

Hope

(1 Corinthians 13:13)

Introduction:

1. In 1 Corinthians 13:13 the Bible mentions 3 important subjects.
2. Although "love" is the greatest, today we are concentrating on "hope."
3. Our lesson is based on 2 principles revealed in Proverbs 13:12.
 - a. First, "*Hope deferred maketh the heart sick*" [when something that we have looked forward to is postponed, it causes us to become despondent]
 - b. Second, "*when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life*" [when we finally experience something that we have been looking forward to, it is a special blessing -- vs.19a].

Discussion:

- I. THESE PRINCIPLES ARE ILLUSTRATED MANY TIMES IN THE BIBLE
 - A. Abraham and Sara were familiar with these principles.
 1. (Genesis 12:1-5) Abraham was 75 years old when God said that he would be the father of a great nation.
 2. (Genesis 15:2-3) Later, Abraham questioned God about his situation.
 3. (Genesis 17-18) When Abraham was 99 years old, he and Sara were told that they would have a son.
 4. (Genesis 21:5) Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old.
 5. (Genesis 21:6-8) Isaac's birth was a happy occasion.
 - B. Jacob was familiar with these principles.
 1. From Genesis 29:25 we see how Jacob felt after Leah was given to him when he had worked 7 years for Rachel.
 2. (Genesis 29:27-28) Jacob had to work 7 additional years for Rachel.
 - C. The Israelites were familiar with these principles.
 1. From Psalm 137:1 we see how they felt during the captivity.
 2. From Psalm 126:1-3 we see how they felt when the captivity was over.
 - D. Jesus referred to the birth of a child to illustrate these principles (John 16:21).
- II. WE SOMETIMES GO THROUGH EXPERIENCES THAT CAUSE US TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THESE PRINCIPLES
 - A. Some experiences we face include:
 1. waiting while a loved one has surgery or is treated for an illness
 2. waiting to complete an education or find a job
 3. waiting to complete arrangements for a place to live or worship.
 - B. Thankfully, help is available to us during times when we have to wait.

C. The heart might ache, but it does not have to break.

III. LET US APPLY THESE PRINCIPLES TO THE RESURRECTION

A. Our desire should be the one mentioned in Philippians 3:11.

B. (Philippians 3:20-21) The resurrection will occur when Jesus returns.

C. According to Romans 8:22-23, we sometimes groan while we wait for the resurrection [*"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick"*].

D. We learn from Romans 8:18, 21 that God's children will receive a special blessing at the resurrection [*"when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life"*].

E. Perhaps this is a good time for us to be reminded of some information found in Romans 8 that will help us while we look forward to the resurrection.

1. Let us remember that:

a. God works providentially on behalf of His children (vs.28)

b. help is available from the Holy Spirit (vs.26-27) and Christ (vs.34)

c. the love of Christ and God is dependable (vs.35, 38-39)

d. God's children can be *"more than conquerors"* through Christ (vs.37).

2. This information will help us to remain steadfast in our service to the Lord, as we encouraged to do in 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Conclusion:

1. After the resurrection, those who are in Christ will be blessed with eternal life.

2. The Bible shows in Romans 6:3-4 how a person gets into Christ so he can have hope.

3. Have you complied with these verses by being baptized into the Lord?