

Series: Ephesians  
Title: Hope of His Calling  
Text: Ephesians 1: 18  
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If you were a member of a large family who sat down to hear the reading of your father's will, you would be listening for one thing, your name to be called. When your name is called you would be fully attentive, alert—because it is your inheritance given to you of your father.

Likewise, the believer whose name has been called by God, has hope in Christ. We gather to hear the gospel because this is the testament of God our Father. We have an interest in heaven. We want to know exactly what our heavenly Father has promised us. We gather to hear the gospel for that reason:

Romans 15:4: For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have HOPE.

And we NEED to know why we have this hope because our heavenly Father says be ready to tell anyone who asks you.

1 Peter 3:15...Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the HOPE that is in you with meekness and fear:

Paul prayed that God would give his Ephesian brethren more and more, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, that more and more the eyes of their understanding would be enlightened, for this very reason.

**Ephesians 1: 18:...that ye may know what is the hope of his calling,**

**Proposition:** Believers have a joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation, a sure hope, a good hope, through the grace of God and the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That is what this hope is—a joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation. The believer's hope is NOT like what we speak of when we say, "I hope such and such happens" or "hopefully it will not rain on the parade." That is merely wishful thinking. Our hope is sure by the grace and power of the triune God.

**I. WE HAVE A GOOD HOPE BECAUSE OF WHO CALLED US—v18: the hope of HIS calling,**

**Our Vain Hopes Are Abolished**

In order to have this hope, God first made us see all our carnal hopes were vain. A carnal man will try fool to himself into thinking he has a good hope, that God will accept him.

- We based our hope on some good in ourselves
- We based our hope in our good deeds
- We based our hope on our religious works
- We had a hope from reforming our life—some, two or three or four times.

**Illustration:** Reforming your life is like the man who tries to quit smoking. He says, "It's easy, I've done it 3 or 4 times."

But mainly, we set our hopes on things in this life. At one time, every believer here had only the hopes of a carnal man.

**Application:** Sinner I know you have hopes. I had the same kind of hopes too. But they are all hopes of temporal things—hopes in this life. But as you get older, as the time you have left in this world gets smaller, those temporal hopes will be fewer and fewer and fewer till they are gone.

Job 27:8: For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?

Proverbs 10:28: The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

Job 8: 14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.

Every believer here was just that way.

Ephesians 2:12: At that time [we were] without Christ, [aliens from the God's true, children, from true] Israel, strangers to God everlasting covenant promises, having no hope, and without God in the world:

### **His Calling**

By God's grace, God called you who truly believe. Notice, this calling is called 'his calling'. It is not man's calling; it is God's "holy calling." The word means "invitation" or "bidding". It is not the invitation preachers give with their Pontius Pilot preaching, turning Christ over to the will of the people at the end of their message.

This is the effectual calling of the saints. It is the internal, high, heavenly, call of sovereign irresistible power and grace which is irresistible. This is the calling of which God is the author. His calling is that calling of his sheep unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus.

When the Spirit of God made the commandment come, he revealed to us that we had broken the whole law of God. He made us to know the sin of our father Adam had passed death upon us. First, we saw our own sins then our hearts sin. We were taught of God that we were conceived in sin of Adam's corrupt seed. Therefore, everything we had ever done—good or evil—was all under sin—all an abomination to God. God pierced our conscience when he personally imputed our sin to us.

We tried to put the charge out of our minds but the Voice of God cried in our conscience, "No hope! We argued for goodness in us but the Voice cried louder, "No hope!" We resolved, "I'll stop sinning" but the Voice screamed, "No hope!" We said, "I'll look to the law!" but the Voice thundered, "No hope!" Some even got some true doctrine and thought we knew the Lord at one time. But we had never grieved over our sin, never confessed our nothingness to God. The Voice of the Lord kept speaking into our guilty conscience, saying...

Isaiah 57:10: Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is NO HOPE: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved. 11 And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not? 12 I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

Then he revealed the good news!

Galatians 3: 13: Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree.

Christ was made the sin of his people. He was charged with those sins, he bore the stripes for those sins, he paid the price we owed for those sins and he put those sins away forever! Then the sweetest Voice we had ever heard began speaking into my conscience, saying.

