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"Hope"

John 17:20-21 (ESV) "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, 21 that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (emphasis mine).

- a. What does Jesus think will show the world that he was sent from the Father? **Answer: The church's ONENess** (unity)

Ephesians 4:1-6 (NIV) "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (emphasis mine).

- b. If we share ONE hope for eternity that has right-now implications in the church today: putting aside prejudice, working through conflict, and seeking unity now.

1. What is Hope?

- a. The biblical definition of hope is "the sure and confident expectation of receiving what God has promised us in the future" (GotQuestions.com).
- i. Hebrew Words: *Yakhal* - to wait for, *Qavah* - to wait / tense expectation
- b. But what are we waiting for? In scripture: A person

Psalms 130:5-7 (NIV) "I wait [qavah] for the Lord, my whole being waits [qavah], and in his word I put my hope [yakhal]. 6 I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. 7 Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption."

c. **Why is the psalmist full of hope?**

- i. Because of God's unchanging character and promises: "for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption" (Psalm 130:7).
1. This is why someone can have hope in the midst of suffering.

d. **How to have hope:**

- i. First look back relationally: "with the Lord is unfailing love" (Psalm 130:7b)
- ii. Stand on His ability: "with him is full redemption" (Psalm 130:7b)
- iii. Therefore - conclude: "in his word I put my hope"
1. What He has **promised us**,
2. We **choose to** eagerly wait for (hope) because it will happen.

2. What is Our ONE Hope?

- a. Biblical Metaphor of Anticipation: **The Wedding**

John 14:1-3 (NIV) "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. 2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

- i. **Hope: 1) a person:** Being with Jesus face to face for eternity, and
- ii. **Hope: 2) a place:** a home - which is on the new heavens and new earth
- iii. **Hope: 3) for that day** Jesus comes to get his bride

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 (NIV) "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words."

iv. **Hope: 4) A New Body**

Philippians 3:20-21 (NIV) “But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.”

v. **Hope: 5) A Heavenly Reception**

Revelation 19:6-8 (NIV) “Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)”

vi. **Hope: 6) A Reversal of the Curse**

vii. **Hope: 7) An Eternity**

Revelation 21:4 (ESV) He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

3. What are the Right-now Implications in the Church Today if we Share ONE Hope?

- a. **Implication #1:** Because we share ONE hope, we don’t look at people the same way.

2 Corinthians 5:16 (NIV) “So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.”

- i. We now see people through the cross

- b. **Implication #2:** Because we share ONE hope, we “encourage one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4:18).

1 Peter 1:3-4a (NIV) “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a *living hope* through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade” (*emphasis mine*).

4. Conclusion

- a. I want to intentionally misquote a verse and then I will correct myself:

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV) “But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the *doom and gloom* that is in you [...]”

- i. That’s not what it says... it says *hope*. Is that hope in you?

Small Group Discussion Questions:

Ice Breaker: What is something that you are waiting for in life?

Main Passages: John 17:20-21, Ephesians 4:1-6

Questions:

1. Read John 17:20-21. Why is our unity so important?
2. How is biblical hope different from optimism or positive thinking?
3. How can a believer have hope in the midst of suffering or bleak circumstances?
4. On a day to day basis, what is your hope in?
5. Tangibly, how do you keep your hope alive? What do you do?
6. In what areas are you struggling to choose hope?
7. What is a practical step that you could take to “keep the unity” of the church?



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