



HG213: Our Hope Is Found In: **The Glory Of God**

Romans 5:1-11

Home Group Study Notes

24 January 2021 - Pauline Woolnough



PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN
ON THIS WORKSHEET IN PREPARATION
BEFORE THE MEETING!

*Don't forget to take your Bible to Home Group
with you, along with any previous notes and other
resources which might be helpful for your discussions.*



Welcome (10 mins)
Ice Breaker

Are you a glass half full or a glass half empty kind of person?



Looking Upwards (10 mins)
Worship

In your time of worship, you may want to sing Songs of Praise; listen to a Worship CD, as well as using Meditations; Bible Readings; Prayers ...



HG213: Our Hope Is Found In: The Glory Of God

Romans 5:1-11

Home Group Sermon

24 January 2021 - Pauline Woolnough

Introduction We may struggle at times with faith, but we are a people of “hopers” and we all know what it is to hope for things but here Paul is wanting us to hope in something. In v2 he says, “and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” He goes on to say that notwithstanding what trials we face in this life, and there will be many, there remains in the Christian heart a sense of joy and an ability to rejoice and hope in something bigger than the things we face so it’s important to know what it is we are hoping in, it’s the key to this passage. We see the glory of God everywhere we look in creation, it’s there in a beautiful sunset, a majestic mountain, a new born baby, nowhere more so than when we look up at the night sky, but we don’t put our hope in them. We prefer in many instances to place our hope in things like money, possessions, education and we can spend most of our lives striving for things that we hope will make us happy only to discover that they never will. Hope can keep us going but it can be devastating when we achieve what we strived for only to find it disappoints us. Eventually all the things that we pursue will disappoint us, they will fade or decay and become useless and when they do, the question we need to ask is “what is our foundational hope?” What is the one real deep hope that remains when everything else fails and disappoints.

God’s Glory Revealed The whole of scripture points to Jesus and Paul knows him here as God’s glory as does John in 1.14, he says “The Word became Flesh and made his dwelling among us, we have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” In the Old Testament the glory of God was the greatness of God and at times seen visibly, such as when a cloud appeared to lead the people as they marched through the wilderness, but John says in Jn 1v14 that it was when Jesus came to earth as a man to dwell with mankind that the glory of God was seen in all its fullness. It is in the Gospel story of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ who is the image of God Himself and where the full glory is displayed and where we “rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

God’s Glory Saves Paul knows that it is in Jesus Christ where our hope needs to rest and when it does we cannot fail to rejoice. Sometimes, that rejoicing is exuberant and sometimes it is reflected in the deep sense of peace and security we have in knowing Jesus and of the future we will share with him that keeps us going in a difficult situation, every other hope pales into insignificance and cannot compare to the hope we have in Jesus. Only the glory of God satisfies and saves and gives eternal hope. In v1 Paul says, “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we have been made righteous in the sight of God, in other words we have been made morally right, or virtuous in God's eyes. 2 Cor 5:21 says "God made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

And how are we justified? It is through faith, the self abandonment trust in the person and work and blood of Jesus Christ. In Romans 3:22 "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified freely by his grace." The same grace that sent Jesus to die for us is the same grace that raised him to life and it is the same grace in which we now stand. It is the same grace that enables us to rejoice in sufferings as we hold on to and trust in his promises and in the peace we now have with God. We may not always experience peace because life is difficult at times, this is one such time, but because of Jesus' death on the cross God is no longer hostile towards us because "we have gained access to this grace, in which we now stand." In v 9 Paul goes on to say "since we have now been justified by his blood how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him. For if when we were God's enemies we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son how much more having been reconciled shall we be saved through his life?"

