon.
 Jesus, the Son of God, hung upon a Roman cross,
 despised and rejected,
 suffering the pain and humiliation of a criminal's death.
 Never had evil so appeared to triumph.

But that darkness did not last.
 It wasn't the last word.
 God's light appeared in the resurrection of Jesus—
 a light brighter than the noonday sun declaring God's victory over sin and death.

That's why Christians rejoice in hope.
 Your darkness, and the darkness of this world,
 can never be darker than that day,
 and so we have hope.

God's good purposes will prevail!

Some people can look only to a hopeless end,
 we can look to an endless hope.

As we prepare to come to the Lord's Table,
 let's pray—as I invite our servers to come forward.

1John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God,

and what we will be has not yet been made known.
But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him,
for we shall see him as he is.
3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

Benediction:

Rom. 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.

Communion—

The Lord's Supper displays wonderfully the gospel hope
that we've been talking about—

First, it calls us to look back—
to remember through these elements
what Jesus did for us
when he gave his life for us on the cross—
his body was broken and his blood was shed.

Then, this table speaks of the present peace with God we enjoy,
this grace in which we now stand,
as we commune with Christ
as we partake of his body and blood in the bread and the cup.

And finally, this Supper points us to the future—
when we will share in that great messianic banquet,
when our Lord Jesus comes again to gather his people to himself.

Some early Christian used to give a cup of milk and some honey
to new believers who were sharing in their first communion
as a foretaste of the heavenly food which they would partake
in the kingdom of God.

For that was their hope.

May this meal increase our hope in the Lord
and our hope of his glory.

Benediction:

Rom. 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.

Great Texts/Great Truths:

“Hope”
Rom. 5:1-5

Life without hope is a living hell. So for the Christian, hope is essential to who we are. We are to be “joyful in hope” (Rom. 12:12). But what is this hope and how can we have it in this world we live in? In our passage this morning Paul points us to the answers.

I. What is biblical hope?

II. How can we have this hope?

III. Why do we need this hope?

“... we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” –Rom. 5:2

Sermon Response:**“Hope”**
Rom. 5:1-5

- How do you hear the word “hope” used most frequently? What kind of things do people hope for? What is the ground of their hope? What is it based on?
- What is distinctive about biblical hope? What can make it certain and sure?
- What is the content of biblical hope? What are we to hope for?
- Why is hope essential to the gospel message?
- How does biblical hope help you to persevere, and even to rejoice, in hard times?
- How does the Lord’s Supper point us to biblical hope?
- How can you grow in hope?