

THAT YE MAY ABOUND IN HOPE

Here we are—the 6th Sunday of 2026! So far, you’ve had a “hodge podge” of sermon topics! The year opened with a guest speaker, then two sermons with a “New Year” theme, followed by a pro-life sermon. Last week, we looked at what God’s Word says about the **role** of government—and our duty to **submit ourselves** to the government—unless it asks us to **disobey God!** Another responsibility God gives us is to **support—not resist or protest**—law enforcement when they are doing what God has declared they should do, which is to “punish the evil doers” (Romans 13:4)!

This morning, I want to go back to—and finish up—the mini-series: “Attitudes for 2026: Humble, Hungry, and Hope-filled!” We’ve already looked at God’s desire that we **humble** ourselves and one way to do that is **judge** (meaning evaluate) ourselves. The standard, of course, is the Word of God! We are to compare **our lives** to what **God wants our lives to be** based on what He says in His Word—not on how we “stack up” against others!

A **second** attitude God’s wants us to have is **hunger—not for food, but for God Himself!** In Psalm 27:8, God said to David—and now says to us—“Seek ye my face!” In essence, God is saying, ‘Draw near to Me! I want you to come **into my presence** and **be with Me** and **talk “heart-to-heart” with me** as a friend talks to His friend!’

David’s response? “My heart said unto Thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.” In other words, ‘I will do it immediately—and whole-heartedly—because that is the place of fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore!’

What about us? Is that our response? Is that our desire? Do we “take God up” on His offer to us? James 4:8a reminds us “**Draw nigh** to God, and **He will draw nigh** to you.”

This morning, we are going to look at a **third** attitude God wants us to have and it is this: **be hope-filled!** God wants all His children—not just a select few—to **abound in hope**. We see that truth in Romans 15; let’s turn there. For the sake of context, please follow along as I read verses 7-13.

Notice again verse 13: “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, **that ye may abound in hope**, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

First let’s consider... **1. The request**

At first glance, it is easy to overlook the fact that this is a **prayer**. **Why** am I calling it a prayer? Because when you **ask God to do something**, that is a prayer!

A. The request is **to** the God of hope

Who is Paul praying to? The God of hope! But what is **hope**? It’s one of those many words that we **know what it means**—kinda/sorta—but we have a hard time **defining**, right? In some respects, “hope” is like **faith**—believing in something that you can’t see! Except...we know **it is different** because I Corinthians 13:13 makes a distinction between the two! **I Corinthians 13:13** “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” It doesn’t say these **2**; it says these **3**—meaning faith & hope r different!

Our English word “hope” is translated from the Greek word *el-pece*’ which occurs 53 times in the Greek NT. Not surprisingly, it is used in a couple of different ways. Notice Colossians 1:5 on your outline—a verse we looked at quite some time ago. Colossians 1:5 “For **the hope** which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;” Maybe you remember me saying at that time that we often think of “hope” as a **verb**—an action word—instead of a **noun**, which it often times is. In Col 1:5, “hope” is a **noun** and means expectation—the thing we are looking for and counting on.

But here—in Romans 15:13—it carries a slightly different meaning. This definition from *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* fits the context best. Hope is “the happy anticipation of unseen and future good” (232).

Not sure about you, but I like that definition! “The happy anticipation of unseen and future good!”

Isn't that what we ***should all want***—and what very few people ***seem to have***?

Let's think for a moment of some of the ***trials in life*** and the difficulty of maintaining hope as we go through the trial. Not all trials are the same in ***difficulty***—or in ***length***. Consequently, the ability to have hope—"the happy anticipation of unseen future good"—varies depending on the type of trial.

1) Temporary, non "life-or-death" trials.

--Water pipes don't stay frozen forever, do they? Furnaces—and cars—get fixed; water-heaters get replaced, torn ligaments—and cuts from chainsaws heal—and the flu and common colds eventually go away.

--We have hope—we have a happy anticipation—that these things will be in the ***rear-view mirror*** someday.

--***Why***—in these instances—do we have hope? Because we've gone through similar things in the past, "and it came to pass," right? Even ***unsaved people*** "handle" trials like these fairly easily and "have hope" because they can often times "work their way" out of their problem!

2) Longer-lasting—and heart-breaking—trials. Things like:

--Ongoing and painful medical conditions that will last the rest of your life!

--***Being separated*** from a loved one ***through death***—like the Francke family...and Sharon...and Joyce...

--The heartache ***from divorce*** that seems like it will never go away!

--And the ***injustice of a legal system*** that sometimes puts ***innocent people*** in prison—and leaves ***wicked people*** loose on the streets!

