**Faith, Hope, and Love**

*1 Corinthians 13:13*

**Introduction**

1. Christians can be described as a people of faith, hope, and love.
2. These three characteristics are key in Christian living, and are intimately related.
3. What are the connections between faith, hope, and love?
4. Faith
5. Seeking Faith
   1. **Hebrews 11:6** – Necessary component to pleasing God.
      1. **That He is** – His existence.
      2. **That He rewards diligent seekers** – acknowledgment that more knowledge of Him which acts is necessary.
   2. Requires us to act on our belief that He is (**cf. James 2):**
      1. **(v. 14)** – No profit without works.
      2. **(vv. 17, 20, 26)** – Dead without works.
      3. **(v. 19)** – No better than demons without works.
      4. **(v. 24)** – Justification by working faith – ***“obedience of faith” (Romans 1:5)***.
   3. Failure of the Gentiles (**cf. Romans 1:18-23**) – They knew God existed, but suppressed what they knew, and did not seek to know Him better.
   4. **Cf. Acts 17:26-27** – God designed us to seek Him further.
      1. Made clear through nature that He exists.
      2. **Only reveals more detail to those who seek it.**
   5. **This seeking faith is a lifelong process which continually acts upon what is found out about God. 🡪**
6. Working Faith
   1. **1 Thessalonians 1:3** – work of faith.
      1. Necessary to please God.
      2. **Cf. Galatians 5:6** – faith working through love.
   2. Such active faith is exhibited in Abraham’s life:
      1. **James 2:21-23** – Abraham had a faith which worked.
         1. **(vv. 21-22)** – Abraham was justified by faith when works made his faith complete – offering Isaac.
         2. **(v. 23)** – fulfilled scripture:
            1. Quote – **Genesis 15:6**
            2. Offering of Isaac **– Genesis 22**
            3. **30 years in between the quote and the “fulfillment” – not simply one act, but a life of obedient faith.**
         3. Such faith was continually active, thus continually grew to completion – in that way it was fulfilled:
            1. **Fulfilled** – to make replete, i.e. (literally) to cram (a net), level up (a hollow), or (figuratively) to furnish (or imbue, diffuse, influence), satisfy, execute (an office), finish (a period or task), verify. (Strong)
            2. **Cf. Genesis 22:12** – NOW I know – or, such is further confirmed after a difficult test.
7. Faith that is constant in works is tied to hope 🡪
8. Hope
9. Living Hope
   1. **1 Peter 1:3-5** – Begotten to a living hope.
      1. **John 1:12-13** – Received by believing and being born of God.
      2. This birth is also to a new hope – ***“an inheritance”*** because you were given the ***“right to become children of God.”***
      3. **Living** – alive; active.
      4. **(v. 5**) – the ***“salvation”*** is what we ultimately ***“hope”*** for, and it is to be realized as we are ***“kept…through faith.”***
   2. **Nature of this hope:**
      1. **Romans 8:24** – Called ***“hope”*** because we do not see it yet, or have it.
      2. **Not without substance though – objective in nature 🡪**
         1. **Hebrews 11:1** – faith is the substance.
            1. ***“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13).***
            2. Faith leads to abundance of hope.
         2. Faith in God who promised (**cf. Hebrews 6:17-20** – cannot lie):
            1. Because of God’s nature – He cannot lie – we KNOW the promise is certain – confident hope.
            2. Such anchors us **(v. 19).**
            3. Abraham **– (vv. 13-15)** – patiently endured – because he knew God’s promise was certain!
            4. So it is with us – **cf. Romans 8:25** – wait with perseverance. 🡪
10. Patient Hope
    1. **1 Thessalonians 1:3** – patience of hope – i.e. patiently continuing in the work of the Lord until the reward.
    2. **When one is begotten again through faith to a living “hope” which is a confident expectation of God’s promise, strength in patience is produced:**
       1. **Hebrews 6:11-12** – full assurance of hope is exhibited in faith and patience. (**vv. 13, 15** – Abraham immediate example.)
       2. **(v. 19)** – anchor – paints the picture of a storm (life) where waves threatened to drive us and toss us about. But our confident expectation (hope) of heaven, because it is sure and steadfast, keeps US sure and steadfast where we should be – in the work of the Lord 🡪
