

Fil-Am Community Church.

Moving Forward with Confidence

How to Live with Hope (Part 5 of 5)

January 31, 2010

(Jeremiah 29:11) (NIV)

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

This is the last message in our series called moving ahead with confidence, in the past weeks we've looked at how we can be confident about the future by knowing how not to get discouraged, how to do and have much more, how to overcome obstacles, and how to win in life.

The attitude that can change anything when we face the future is called Hope.

We can look once again at **Jeremiah 29:11** and see where it promises us God's future, it promises to us God's hope.

We can look at the dictionary and see that it says hope is to wish for something to be true because it is possible. We can almost here people say when they go to a movie or a concert, I hope I get my moneys worth, or when they but that quick pick or lotto, say I hope I hit the numbers.

The Bible doesn't use the word hope that way. When the Bible uses it, it doesn't mean "I wish", because hope in the Bible is a **fact**, similar to saying I'm sure, or **I have confidence in it being completed.**

Let me give you a word definition of hope.

Hope is when I realize that **God is in control**, when I see that and come to that realization it changes everything. When I realize that **Gods plans will always prevail**, I have hope, ***I have assurance.***

We are all in need of hope, if you do not think so just look at any news channel, or pick up any newspaper and look at the headlines, let's face it, and we are living in a dying world.

Remember if I have Hope I can Go On!

Hope is that thing that gives us the strength to go on after a loss or a disappointment or a dream that refuses to come alive one more time.

We can look at the story of Florence Chadwick, who was the first woman to swim the English Channel both ways.

In July of 1951 she was going to swim from Catalina Island off the coast of California to the shore a little north of San Diego Californian. She didn't make it on her first attempt; it wasn't because of the cold water, sharks, or the 15-16 hour swim it will take. It was the fact that the fog rolled in and she couldn't see the coastline. It seemed that she quit just half a mile from the goal, all because she see the coastline. Once she got out of the water she said if the fog had not been there and she could have seen the coastline she would have never stopped but would have completed the goal.

She attempted it again, and just like last time the fog rolled in on her, this time she knew that just beyond the fog was the coastline. She not only finished the swim but did it in less than two hours faster than anyone else so far.

Has the fog rolled into your life, keeping you from seeing the coastline right ahead of you?

(1Peter 1:6) (NIV)

⁶In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.

I would like to be able to cope with anything in life, I would love to be able to keep going when the chips are down and it doesn't look good for the home team. How do I have hope during these times?

(Romans 5:3-4) (NIV)

³Not only so, but we also **rejoice** in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces **perseverance**; ⁴perseverance, **character**; and character, **hope**.

The above verse is considered God's assembly line, *Suffering produces Perseverance, which produces Character, which produces Hope.*

The process starts with step number 1.

1. Have a problem.

Jesus says in John 16:33, "In this world you will have trouble." ***Are you going to have trouble in 2010?***

We must understand that problems are inevitable, meaning they are going to happen regardless.

You could look at any problem in your life and respond "***Why Me?***"

You must face the fact that you are going to have problems; the issue is not if we are going to have them, we are, the issue is how we are going to deal with them.

We must also realize that problems are unexpected, they seem to hit you when you least expect them. You can't plan for them; they sneak up on you as if to ambush you.

Now the key thing to remember is that problems are used by God to develop and grow us.

(1Corinthians 10:13) (NIV)

¹³No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

(James 1:2) (NIV)

²Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

We need to remember to look at the verses above and realize that God is in control and knows that we can handle the things thrown at us even if we doubt that from time to time.

2. We need to practice patience with the problems given.

Looking back at Romans 5:4 we understand that suffering produces perseverance, (Patience). This is required for growth.

Many people don't understand this principle and try to run from our problems, they try and hide from the problems, anything short of realizing that we need to face the problems and accept them.

We need to realize that once we stop running from our problems, stop trying to hide from them and turn them over to God, knowing that God is in control, trusting in that fact, things will seem so much easier to handle.

A key thing to remember is that Trust must be built upon truth. It cannot be built upon a lie; it will never stand the test of time.

Look at it from the worldly or carnally minded individual. If you are hungry what do you do? You get something to eat. If you are sleepy what do you do? You get some sleep. When you feel hopeless where do you turn? ***The answer should be the Bible.*** But said to say too many this is the last resort instead of the first. What we typically do is surf the channels on our TV or turn into Dr Phil or Oprah.

Trust me you will not find hope that's built on truth there.

The secret is to stop looking to the world for that truth, but search Gods word, it's the only thing that will never let you down, or desert you!

3. Develop Character.

God starts to develop us, once we have been tested. Remember how is a diamond made? It's a piece of coal that has been introduced to immense heat and pressure and develops as a diamond. It has been through the fire.

If you find anyone who has character I bet if you dig a little deeper you will see that they have been through the fire and with patience endured, to get them where they are today.

We can't build our hope of future on material things that can easily be taken away at a moments notice. Look how easily everything you have worked for all your life can be taken away by one earthquake, fire, flood, storm etc. When they are pulled out from under us we think that all hope has been lost. The truth is we have built our hope on the wrong thing.

(Matthew 6:19-21) (NIV)

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

When you build your hope on the character that God alone can develop in your life, no one can take that away from you!

Hope doesn't come by developing a career it comes by developing character!

Many of us need to remember to trust the fact that God is working in a problem that you're facing right now even though you can't see it.

It is just like the swimmer Florence Chadwick and the Fog has rolled in on your life, and you have no idea where the coastline is.

We need to remember today that God is in control, and we must say that we trust the fact that God is working it out in our lives. We need to realize that even though we may be going through some issue right now, we need to trust the fact that even though we are suffering now, and don't understand or see where its going, there will come a time when we have made it through the fog and find ourselves standing on the coast line.

Remember it says in God word in Isaiah 49:23, ***"Those who hope in Me will not be disappointed."***

Remember when the Devil tries to keep you down by continuing to bring up your past, **remind him of his future!**

When the going gets tough remember all we have to do is skip to the back of the book, **We WIN!**

(Revelations 21:3-5) (NIV)

³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." ⁵He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

We look forward to seeing you next week.

Remember if you have prayer request don't sit on them pass them on to the saints.

Remember the theme for 2010 is Above and Beyond.