Psalm 130:7: Let Israel HOPE in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

His light shined into our soul saying, “Hope in the LORD!” We had never thought of doing that, never been willing and could not make ourselves to be willing! But then we found ourselves hoping in the LORD. We heard God say effectually, “With the LORD there is mercy! With him is plenteous redemption!” Therefore, we found ourselves believing God. Before, we had heard the general call in the preaching of the gospel. But now God called us personally, effectually.

When God begins this work of grace in one of his elect children, God keeps working in his child till our old stony heart is replaced with a new, created heart which God puts in: a broken heart—a contrite heart—a submissive heart—a teachable heart. Then all our vain hopes are gone: then we cease seeing Christ with the eyes of a skeptic and we believe; we finally cry out, honestly, “Oh, God be merciful to me the sinner!”

Immediately, Mercy sweeps up his child in his everlasting arms! The Spirit purges the conscience with his blood from dead works. He makes his child know he made us the righteousness of God in Christ. Through faith he charges us righteous in the righteousness of Christ, saying, “Thy sins and thine iniquities I remember no more.”

Romans 5: 1: Therefore being justified, by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in HOPE of the glory of God.

**Application:** Sinner, can I tell you from personal experience. I have been an unbeliever, doubting, trying to prove God a liar. Whatever else you do, never stop paying attention to this gospel. If God calls you, he will do it through this gospel. The whole time that I was hoping in a vain shadow, something kept me listening to the gospel. It was God, though I did not know it. As much as I hated the gospel, looking back now I know, God kept me going to church services, kept me listening, kept someone handing me sermons and tracts. Oh, don't try to ignore the Voice of the Lord.

Jeremiah 17: 7: Blessed IS the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose HOPE THE LORD IS.

Believer, for you who have this hope, our hope is grown the more the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit and one way this done is through trials.

Romans 5: 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, HOPE: 5 And HOPE maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

So if God gives Paul his petitions for the Ephesian brethren to know the hope of his calling more assuredly, and if God makes us to know more assuredly, one way will be through painful trails. The trials make us experience the truth:

Romans 8: 28...that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

We learn more assuredly that

Romans 11: 29: For the gifts and CALLING of God *are* without repentance.

## II. SECONDLY, WHAT IS THIS HOPE?

**Above All The Believers Hope Is God Our Savior The Lord Jesus Christ**

Psalm 38:15: For in thee, O LORD, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Lord my God.

1 Peter 1:21: [It is by Christ that we] do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

1 Timothy 1:1: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ,...our hope;

It is of God that you are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. Christ is All and all the glory for which the believer hopes. And because we are sons and heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, our hope in Christ is of eternal life with Christ.

Titus 3:7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Our hope is of being with our Savior in a sinless world forever and not only our souls but our bodies.

Psalm 16: 8: I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my FLESH ALSO SHALL REST IN HOPE. 10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

This hope of glory begins when Christ is formed in our inward man.

Colossians 1: 27: To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY.

**Application:** Believer, the calling of God formed Christ in you. And Christ shall never be taken from those God has called. His calling is without repentance. Christ is our hope of glory and Christ is that glory!

### **III. THIRDLY, LET'S HEAR SOME DESCRIPTIONS OF OUR HOPE ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES**

#### **One Hope**

Ephesians 4:4: There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one HOPE of your calling;

The glory hoped for is the same in every believer for each believer is loved of God equally the same.

**Illustration:** No child on the circumference—all at the center.

We each shall equally possess heavenly glory. We were:

- Chosen in Christ the same
- In the same everlasting covenant of grace
- Bought with the same precious blood of Christ
- Justified by the same righteousness
- Born of the same Spirit, in the same body, baptized with the same baptism
- All are equally the sons of God
- All are made kings and priests unto God,
- All are in one kingdom, heirs of the same inheritance.
- So the saints in heaven will all be equal. There is no division with our God.

**Application:** Pause, brethren, and just imagine what it will be like to all be equal and to love it to be so—to have no envy, no jealousy, and no desire to make others envious or jealous, just perfect love for our Savior and for one another!

