

"Hope"

Kathryn Seib on Saturday evening, March 27th, 2021

Theme: Things that can hinder living in hope and how to fix our eyes on Jesus, our Living Hope.

Text: Proverbs 13:12, Hebrews 11:1 and Psalm 42:5

Here's a thought: Unmet expectations can be rooted in pride and selfishness resulting in deep disappointment and anger.

We can put our hope in wrong things.

What does it look like to be hopeless? I feel stuck, irritable, discouraged, angry, frustrated, disappointment, lack of motivation, like things won't change, like I am carrying a heavy sack.

Proverbs 13:12 - hope deferred

I can feel grateful while I feel hopeless.

Hebrews 11 - now faith is the substance of things hoped for.

Psalm 42:5 - why are you downcast, oh my soul?

There is a gap between what we know and what we do. Let's talk about this gap.

What are four hindrances to hope?

I am not saying that we will be happy all the time.

There will be times when we feel stuck.

1) Unmet expectations - these can sneak up on us.

Anger can result when our expectations are not met.

I came up with 70 pages of notes of unmet expectations (disappointments) from over an 8 year period.

Unmet expectations are rooted in pride and selfishness and our own desires rather than reality or a willingness to allow God's will, God's way.

We need to start by being honest with ourselves and with the Lord.

We need to repent, which means to change one's mind or to think differently. It doesn't have to be a heavy thing. Ask the Lord for forgiveness and adjust your thinking.

We need to forgive. This is not a feeling but a choice. This may or may not involve a conversation with the person we forgive. We might need to forgive ourselves and we might need to forgive God.

2) Idols

An idol is someone or something more important than God. This person or thing might even be good and God given.

We need to repent and ask forgiveness.

3) Our focus and our feelings

It is like holding a magnifying glass over this item.

As a feeler I need to ask myself what I am feeling and why I am feeling it.

I need to repent.

I need to examine God's Word on this issue.

It requires repetition and consistency.

2 Corinthians 5:7 - I walk by faith not by sight.

We can ask the Lord for faith.

We cannot allow past experiences to be future predictors.

4) Striving

This can feel like I am on a treadmill and I can't get off.

Psalm 46:10 - be still (cease striving)

2 Timothy 3:2-5 - having a form of godliness but denying the power.

We need God's miraculous power.

Cease striving and allow God's power to work in us and through us.

If we allow the Lord to deal with these areas we can run further and faster.

Hebrews 12:1 - let us fix our eyes on Jesus.

The Lord wants to give us assurance, which is entire confidence.

Hebrews 10 - we can come to God with assurance.

Lamentations 3 - we call this to mind and it gives Hope.

Jesus is our hope.

Would you like to pray with someone about where you are struggling to have hope?

Would you ask the Lord to make us expectant?

What would the Lord say to the others you are praying with about hope?