

LITTLE DOGS & LITTLE SCRAPS

INTRODUCTION

The most hope filled place in the universe turns out to be the humblest and the least exclusive. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are determined that their circle should be ceaselessly inclusive.

DISCUSSION

When was the last time you felt you didn't understand what Jesus was doing?

EXPLANATION

Read Matthew 15:21-28

Have you ever done anything thinking it would have Jesus' approval only to realize later it doesn't?

What is the thing you use to separate yourself, and you being "GOOD," from others?

Do you think you truly understand God in this regard?

APPLICATION

By having hope in Jesus will you keep going when you don't know why?

When you can't get answers to your pain, will you still say "my LORD" even though nothing is clear to you?

Will you keep going with grit and grace and live in the hope that God will set all things right?

How do you trust God to be good?

MISSION

Where are you not displaying the HOPE that God intends for your life to be about?

When was the last time you didn't associate with someone?

When was the last time you noticed someone that was left out?



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2 Peter 3:9

Romans 12:12

Matthew 15:21-28

Mark 7:26

Acts 10:34-35

Week 6

& SCRIPTURE VERSES



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2 Peter 3:9 *“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”*

The New Testament associates hope with character. In the New Testament, character development is linked with patient endurance: doing the right thing despite any delay in reaching goals or receiving rewards. It is very significant when we are told that “endurance [is] inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess 1:3; cf. Romans 5:4-5). We are exhorted to “hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast” (Hebrews 3:6) and to make our hope sure by showing “diligence to the very end” (Hebrews 6:11).

The Old Testament “saints” knew less of God’s plans than did New Testament “saints.” But psalmists and prophets still called on believers to anchor their hope in the Lord himself. Most New Testament references either explore the objective content of the Christian’s hope or examine the subjective impact of hope on our spiritual growth. But throughout the ages, in regard to the God of scripture, it is clear that there has been no basic change in the basis for hope. It is God who is the focus and object, and the ultimate guarantee, of our hope.

Everything you and I hope for is wrapped up in Jesus.

- He is the power who works our present transformation.
- He is the one whose life marks history’s furthest horizon.
- He is the one through whom each believer will experience both the resurrection of the body and the future’s full expression of eternal life.

Jesus calls His people to be those who are about INCLUSION into this great life and future He calls all people into. In Matthew 15, Jesus gives a test to 2 types of people: His disciples and a woman.

Sociologists distinguish two types of connections

- Bonding: Similar people perceive themselves as similar and develop deeper connections with each other.
- Bridging: steps across divides. Looks outward to encompass people across great social divides.

Jesus is the greatest bridge(r) the world has ever known and when the first church understood His heart they became a community like the world has never seen.

Miroslav Volf: *Jesus “names as sin what so often passes for virtue, especially among religious circles.”* In this day people were excluded by ethnicity, gender, physical problems, and certain jobs. Excluding was considered “righteous” and was thought of as a virtue.

Jesus was sinless and righteous and He *embraced* the outcasts. He did not condone sin, but clarified unfair labels. He spoke to outcasts, touched them, loved them, and ate with them.

Miroslav Volf: *“By embracing the outcast Jesus underscored the sinfulness of the persons and systems that cast them out.”*

When people follow Jesus they embrace others.

The most hope filled place in the universe turns out to be the humblest and the least exclusive. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are determined that their circle should be ceaselessly inclusive for the greater glory of God.

AGAPE (LOVE FEAST)

Sunday, November 20th OR

Wednesday November 23rd.

Sign up for our Thanksgiving Service which will be hosted by each of our Gospel Communities!

