

The God Of Hope

How are you going to be different one hour and fifteen minutes from now? Here's my prayer for you. The God of Hope, by His Holy Spirit, is going to fill you with all joy and peace in believing. That's Paul's words in Romans 15:13.

When you leave this place, you are going to overflow with hope, for our God is able to do immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine. In the quiet of this moment, why don't you ask the Lord to do nothing less than this in you this morning.

The Awesome God Who Can

In Romans 15:5, Paul refers to **the God who gives endurance and encouragement**. Just how does God encourage us? Remember Gideon. God enlisted him to take on the Midianites. In order to keep Israel from boasting, the army was whittled from probably 25,000 to 300. That's encouragement? God knew he needed assurance, so....

....that night the LORD said to Gideon, "Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands. If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah and listen to what they are saying. Afterward, you will be encouraged to attack the camp."

So he and Purah his servant went down to the outposts of the camp. The Midianites, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore.

Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend his dream. "I had a dream," he was saying. "A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed."

His friend responded, "This can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands."

When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped God. He returned to the camp of Israel and

called out, "Get up! The LORD has given the Midianite camp into your hands." Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside. "Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.' "

Judges 7

The Solid Rock

Against all hope, Abraham *in hope* believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead - since he was about a hundred years old - and that Sarah's womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Romans 4:18-23

The Hope We Have

Alexander Whyte recalls Lady Kenmure, who was one of the Campbells of Argyll in Scotland back in the 17th Century. They were a family distinguished for their depth of piety, and he comments that Lady Jane was "one of the most richly-gifted members of that richly-gifted house."

But she had her own crosses to carry. She had the sore cross of bad health to carry all her days. Then she had the sad misfortune to "make a very bad marriage in the morning of her days" and, partly as the result of all that, and partly because of her peculiar mental constitution, her whole life was "drenched with a deep melancholy."

On September 14th, 1664, Her pastor, Samuel Rutherford wrote to her on September 14th, 1664, when she had just become a widow...

Madam, let me implore you, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, and by the comforts of His Spirit, and because you know that in the future you will appear before him: let God, and men, and angels now see what is in you. The Lord has pierced the vessel; it will be known whether there be in it wine or water.

Let your faith and patience be seen, that it may be known your only beloved first and last has been Christ. Therefore, now cast your whole love upon Jesus Christ; He alone is a suitable object for your love and all the affections of your soul. God has dried up one channel of your love by the removal of your husband.

Let now that river run upon Christ. I dare say that God's hammering of you from your youth is only to make you a fair carved stone in the high upper temple of the New Jerusalem. Your Lord never thought this world's worthless, imitation glory a gift worthy of you; and therefore would not bestow it on you, because he is offering you a better portion.

Let the small change go; the great inheritance is yours. You are a child of the house, and joy is laid up for you; it is long in coming, but none the worse for that. I am now expecting to see, and that with joy and comfort, that which I hoped of you: that you have laid such strength upon the Holy One of Israel, that you defy troubles, and that your soul is a castle that may be besieged, but cannot be taken.

Be Still My Soul

Prayer from the congregation

Hallowed Be Your Name

OFFERING
Now And Forever

SERMON
Dave Talley

The Awesome God Who Can

Benediction

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:16-21