

I. Jesus promises a kind of peace that the world cannot offer. John 16:33

- A. Note his realism about this life—it has tribulation, (thlipsis)
- B. Note his counterintuitive promise about overcoming the world.
 - 1. Within the next few hours it would appear to everybody that the world had completely overcome him... *but this is not what was really happening.*
- C. Note the Hope that he is presenting.
 - 1. Realistic but Counterintuitive and based on something He is accomplishing.
 - 2. There is a present promise based on something Christ does that orients us toward a bright future—this is eternal hope.

II. The end of the main teaching section of Romans is a prayer for unifying hope. Rom.15:8-13

- A. The Lord has rescued us permanently. Rom. 1-11
 - 1. The Good News explained.
- B. The Spirit is transforming us gradually. Growth in Christ. Rom.12:1-15:13
 - 1. This is His life growing in us.
- C. The Gospel is Unifying us Hopefully. 15:8-13. The hope he brings is a unifying dynamic to us.
 - 1. Because his promises are secure. 15:8
 - a) He serves Jews to fulfill His promises.
 - b) Our salvation is guaranteed by God's promise in Christ. Rom.4:16
 - 2. And his Mercy is infinite. 15:9-12
 - a) He saves the "unsavable" (Gentiles) to show His Mercy.
 - b) The whole OT implies this. Ps.18:49/2 Sam.22:50; Deut.32:43; Ps.117:1; Isa.11:10.

III. The main teaching of Romans ends with Paul's prayer in Rom.15:13.

- A. May the God of Hope. (used only here) Why is He called the God of Hope?
 - 1. 2 ways "hope" is used in the Bible.
 - a) Mundane = a wish. (Rom.15:24)
 - b) Theological/eschatological = *a form of certainty in future.* This is what Paul means here.
 - 2. This title means that He is not the God of Wishful Thinking but the God of certain future blessing—for the universe! **Isa.11:1-10 (Ps.16:11)**
 - 3. **Hope is central to everything God is doing in the world. (note 7 things)**
 - a) Built into the original creation. Gen.1-2.
 - (1) Cultivation, Love, Children, Family = hope, confident expectation of future blessing is literally designed into the human psyche, created in God's image.
 - b) Lost in the fall. Gen.3.
 - (1) Severed from the source of life, God himself, humanity experiences Hopelessness in this life, followed by death...
 - c) Promised to humanity. (!) (the seed of the woman). Gen.3:15.
 - (1) Through your Seed will come the blessing of the world. (Gal.3)
 - d) Initiated with Abraham. Gen.12:1-2
 - (1) Through your Seed the world will be blessed...Gal.3
 - e) Foreshadowed in Moses: The Old Covenant. Col.2:17; Lk.24:44-48.
 - (1) The entire Mosaic Law is the promise of Abraham as it applied to the nation of Israel, pointing to the coming hope in Christ. Matt.5:17; Rom.10:4
 - f) Achieved in Christ: the new covenant.
 - (1) 1 Pet. 1:3; Col.1:27; Heb.10:19-23
 - g) Permanently bestowed in the new creation. Rom.8:18-25; Rev.21-22
 - (1) A new creation in which the "future" is always bright.

B. Fill you with all Joy and Peace:

1. *Joy and peace in a fallen world come from the certain knowledge of coming blessing*
2. Your sense of what will happen in the future sets your attitude today.

C. In Believing = continuing to know—the gospel! Heb.11:1.

1. *Faith (in Christ as Lord) is Spirit-inspired knowledge of Christ (the gospel) coupled with trust, resulting in action.*
2. It is knowledge based on God's Word (made flesh and made text). 1 Cor.2

D. So that by the power of the Holy Spirit...Titus 3:7

1. *The Spirit's main job is to enhance our understanding of who Jesus is and what he has done for us. To fill us with God's life in Christ.*

E. You may abound in hope.

1. Abound = more than enough, like kids in a swimming pool.
2. *Do you sense in your heart that you have more hope than you need? Abounding in hope? Perhaps not...*

IV. What reduces our hope-centered joy and peace?

A. Not **knowing** what we **say** we **believe** about the gospel.

1. Many people in church don't actually know what the gospel really teaches. Our intuitions are toward legalism rather than gospel-grace.

B. Not **believing** (trusting) what we already **know** about the gospel.

1. Can we "know" and not "believe"? sure. Many believers "know" their theology, but fail to believe it on a daily basis. They don't rely on the reality of it in the face of the stresses of this life.
2. Eta Linnemann. "When I was a (liberal) theologian I thought I was a Christian, but I wasn't."

C. Not looking **past this life**. Col.3:1-4 (2 Cor.4:18-5:10)

1. *This is our main problem in this country. We don't look past death and into the next life through the lens of the gospel—but we should.*

V. We Serve the God of Hope—The Good News of Jesus Christ! Eph.1:11-23

A. He focuses us on the certainty of the future.

B. He instructs us to enter in the present. Mark.1:15. 1 Pet.1:3.

C. He guarantees it all by what He has done in the past. The Cross and Resurrection of Christ.

1. The Cross is an eternal reality that took place in time and space and changed the destiny of the universe.

VI. What to do? Be immersed in the God of Hope through Jesus Christ.