

Romans 15:13 - God of Hope
Ryan Patty / 7/17/2022

Good morning Christ Community! Thankful to be here and to be gathered with you. For those new or visiting my name is Ryan and I'm one of the pastors here and it's my joy to open God's Word up to us this morning. So if you have a bible or a device I'd like to ask you to turn to Romans 15. We just finished up a great week of VBS as we looked at what it means to have true hope in life and how that only comes about through knowing God. And so many of the youth students have been serving at VBS and now just helped with worship, so in many ways this is like a NextGen sunday which is great.

And I want to take a moment to tell you all that we have some truly great kids and students who are coming up behind us. I'm going to hit on this towards the end, but I want you all to be encouraged at what God is doing amongst this up and coming generation, and in particular at the next generation at CCC.

With that said, Romans 15. I have one verse for us to consider this morning. Romans 15:13 and I'll read it for us now. 13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. - Romans 15:13

Let's Pray.

We have been walking through the book of Romans and it'll be a bit before we come to chapter 15, but think back to what we have seen and what we know of the context. Paul begins in chapter one and outlines the problem of sin. He paints it in very clear and stark terms: all of humanity has sinned and therefore is under the judgment of God. We saw how this manifests in the vice list at the end of chapter 1. Then in chapter 4, as we will come to see, Paul shows us what it means to be justified by faith and how God's plan of salvation, even in the OT, has always been by grace through faith. Our justification before God does not come from our good works, or righteous behavior, or any other thing we do, but rather in the finished work of Christ and what he did for us.

Then in chapter 8 we come to arguably the most famous chapter in all the Bible as we come to see and understand that there is “no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus,” and that the “sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us,” AND the glorious truth that “if God is for us, who can be against us? He did not even spare his own Son but offered him up for us all. How will he not grant us everything?”

This glorious book then continues in describing God’s election and predestination and how our salvation and how the work of salvation is dependent upon God and not us. Then we come to chapter 15, nearing the end of the book, and Paul provides some practical advice for how Christians, particularly Jews and Gentiles, ought to accept one another and live in harmony with their brothers and sisters in Christ, and then he says this verse that is the focus of our study this morning:

13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you believe so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. - Romans 15:13

I’d like to briefly highlight the God of hope, our faith-filled hope, and our future hope. (3 ideas here)

1. God of Hope: God here is described as the God of Hope. In the midst of difficult Jew/Gentile relations in the early church, remember the church is still young here, there are some things to work out. In the midst of those, Paul prays that the God of hope would will them with joy and peace.
 - a. This God of hope is the key to all of the Christian life. Jew and Gentiles were called to place their hope and trust in Jesus Christ the messiah, and God in turn would produce in them joy and peace as they believe. More than this, think back to what happened in the beginning (**think about the character of the God we serve**). Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they are cast out of the garden, they know their shame, the weight of their sin, yet what does this God of hope do? He clothes them himself, he judges them but provides hope in the midst of the judgment that one day the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. And this only continues throughout the pages of Scripture. God time and time again provides hope for those who believe in him.
 - b. Friends this is a short exposition of this one verse, but I want to encourage you, if you are struggling with hope, struggling day by day to see the beauty in life, struggling because you feel forgotten by God and

you're in desperate need of hope.. One of the more helpful things you can do is to meditate on this one verse and remind yourself of God's promises and his character. He is the God of hope. This hope cannot be produced by human beings but only by God. **And Biblical hope is a certainty, it is an assured hope.** Sometimes we hope that we get that promotion or we hope we can go on vacation or we hope that the Dallas Cowboys will finally win the super bowl this century (that might just be me), but biblical hope is something else. It is a certainty, you can count on it to happen because God said it will happen. IT is an assured hope

- c. You see, hope characterizes the life of the Christian. We are a people of hope because we know God and we know what He says will happen at the end, when he wipes every tear from every eye and when sin and death are no more and we are ruling and reigning with Jesus Christ. Our God of Hope guarantees that that will happen.
 - i. So this doesn't mean things in life aren't hard, it doesn't mean that at times we will have to fight for hope, it doesn't mean we don't still suffer, it doesn't mean we don't see the effects of sin and wonder, how long o Lord? But for the Christian here today, whose heart has been regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit and you now confess Christ as Lord and seek to live for him day by day, for that person here today, you have hope because your God is the God of Hope.