       3. **1 Corinthians 15:57-58** – Because we have hope of victory we are steadfast in the work of the Lord.
       4. **Hebrews 11:13-16, 24-26** – The hope of the reward produced by trust in God caused these men of faith to be patient and constant in their work for God.
    3. **“Man can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air, but only one second without hope.”** (Hope gives us drive and purpose to see its realization.)
11. Love
12. A natural product of such hope is love for those who share in it with you – **cf. Colossians 1:4-5** – love for the saints because of the hope you have. 🡪
    1. **2 Peter 1:1** – like precious faith.
    2. **1 Peter 1:3, 5** – by faith begotten again to hope of salvation. (Like hope.)
    3. **Redemption price to afford us this hope** – **1 Peter 1:18-21** – precious blood of Christ redeems us from sin, and grants us hope in God through His resurrection.
    4. **(v. 22)** – When we are born again, and purified by such blood through obedience to the gospel, we become part of a family – **a part of others who have likewise been redeemed with this blood, thus affording them the same hope.**
       1. This impresses us with the value of that individual.
       2. ***“what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:18*** – we are of immense value to God).
       3. When we share such hope, we share the gift of Christ’s blood – **that means God saw value, not only in ourselves, but in our brother** – WE SHOULD SEE THE SAME VALUE IN EACH OTHER, WHICH DEMANDS LOVE. 🡪
       4. ***“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11).***
13. Knowledgeable Love
    1. **Philippians 1:9-11** – The love we are to have, and abound in toward one another is a knowledgeable love.
       1. Typical idea – love is purely emotional, and often impulsive.
       2. **Biblical idea** – love is an action birthed by knowledge and discernment.
          1. **Knowledge** – of God’s will.
          2. **Discernment** – in what He requires, and what your brother needs. (in expressing love toward him)
          3. **(vv. 10-11)** – approving excellent things and acting in sincerity and without offense, i.e. being filled with the righteousness of Christ toward brethren. **(cf. 1 John 3:16-17** – by this we KNOW LOVE – thus can act accordingly)
    2. Greatest command, and second greatest command – **Matthew 22:37-40** – a knowledge of God’s will is necessary to love Him, and the brethren.
       1. **Cf. Hebrews 5:14** – We cannot love our brethren properly without being able to discern good and evil through studying and practicing God’s will.
       2. **Cf. Jeremiah 10:23** – just like we do not know what is best for ourselves, but it must be revealed to us, we do not know what is best for our brethren without revelation.
    3. **It is this kind of love we are to have for our brethren, and this kind of love that is transcendent 🡪**
14. Transcendent, Enduring Love
    1. **1 Corinthians 13:13** – the greatest of these three is love.
       1. **Faith** – becomes sight.
       2. **Hope** – becomes reality.
       3. **Love** – will abide forever.
    2. Transcendence, and endurance of love:
       1. **(vv. 1-3)** – Nothing done without love is profitable.
       2. **(vv. 4-7)** – The action of love – always looks to the value of its object.
       3. **(vv. 8-13)** – While the spiritual gifts will fail (cease), love will never. Even faith and hope will someday cease, but love will not.
    3. Partaking in this love, especially as we show it to each other, **is the closest thing to eternal life with God on this side of heaven.** Such will be present forever upon our resurrection and transformation to be with the Lord.
       1. **Cf. John 14:23** – we love God so that He will love us – by making His home with us.
       2. If we wish to abide in the eternal love of God in heaven, we will begin doing so now, as we partake in His love for the brethren – **cf. 1 John 4:7-11**

**Conclusion**

1. Christians are those characterized by faith, hope, and love.
2. We need to understand the intimate connection between these three, and partake in them fully.