

June 10, 2018  
Sermon for the Third Sunday after Pentecost  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
Bowie, TX  
Larry Knobloch, Pastor  
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

*J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus*

2 Corinthians 4:13–5:1 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, “I believed, and so I spoke,” we also believe, and so we also speak, <sup>14</sup> knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. <sup>15</sup> For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. <sup>16</sup> So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup> as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

<sup>1</sup> For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Amen.

Discouragement is a part of every Christian's life. This should not surprise us, for Satan is determined to pull us back and hang on to us for his kingdom of darkness.

It also shouldn't surprise us to learn that pastors, like the apostle Paul himself, become discouraged too, for they/we are also human. This explains why, in today's Epistle, Paul reminds the Corinthians (and us) that in times of discouragement, Christian hope refreshes our hearts.

Our hope is based upon the past (vv 13, 14a). Jesus' death and resurrection give us hope not only because of who He is but what He has done.

Jesus made complete payment for our sins. Today's OT Lesson describes how God promised that the woman's Seed would crush Satan's head. From all the way back to Garden, the promise was made. The Hope of all mankind was promised. Every generation was looking for the Messiah. That's why you see the generations listed. They were looking hard for their Savior.

We look too and we find our Savior all through the Old Testament. The Old Testament looks forward to the cross, while we look back to the very same cross of Christ!

Through Baptism, in which we died to sin and rose to new life, we are now a part of God's family. In today's Gospel Jesus refers to all believers as His "*mother and brothers.*" Not friends and neighbors but close, close family members.

But we don't only look to the past. Our hope focuses upon the future also. (v 14b).

Our eventual death and the Second Advent of our Lord do not fill us with fear, for we know it will be the beginning of our eternal life in heaven. While our Christian faith takes seriously temporal or earthly blessings and problems, our hope ultimately focuses on the next life. We know that this isn't all that there is.

Non-Christians do not have this hope for the future. For them, life is like a dead-end street, and the death of a loved one is a time for inconsolable grief (1 Thess 4:13).

Our hope of eternal life in Christ is the focal point of our Christian faith. We confess it weekly in the creeds. The Apostles' Creed ends with the declaration, "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting."

Without this hope, Christianity is of no value (1 Cor 15:19). This hope has a solid foundation (1 Cor 15:12-20). St. Peter refers to our faith as a "living hope" (1 Pet 1:3), in contrast to a hope that is wishfully dreaming of a better place. Jesus promises an eternal paradise.

But it's also not just about the future.

Our hope is evident in our daily lives (vv 15-18).

As long as we keep our eyes fixed on Christ, we as Christians will be optimistic about the future, for we know that the "bottom line" is eternal life in Christ.

Though we live in the visible world, our focus is on what is not seen (v 18). The Nicene Creed ends, "I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." The ministry of the church enables us to glorify God in our lives.

This is daily as our hearts are refreshed with the hope of heaven (v 15).

Because our hearts are refreshed by the hope of heaven, we who believe in Christ keep smiling in spite of troubles in life (v 16).

This does not mean that our troubles are not real and painful. But instead of “crying on the inside and laughing on the outside,” as some people do, we Christians do the reverse: while outwardly our lives may waste away, inwardly we are renewed day by day through the living hope we have in the living Christ.

There is no comparison between our present heartaches and the glory of eternal life. You could not balance them against each other on scales, because the eternal glory for which we hope far outweighs all else (v 17; Rom 8:18).

It would be very discouraging to have no hope for the future. As a pastor I’ve heard many times, the phrase “I don’t know how someone who doesn’t have our Christian hope could take the death of a loved one!”

This is spoken at visitations, at funerals and at many bedsides as they wait and watch their loved ones pass away. There are tears and cries of loss and pain, but underneath there is that hope in the sure and certain promise of life eternal with Christ as their Savior.

*“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,<sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 8:38-39)

To be a Christian does not free us from disappointment, discouragement, or disaster; but our hearts are continually refreshed by our living hope in Christ!

Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Amen.

S.D.G.—Soli Deo Gloria

### **Sermon Outline**

#### **Refreshed by Hope**

*2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1*

- I. Our hope is based upon the past (vv 13, 14a).
- II. Our hope focuses upon the future (v 14b).
- III. Our hope is evident in our daily lives (vv 15–18).