2. Our Faith-filled Hope

- a. Paul is very clear here in context, that God fills the believer with joy and peace, **as they believe.** That's the key here. This is an apparent promise and condition for those who believe: that we have joy and peace. Now as I told the kids this week in our lesson time, we can have true joy and true peace only by knowing God, **only by believing in Christ, because the reality is is that joy comes from Jesus, not circumstances. And peace is promised to God's people.** Those were two of the 4 big truths I communicated to the kids this week, and what this verse is clear about is that those only come to us, joy and peace, as we believe.
 - i. Believe in what? Believe in this God of Hope who has rescued and redeemed you and I and done an amazing work in the new covenant so that we can now know God directly and no longer need an intermediary, someone to go between us and God, but we can know God through Christ directly.

ii. So my hope, just like I told the kids, is that if in God's providence you are here and you don't know Jesus Christ, you have no hope, you have been hoping that you would be good enough to one day be in his presence because of your good works, my simple and clear statement to you is that you are not. You're not good enough, **but Jesus Christ is**, and through his death and resurrection he has made a way for you to know God. But the call for you, is for you to believe in him, not in yourself, not in someone else, but to believe in Christ alone for your salvation.

1. I think one of the saddest things about my childhood was growing up in the Bible-belt, attending church every time the doors were opened, being known as a good Christian kid, yet never having true Christian conversion and discipleship explained to me for the longest time. In my younger years I thought I needed to be nice to others, and sincere about my faith, and make a decision for Christ and that was it. But I was wrong. I think I was wrong biblically.

a. And what I'm often trying to communicate to the next generation here, to the students in particular, is that those things, while helpful, are not in of themselves what it means to be a Christian.

b. I'm not calling them to be **nice**, I'm helping them to see that they need God to make them **new**. I want them to be **sincere**, but more than that I want them to be **saved**. I'm not after a ton of **decisions** for Christ but rather want them to be life-long **disciples** of Christ.

2. The God of hope has to do a new work in our hearts, and we are called to believe. We are called to day by day trust in him, to follow him, and as we do, he will fill us with joy and peace by the power of the Holy Spirit. Praise God for that! Praise God that our joy comes from Jesus not our circumstances. And praise God that peace is promised to the people of God.

3. Our future hope

a. I'd like to briefly talk about our future hope. Hope is often thought of in the future. And that's true, there are things we look forward to, as I said, that we know God will one day too. Yet hope is also something for the here and now as we have seen. That we believe in the God of Hope who day by day gives us joy

and peace in the midst of life in a fallen world. So there is a present aspect to hope and a future aspect that God is accomplishing and working out in his purposeful timing.

- b. But I would like to briefly, again since so much of this week is talking about the next generations coming up behind us, **I would like to briefly talk about a future hope as it pertains to them.**
 - i. Because trust me, at times, it doesn't look good. We see the culture that seeks to sway our young people, to teach them things clearly against God's created order and what it means to be male or female, to get them to indulge in an incessant consumerism, and to distract them from the things of God with social media that is constantly warping their minds at a young age.
- c. So we can look, sometimes, at those coming up behind us and think, "they're worse than us, what is happening, there is **no hope** for them." I'll be honest, I've been there.
 - i. But I'd like to tell you what I've seen in this church the last 4 and a half years. I've seen boys and girls grow and mature in their love for God and his people. I've seen them recognize, at a young age their sins and wrestle with what it means to repent. I've seen adults sacrifice their time week after week to pour into these kids and teach them God's Word because they believe it matters and has eternal implications. I've seen students start bible studies and desire to study God's Word with others, and ask older men and women to help them study it. I've seen these same student take on responsibility and seek to lead. I've seen them love and serve this church in countless ways, and to desire to be faithful for the rest of their lives. I've seen parents here who are amazing, who own their **responsibility to disciple their kids and see it as their highest calling and seek to do that tireless work faithfully.** Not passing it off and not hiding from it, but day by day trusting the Lord to give them wisdom and peace in the midst of it. And these are just a few quick examples.
 - ii. But friends, when I at times, feel like something is going in one ear and out the other with this next generation, I have to trust that the Lord of the Harvest is doing the work. That he is causing seed to grow as we faithfully plant. And my mind often comes back to Jesus's words in Matthew 16 when he says that he will build his church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.
 - 1. Christ is building his church, and he is doing it through these young people as well. It doesn't mean, that they like the generations that came before them, won't have battles, won't have things that they still have to figure out, it will be difficult for them at times, but let us not look

at them with hopelessness but rather through the lenses of the God of Hope, who has promised to build his church and to see His Kingdom advance.

- iii. This is our future hope! Yes we understand hope in terms of eternity, but as far as the kingdom of God being built through local churches, these young people coming up behind us are the future hope. How then should we lead them, pray for them, disciple them, love them, and view them?

Let's pray.