

Christian Essentials – Pt. 1

Faith, Hope & Love

I. Introductory Remarks.

In 1 Corinthians 13 we find the apostle Paul speaking about the imperfected state that we as Christians find ourselves in while we wait for the time when we will see Jesus face to face. He is comparing our lives as to what they are now and what they shall be like at the return of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 13:8-11 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

He mentions several things that we now have in part of which are needed until we see Jesus face to face and then he gives three essential ingredients that are needed in our lives right now; faith, hope and love.

1 Corinthians 13:12-13 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. ¹³***And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.***

Many of the things that we now find essential for our Christianity and spiritual walk in this life will not be necessary when we live and reign with Jesus forever. Love is the one thing that will remain constant. It will be a part of our lives now and in eternity.

Faith, hope and love are the three major essentials to the Christian life of which are necessary to keep us on course so that we do not shipwreck before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because of God's great love towards us, when Jesus is revealed we shall be like Him. This is our hope and this is what we put our faith in.

1 John 3:1-3 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed,

we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

We are all on a ship, so to speak, that is sailing towards our eternal destination that Jesus is preparing for us at this very moment.

John 14:2-3 *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

The problem is; that our ship we are sailing on must sail or pass through all kinds of muddy and murky waters as well as the many storms that it encounters along the way.

We live in a world that has created for itself many turbulences and disorders. It is a world that is on a destructive course; and we as Christians must sail against the tide of unbelief, violence, wickedness and corruption.

- **There is always the possibility of suffering shipwreck along the way and losing all that we have been given by the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Paul warned Timothy to have faith and a good conscience before God so that he would keep himself from suffering shipwreck as some had already done.

1 Timothy 1:18-20 *This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, ¹⁹having faith and a good conscience, which **some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck**, ²⁰of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

The truth is; that there are many potential dangers around us that do have the potential of causing us to shipwreck. We live in perilous and evil times with many demonic and destructive forces that are trying to shipwreck our faith as well.

But if we continue to walk in faith, hope and love we will sail through life's many disturbing waters with our faith intact.

2 Timothy 3:1-2 *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*

2 Timothy 4:1-2 *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ²Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

All of this creates a stormy environment for us to sail in or walk out our faith. There are many pitfalls, trials and obstacles that we must navigate through.

II. The Importance of Faith, Hope & Love.

Faith, hope and love have been given to us so that we will have the essentials of navigating our lives securely in this world until that glorious day of seeing Jesus face to face.

1. Why Faith is Important.

Although we have been given a glimpse of our final destination, there are many uncharted seas of which can only be navigated through by faith.

We cannot see with our carnal eyes where we are going in our spiritual quest for God. Faith goes as far as it can see, and when it gets there it will always be able to see farther.

2 Corinthians 4:18 *while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

When in the midst of life's many perplexing dilemmas faith is able to grasp and seize that which is ahead. It is the conviction of the reality of all that we cannot see with our carnal eyes. It is a firm belief in something for which there is no proof.

Hebrews 10 has much to say concerning the importance of walking by faith in the midst of life's many challenges.

Hebrews 10:32-39 *But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: ³³partly while you were*

made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; ³⁴for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. ³⁵Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷"For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." ³⁹But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Any time we begin to focus too much on the storm around us or the situation we find ourselves in, we begin to lose sight of God and our faith begins to diminish. We must continue to stay focused on that which is unseen to the carnal eyes.

Unbelief puts our circumstances between us and God, but faith puts God between us and our circumstances. ¹

2. The Necessity of Hope.

Hebrews 10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.*

Our hope is based on that which is unseen. It is a desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment of it. It is to cherish a desire with expectation of fulfillment.

A few years ago the psychology department of Duke University carried on an interesting experiment. They wanted to see how long rats could swim. In one container they placed a rat for whom there was no possibility of escape. He swam a few moments and then ducked his head to drown.

In the other container they made the hope of escape possible for the rat. The rat swam for several hours before finally drowning. The conclusion of the experiment was just the opposite of our common conclusion. We usually say, "As long as there is life, there is hope." The Duke experiment proved, "As long as there is hope, there is life."²

¹ F.B. Meyer

² Bruster & Dale, How to Encourage Others

Romans 8:24-25 *For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.*

- **Hope is the anchor of our soul.**

It is hope that hold us together when everything around us seems to be caving in. When the storms begin to rise against you, you simply throw out the anchor of hope until the storm begins to subside.

Hebrews 6:18-20 *that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, ²⁰where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*

3. The Necessity of Love.

The greatest of faith, hope and love is love because it is the bond that hold everything together. Where would we be without the love of the Father, or where would we be without the love and support of our brothers and sisters around us?

Colossians 2:2 *that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,*

Colossians 3:14 *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

III. Concluding Remarks.

Let's not be swept aside and shipwrecked by the many storms and upheaval of our times, but rather walk in faith, hope and love setting our sights on the eternal purpose of God.