## Unseen Hope

Romans 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

By making us wait for hope unseen, God teaches us his grace is sufficient:

- To keep us believing in hope
- To uphold us through every trial
- To grow us in hope through every trial

Psalm 33: 18 Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; 19 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he *is* our help and our shield. 21 For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. 22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

Lamentations 3: 21: This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. 22 *It is of* the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23 *They are* new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness. 24 The LORD *is* my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. 25 The LORD *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him. 26 *It is* good that *a man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

## Hope Waited For Through Faith

Galatians 5:4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

In this life, the “hope of righteousness” we wait for is the hope that God will reveal Christ our Righteousness in those we love. It is turning to the law when we start preaching TO them rather than declaring to them the sure mercies of Christ our Savior, when we lose our patience of hope, when we deal with them in the power of our fleshly strength.

**Application:** I say this to us fathers and mothers who want so dearly for Christ to be formed in our unbelieving children. It may be that God has not revealed Christ in them because he is first bringing us to the end of ourselves, teaching us once again that we must trust him. So trust in God for the hope of righteousness to be revealed to those you love—faith worketh by love, not in the power of the flesh.

In the life to come, the hope of righteousness is Christ our Righteousness who shall come again for us. We must persevere in faith waiting for Christ our Righteousness to be revealed from glory.

Colossians 1:22: [Christ shall] present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: 12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

### **Sure Hope of Never Being Ashamed**

Our hope is the sure expectation of never being ashamed of trusting the Lord to keep us. Even while in prison, not knowing whether he would live or die, Paul said,

Philippians 1: 19: For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 According to my EARNEST EXPECTATION AND HOPE, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so* now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

**Application:** Continually pray for one another for this supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ to fulfill this hope of our brethren.

Philippians 1:6: Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

### **IV. LASTLY, OUR HOPE IS SO CERTAIN THAT PAUL SPEAKS OF IT AS IF IT IS THE OBJECT OF THE THING HOPED FOR.**

Colossians 1: 5:...the hope which is laid up FOR YOU in heaven,

That means the glory, the inheritance, even Christ himself, is laid up FOR YOU in heaven. We have a sure hope!

1 Peter 1:3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a LIVELY HOPE by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4: To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**Application:** Sinner, wouldn't it be wonderful if today you found out that God had laid up this hope for you from before the foundation of the world! God says, "hear and your soul shall live!" Oh, that he would give you ears to hear this day. If he commands you effectually to "hear" he will give you ears to do what he commands!

Believer, this hope IS FOR YOU.

1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

When a man has a carnal object for his hope there is no guarantee he will have it. A man may hope to live to old age, to be wealthy, on and on, but we have no guarantee of tomorrow much less of old age. But the believer has God's full guarantee. God promises we shall never be disappointed. This is not presumption; it is confidence in God's word.

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

God cannot lie! The word of God would have to fail before our hope can fail. Truth would have to be turned into a lie before our hope can make us ashamed. THAT CANNOT BE BECAUSE THE WORD OF GOD ABIDETH FOREVER. God swore by himself in Christ to Abraham and likewise to us who believe.

Hebrews 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the HOPE set before us: 19 Which HOPE we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Our hope is sure because Christ has entered in as the forerunner for us. Our possession, even Christ himself, is laid up for you!

Psalm 31:19: Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which THOU HAST WROUGHT FOR THEM that trust in thee before the sons of men!

## Hope of Resurrection

Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

1 Thessalonians 4: 13: But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Corinthians 15: 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

Every enemy shall be put down. Satan shall be crushed under our feet. Death will be no more.

Our sin shall be no more. We will no more grieve the Holy Spirit by our sin. We shall be as holy, harmless, and undefiled as our great High Priest. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when we see him, we shall be like him." We will have no weakness in worshipping Christ. If we rejoice now, seeing through a glass darkly, imagine the chorus of rejoicing when we know him as he knows us.

We shall have perfect safety. There will be no one around us with sin, no hidden agendas, no pain or sorrow, no mental worries, not even a drop of sweat—just perfect peace! Scripture describes it as: Rest from your burdens, rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; rest from war; rest from the days of adversity, rest from thy sorrow and from thy fear—one eternal Sabbath rest!

Best of all, we shall have continual, never-ending, uninterrupted communion with the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Application:** Believer, imagine sitting at Christ's feet, like Mary, and knowing you have all eternity with the one thing needful. What a day it will be when we see the Lamb that was slain for us. This is our hope!

1 John 3:3: And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Brethren, like Paul, I cease not to give thanks for you and to pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your

understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling! Believers have a joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation, a sure hope, a good hope, through the grace of God and the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:13: Now the GOD OF HOPE fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may ABOUND IN HOPE, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

**Amen!**