We need a ***different kind of hope*** in these cases, don't we? To happily anticipate future good—in spite of the heart-ache—we need a ***God-given*** hope that is based on the ***character and promises*** of God as seen in the ***Word of God!***

Maybe I'm drilling a little too deep, but in my mind there's a ***third*** category that can defeat and discourage God's people—and challenge their hope—and it is this...

3) The presence—and often-times triumph—of wickedness! Babies are murdered...the Bible is ridiculed...children are trafficked...God's name is blasphemed...God's people are mocked—and in some places are killed! Not only that, but with all the ***division and hatred*** in our country, we seem to be constantly on the brink of a ***civil war***—and possibly a ***world war!***

How can God's people ***abound in hope*** when all ***this is going on*** in the world? Once again, we need a God-given hope—and God tells us that He Himself is the ***source*** of hope and the ***giver*** of hope!

So ***the request is to*** the God of hope—the One who can give us a "happy anticipation of unseen future good." What was the request ***for***? ***B. The request is for believers to be filled with all joy and peace***

Why am I stressing that Paul's request is for ***believers***? Because ***Paul stresses*** it is ***for believers!***

--Vs 6. Can you glorify God with your mouth and mind if you have not received Christ—God's gift to us?

--Vs 7. Can you say Christ has ***received you*** if you have not ***received Him***? Obviously not!

--Vs 9. Can you be a Gentile—a non-Jew—that glorifies—that praises and thanks God—for His mercy if you have not received Christ—God's gift of mercy!

--Vs 12. The One referred to is unquestionably Christ—and we are to put our trust in Him!

--And then—in vss 14-15—Paul speaks of brethren—meaning fellow, born-again, blood-bought believers!

So if the verses ***before*** verse 13 are ***to believers***—and the verses ***after*** verse 13 are ***to believers***—it should be fairly obvious that verse 13 is a prayer ***for believers—not everyone!***

Here's another reason we know the request is for ***believers only***—because an unbeliever cannot have true joy...or true ***peace***...or true ***hope!***

--You cannot have ***true joy*** in your heart-of-hearts until you know you have been forgiven by God!

--You cannot have ***true peace*** in your innermost being until you belong to God and are right with Him!

--And you cannot have ***true hope***—a "happy anticipation of unseen future good"—until you know for sure you are going to spend eternity ***with God*** as a ***child of God!***

So this prayer—and this message—is to believers and for believers!

Back to verse 13 again: “Now the God of hope **fill** you with **all** joy and peace....” Paul’s desire is that they be **filled** with **all** joy and **filled** with **all** peace. He didn’t want them to have just a **little** joy and a **little** peace—he wanted God to give it to them so that it **overflowed** in their lives.

But what do **joy and peace** have to do with **hope**? I could be wrong, but it seems to me that Paul is **defining hope** as a combination of joy and peace! If God fills you with **joy and peace**—and the result is that you will have **abundant hope**—it seems he is using them interchangeably!

--What is **joy**? A contentment—a happiness—in whatever circumstance you find yourself in.

--What is **peace**? A confident expectation that everything is going to be fine—even if they aren’t now!

--What is **hope**? A “happy anticipation”—like joy—“of unseen future good”—like peace!

But **why** would God fill them with these things? Was it just a **random act** by God in answer to prayer—or was there something they had **to do**? What was **their part**?

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace **in believing....**” **It wasn’t** a random act; God would fill them with an abundance of joy and peace as a result of their **believing**! But believing **what**?

--Believing **better days** were coming?

They might be—but worse days could be coming, too!

--Believing **nothing bad** would ever happen to them?

Just believing bad things won’t happen doesn’t stop them from happening!

--Believing that **God exists**; that He is out there somewhere?

James reminds us that the devil believes in God—and God certainly **won’t be sending any joy** or peace to **him**!

Flip back a page (maybe) to Romans 15:4 “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for **our learning**, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures **might have hope.**” **How**—according to this verse—do we **have hope**? By **learning** (with an “n”) what God says in His Word!

God will fill us with all joy and peace in believing, but our part is to take in—and **believe**—the Word of God! And that brings us to... **2. Our responsibility**

I’ve used this analogy before, but here it is again. Think of your heart and mind as a **garden**. God will do the growing—He will “grow the plants” of joy and peace—but **you** have to **put seed in the garden**! And the seed is the **Word of God**! Another analogy is that of a **building**. In I Corinthians 3, we are told to “take heed” how we build upon the **foundation** of our life—which is Jesus Christ. If **you are** a child of God, **Jesus** is your foundation. If **Jesus is not** your foundation, though, you **are not** a child of God. It is really that simple!

Notice **I Corinthians 3:9** “For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” With this analogy, instead of **planting the seed** to grow a garden, we are **providing God the building materials** to build a house! And in both instances, **the Word of God** is what is needed! We need to take it in—or God has nothing to **grow the garden**—or **build the house**—with!