God's Glory Declares Peace Wrath is not a word we use these days, yet Paul's letter to the Romans contains several explicit references to God's wrath. The dictionary defines wrath as "extreme anger, fury" and these interpretations don't leave much doubt as to what Paul is saying here especially when he goes on to call us God's enemies. Paul knows God was angry with us because of our sin and ungodliness. Can you imagine the awesome power behind creating billions of stars that we see in the night sky coming against you in extreme anger, in fury? Many people object to the thought of a loving God being angry and any references to God as "our enemy," even in church we prefer to say little about the wrath of God, we'd much rather talk about God's kindness and love, but Paul has no such objections as here and again in Romans 1:18 he talks of God showing his anger from heaven and that no one can say they have no knowledge of God, or plead ignorance, because God has plainly revealed himself in creation and we have no excuse if we choose to suppress that truth. He says Romans 1:20 "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, his eternal power, his divine nature have been clearly seen and understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

However between us sinners and the awesome terrifying power of a righteous God and his divine wrath, stands the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and if we are his through faith, then we are justified through his cross and God's wrath will never touch us, Jesus delivers us from God's wrath to come, "Jesus who rescues us from the coming wrath." 1 Thess 1:10. The work of Jesus on the cross for us is God's ultimate proof of His love for us. We have been saved from his wrath and whereas sin led to death, grace brings eternal life.

Paul's amazing words in v 8 tell us of the depths of God's love for us when he says "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." God sent Jesus Christ to die for us not because we were good, but because he loved us first. It is a historical fact that Christ died, but today God still demonstrates his love for us. J I Packer says

“Justification is the truly dramatic transition from the status of a condemned criminal awaiting a terrible sentence to that of an heir awaiting a fabulous inheritance and it takes place the moment a person puts vital trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour”

Glorify in sufferings Some of us may find Paul’s request to us to rejoice in our sufferings difficult and hard to understand, but he is of course speaking from personal experience because Paul knows a bit about suffering himself and for first century Christians, suffering and persecution were the rule and not the exception. Here Paul encourages us to see that there can be a purpose in trials as they can help us to grow in character, perseverance and hope. In 8.18 Paul says, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” For Paul, everything counted as nothing compared to knowing Jesus Christ as Lord. In his own life, he suffered beatings, imprisonment and he was shipwrecked 4 times. Strange really when you think of it because God could have spared Paul all of that in order to support him in his mission, but Paul discovered that God has a different perspective on suffering to us and suffering seemed to motivate him to ever greater service. He said something amazing about his trials in 2 Cor 12.10 “For Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Paul wasn’t some kind of super hero either because at times the hardships became almost too much to bear. After suffering in Asia he admitted that he and his companions “despaired of life” and it was “far beyond our ability to endure” but he said “On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us.” 2 Corinthians 1:8-10. Paul had faith in the living God to see him through his trials but as he also discovered, God will often help us out of troubles that we are already in but he doesn’t necessarily prevent them before they begin. He was able to overcome and rise above his many trials and afflictions, not by his own strength or will but through his hope and faith in Jesus Christ, he said in Philippians 4.13 “I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” He rejoiced in the power of Christ within him and we have access to the same spiritual power and strength.

Paul defined sufferings as a proof of his calling and spiritual authority and doesn’t complain when he says “I have worked much harder,” “been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again” 2 Corinthians 11:23 For Paul, it was just a fact, -never defined by sufferings rather, refined by them.

God has a purpose for our lives and that may include adversity and suffering but the good news is that we do not face these trials alone, we do so with the Holy Spirit through Christ in us. When we go through difficult times and we continue to hope in Jesus, our faith survives and comes out stronger. During the good times our faith is rarely tested but along comes a problem and we search once more for the Lord and we remember where our hope lies and once more our faith begins to grow. It is when we go through trials with the help of the Holy Spirit that we are encouraged because our faith grows and proves to be resilient and genuine and we know that God can be trusted.

So we don’t rejoice in sufferings for what they are but for what they produce in us, hope, perseverance, the test was character building. God is faithful and we are standing on solid ground. He is the Anchor of our souls.

