***Hope Within***

**Pastor Online Devotion #2**

**John 1:12, Hebrews 6:19, Romans 15:13**

**The Point:** In unstable and changing times, we can count on the hope we possess as a “child of God.” The hope “within” is greater than the challenges “without.”

**Motivation: We Must All Receive the Gift**

Think of the word “received” in this verse of Scripture, ask everyone about a favorite gift they received at Christmas, a birthday or anniversary. When I am asked to identify a favorite gift, I think back to a time when I was in 2nd grade. I didn’t know it at the time, but my parents were struggling financially. It was Christmas time and my parents were not going to be able to buy Christmas gifts for me, my brother and sister. One day a box full of gifts arrived at our house. My aunt and uncles sacrificed to buy gifts for me and my siblings so that we would have Christmas. I didn’t learn about the origin of those gifts came until years later. I don’t remember everything they sent but often think about those gifts and what they did to make a difference in our struggling family.

In the midst of this struggle, God provides the greatest gift ever given, his son Jesus. The question remains, have you received him. If you have received him, you can rest secure in his care and protection.

**Illustration**: At one time in our lives, most of us have attempted to climb a tree. I remember climbing tress as a boy and the trepidation I felt with each step up. I remember the feeling of panic when I felt the limb beneath my feet was going to give way and I was surely going to plummet to my death! Sometimes branches give an outward appearance of being strong but are actually rotten within and when we step on them, they crack, and collapse and we fall.

In the past few weeks, many of the limbs we have been climbing have given way beneath us and so many people feel out of control and free falling. Recently, I heard someone say, “the gods of this world have collapsed overnight…money, entertainment, and sports.” These were the limbs that so many choose to build their lives around.

Just like money, power, position give us false security that all is well, and we can weather storms, we are often one step away from a fall.

The basic, underlying hope of all desires and wishes is that “things are going to be okay,” and this hope equals reality only in Christ—and when He is within is, we have this hope. No matter what is happening “without,” we can trust what we have “within”

I love this verse…” *We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul…” Hebrews 6:19a.* That “anchor” for the soul is the stability we possess as a child of God. Our hope is found in him and not in the things of this world.

When our money is gone, we have this hope. When our health fails, we have this hope. When we are forsaken by family or friends, we have this hope. This hope isn’t a wish—it’s a reality because it’s Jesus—the eternal God and Savior of our souls.

Romans 15:13 reminds us, “*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.”*

Being a Christian, a follower of Christ, doesn’t mean we ignore our fears. It doesn’t mean that we are oblivious to what is taking place around us. I am definitely concerned with what is taking shape in our world today. We have never seen anything like this. This are unprecedented times. But, being a believer simply means that we have move confidence in *who* is “within” us rather than *what* is taking place on the outside. As a child of God, if I face my fears and hit the fast forward button and realize the worst that can really happen to me here on earth is nothing compared to the eternal promise I receive as a child of God (2 Corinthians 4:17), I can finally can rest in the fact that JESUS IS REALLY ENOUGH!

So, we should take every concern and have hope that Jesus is working for His glory in every situation. He holds our souls, and He is our hope.

*The Solid Rock by Edward Mote*

*My hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus blood and righteousness*

*I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.*

*On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

*All other ground is sinking sand.*

**Application: Walking In Confidence and Peace Is the Fruit of Having Hope**

Personally, I always liked climbing pecan trees because the big branches were so sturdy that I could climb with confidence—great picture of our confidence in Christ. (*Pastor use this time to talk about your faith. Give you testimony. Talk about how a relationship with Jesus Christ has given you hope in the midst of this crisis. This is the time to be personal. Get real and GIVE THEM JESUS!)*

**Takeaway: Choose Jesus to Receive Hope and Peace**

* If you are a believer, rest in Jesus. He is enough. Share with him your fears and thank him for being an “anchor” for your soul.
* If you are not a believer, a gift is not truly a gift until it is “received.” As John 1:12 says, *“But to all who did* ***receive him****, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”* Salvation is only given to those who “receive” Jesus. He will not force you to accept him. He invites you to trust him. (Pastor, share how someone can pray to receive Christ.)