What I want to do now is go back to some of the trials that I mentioned earlier and look at how God’s Word can provide the “seed”—or the “brick”—for us to have a “happy anticipation of unseen future good.”

A. What God’s Word says about temporary trials

In this category, we’re primarily looking at what God says about taking care of **physical needs**. Please know that for all of these categories, I’m only giving a sampling of verses—promises—that could be referred to.

Psalm 37:5 “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and **He shall bring it to pass.**”

Matthew 6:30 “Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, **shall He not much more clothe you**, O ye of little faith?”

Matthew 10:29-31 “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and **one of them shall not fall** on the ground without your Father. But the **very hairs of your head are all numbered**. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of **more value than many sparrows.**”

I Peter 5:7 “Casting all your care upon Him; **for He careth for you.**”

B. What God's Word says about longer-lasting—and heart-breaking—trials

1) God sometimes delivers us

--II Timothy 3:11 "Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord **delivered me.**"

2) God sometimes gives strength for the trial instead of removing it.

--II Corinthians 12:8-9 "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, **My grace is sufficient** for thee: for **my strength is made perfect in weakness.** Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

--II Timothy 4:17a "Notwithstanding the Lord **stood with me, and strengthened me;**"

3) God promises not to leave us

--Hebrews 13:5b "...for He hath said, I will **never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**"

4) The suffering of this life is nothing compared to the glory of the next life!

--Romans 8:18 "For I reckon that **the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared** with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

--II Corinthians 4:17 "For our **light affliction**, which is **but for a moment**, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

--Revelation 21:4 "And God **shall wipe away** all tears from their eyes; and there shall be **no more death**, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

5) You will see your saved loved ones again if you—and they—are saved!

--II Corinthians 5:8 "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

--I Thessalonians 4:13-14 "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, **that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

C. What God's Word says about the end of wickedness

1) God is in charge—even if it seems He is not!

Some of these verses we looked at last week.

--Psalm 115:3 "But our God is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased."

--Daniel 4:32 "...until thou know that the **most High ruleth** in the kingdom of men, and **giveth it to whomsoever** He will."

--Daniel 4:35 "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and **He doeth according to His will** in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and **none can stay [stop] His hand**, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

2) God will judge the wicked!

--Genesis 18:25c "Shall not the **Judge of all the earth** do right?"

--Psalm 9:17 "**The wicked shall be turned into hell**, and all the nations that forget God."

--Psalm 37:38 "But the **transgressors shall be destroyed together**: the end of the **wicked** shall be cut off."

--Revelation 20:11-12 "And I saw a **great white throne, and Him that sat on it**, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: **and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.**"

--Revelation 21:8 "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, **shall have their part in the lake** which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."

3) There will be an end to the devil and sin!

--Revelation 20:10 "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

--Revelation 21:5a "And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."

--Revelation 22:3 "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him:"

I just shared with you **24** promises that God has given us in His Word that if you meditate on, God will use them to fill you with joy and peace. And there are dozens—if not hundreds—more!

Lastly... **3. The result**

Back to Romans 15:13. What is the **result** of God's desire to fill us with joy and peace—if we provide Him **the material**—the "seed" and the "brick?"

"...that ye may **abound** in hope." We will have an abundance of happy anticipation that at the end, everything will be **more than good**—it will be perfect! How does that work? We see that in the end of the verse "...through the power of the Holy Ghost."

I can't explain exactly how it works, but I do know this—it does work! God takes His Word—that you put into your heart and mind—and makes it **so real to you** that you **just know everything** is going to be fine—regardless of appearances and circumstances!

This filling of joy...and filling of peace...and abundance of hope, is something God wants all of us to have and enjoy. But we have a part, don't we?

--God will certainly do His part!

--The question is, are **you** doing **your** part? If not, start doing that **today!**

So what would God have us do based on what we've heard this morning?

1. First and foremost, do you **have Christ**? I want to remind you of something that I said earlier:

--You cannot have **true joy** in your heart-of-hearts until you know you have been forgiven by God!

--You cannot have **true peace** in your innermost being until you belong to God and are right with Him!

--And you cannot have **true hope**—a "happy anticipation of unseen future good"—until you know for sure you are going to spend eternity **with God** as a child of God!

Not only that, but the Bible also plainly states that if you are without Christ, you have no hope!

2. The second thing I believe God would have us do is this: Earnestly search God's Word for the promises—the seed and the brick—that God can use to fill you with joy, peace, and hope! You have a good start with what I gave you this morning!

--You can take your outline—and go to your Bible—and look these verses up.

--But don't just look them up! Highlight them—or underline them—and commit them to memory!

--And—as you read your Bible and find more—add them to your list!

God's Word is our "Manual for Living"—our "Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth!" We need to start looking at it in that way!