Glory in Christ Alone These are truly unprecedented times, (there's that word again), the UK has divorced itself from its European neighbours, the new administration in the USA faces enormous challenges, we are in the middle of a global pandemic, a crisis that none of us can avoid and that affects us physically, mentally and spiritually, to say nothing about climate change, the world is in turmoil, but does our hope lie in trade deals that the UK government might make?

Is it in Joe Biden the new President of the USA? Is it in the vaccine, wonderful as it is? As Christians our foundational hope is in none of these things, our hope is in Jesus Christ alone. Over this last year our faith been tested and our hope may have wavered because that's what happens in a crisis. Our priorities and our lifestyles have been challenged. The question is, will we come through this crisis with our faith and hope in the Lord deeper and stronger, or will we still be asking "why?" and "where is God in this pandemic. How could he let this go on?"

It's been a painful time but we have the chance to come out of this better, to address and defeat the culture of indifference that only worries about things that affects us individually because we have now all lived through something that we have to acknowledge affects us all and we can see what can happen when we work together for the good of all. As Paul has told us, as Christians, we are not exempt from troubles, and a quick prayer will not always make everything better. We know that God is able to intervene and kill off this virus, but even if he doesn't our confidence and hope is in his faithfulness and in his character, not in what we want him do. We trust in him knowing that He is never indifferent to the person, to the people, the nation, to his world that is in crisis and we know that He will have the last word.

Our Hope is in The Glory of God As Christians we need to emerge from this time rediscovering again that God has called us into a distinct way of life with a glorious future shared with him and with renewed purpose to share the Good News message because its a message of hope, and we do not do this on our own because V6 says, "because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." This is a work of God in us, it is something that he does, he shows his love for us and for all people by giving us his Holy Spirit.

Like Paul we have had so many reasons recently to despair and at times we may have found life difficult to bear but like him I hope those same reasons have given you reason to trust, hope, persevere and to rejoice in Jesus Christ, the Glory of God and to remind you of the fact that our citizenship is in heaven and we can look forward to sharing a glorious future one day and forever with him when face to face his full glory will be seen and revealed to us. Jesus Christ, Redeemer, Saviour and Lord. He is the Final Word and Hope in him will never disappoint.

Emmanuel Church Text for 2021

*"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul,
firm and secure."*

Hebrews 6:19



Looking Upwards (40 mins)

Bible Study

Read the text for this study, and any references given, then answer the following questions. You may find it helpful to listen to the sermon and/or read through the sermon notes as you do so. Discuss some, or all, your answers with your Home Group and, remember, these questions are only a guide to start your discussions.

1. What is the difference between peace *with* God and the peace *of* God, (Phil 4 5 -7 and Eph 2 17 may help).

2. Phil 4.4 says, “*Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*” What is it in this passage in Romans that Paul says should lead us to rejoice?

3. What do you think when you hear the word “wrath?” Why do you think we are inhibited about speaking of God’s wrath?

4. What does it mean to you to know that you now “*stand in grace.*”

5. If someone accepts Christ on the basis of the message that God has a wonderful plan for their life what do you think their response may be when they encounter trials and suffering?

6. How might God have used the pandemic to produce and increase “perseverance, character and hope” in you? Can you share examples where you have found life difficult and when your faith and hope in Christ has carried you through?



Is there anything you most want to put into practice as a result of this study?



Looking Inwards (15 mins) *Caring For Each Other*

Reflecting on your life at the moment, is there anything you would like to share with other members of your home group which you feel is appropriate (this is an opportunity to share, not something you have to do, however, 'It's the sharing that enables the caring!') for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



Looking Outwards (15 mins) *Concern For Others*

Is there anything concerning someone in your: family; circle of friends; neighbours or church, which you would like to share (please be sure not pass on anything that is confidential or which you think the person concerned would not wish to be shared) for:

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?

Emmanuel Church, Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex. CM12 9LD

P 01277 632120 E Emmanueloffice@billericaychurches.org W Emmanuel-church.info
FB Emmanuel Church Billericay T EmmanuelCM12 YT Emmanuel Church Billericay

Part Of The Billericay & Little Burstead Team Ministry