

# Sermon Notes - 22.1.2017 Tony Winter

Heb 11;1, Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2, For by it the elders obtain a good testimony. 3, By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

What is our HOPE? We must have Hope to have faith because without hope there is no substance, no faith. (The key is hope)

And without substance/faith, our testimony is empty/no good, and the people hearing our testimony need something tangible (real living knowledge) to recognize the truth in what we say.

It's a bit like a man trying to talk to a woman about having a baby, I can read and talk about the process, see the results, but only a woman can truly know what it is to give birth.

## HOPE

I know what I like and hope I can do or have, (ask people what they like, and it's amazing how our thoughts naturally turn to the flesh,).

But we all know in this room that all things do not work out as we would hope, if our faith was in that kind of physical outcomes of hope, then I'm not sure if that kind of faith has any substance, it's a kind of hit and miss hope.

In fact I have known people who question their belief because of the outcomes of what they physical hoped would come to pass-there circumstances.

There needs to be something more, something steadfast and sure, and something that cannot be shaken.

It's not that God does not bless us in this way, but it will never be enough, I often find only disappointment there. And if this is our only understanding of who Christ is, then that can lead to questioning the validity of Christ, and especially in our life. (Work in opening this up for clarity) this is any area where the enemy can have a field day with those niggling thoughts.

Paul tells us in (Phil 3;8) that he counts all thing as loss for the knowledge of Christ Jesus, Paul discovered that there was more than the transient, the reality of life, as solid as that is, it was only when Paul discovered how truly substantial the knowledge of Jesus Christ is that he was able to count all else rubbish, that he may gain Christ.

As soon as I allow my brain to try and accept this truth I find myself confronted with this choice that I don't really want to make because it seems so empty. Ahrrr! I have a real

life to live, I can give all things up. It's not about giving up but a change of heart, a way of thinking that happens when we place our hearts and minds in the pursuit of a deeper relationship with Him.

Seeking Christ in this way is not a call to become a rag wearing hermit living in a cave.

We can always take that moment to thank God, whatever you are doing, in the middle of a task etc. Grabbing a verse from the bible with your coffee and contemplating it.

This is all about becoming one, the invisible but tangible out working it's self.

This is a God given opportunity to extend our thinking. To know the glories of the unseen, which grow to become such strong substance that the world and all that it offers grow strangely dim. So that we also count all else as loss.

In other words, the world has no power over us, we become over-comers.

My Hope is to gain Christ, Christ in reality, through and in His word, the bible. There is nothing greater, it's what excites me, empowers me and sustains me, and Christ does not disappoint.

I'm not saying that we don't have or do things, I love having and doing things, but its Christ that makes these thing more than the sum of their parts. How those walks in the country where the beauty brings praise to the creator God.

I would not be preaching this message if I did not know that we all what more of Jesus. That we understand that everything begins with God, God is the centre.

The problem is that we are what our hearts are, and find it hard to change.

I was at a leaders meeting ..... Richard Thomas... J.K Rowling wrote on a table in a cafe..... Oprah Winfrey dried her underwear on the balcony of hotels she stayed in because she felt it was too expensive to send then out to be cleaned.

As we become accustomed to a new reality our hearts change and therefore we change. Today, for some, if not all, can be the beginning of a new, person to person, relationship with God, through His Word by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Remember this is not a call to find hour during a busy day, it's a heart change that in the midst of our business we just take a moment to thank and praise Him. That in our coffee break, or even in the WC, we take a verse from the word and let our minds reflect and question what we have read.

Well the good news today is that we are a chosen and privileged people, and by the power of the Holy Spirit we can have revelation of mysteries hidden until now, today, new every morning, in fact moment by moment, this is God's will and purpose.

Col 1;25-27, To fulfil the Word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make

known what are the riches of the Glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

As we seek we should be excited about discovering those mystery's, those pearls of great value. As we receive we overflow to those around us.

If there is anyone in the room that struggles to share their faith, then this revelation is the substance, our faith, that can be captured by those who are being saved, who are perishing.

Col 2;14-15, Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

The question and struggle that we have faced is how do I obtain and disseminate this revelation, Jesus, so as to include all. It's easy to live on the mountain top and to know that you are anointed with the Holy Spirit, and have people stare at you encapsulated by what is real in what you share.

It's even pleasing to live there in our own self importance, wallowing in His presence. Our task, should we will to accept it, is to seek Him, together, as His body The Church, through His Word, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

If revelation comes through ourselves or one or two others, as true and as real as it is, it will be lacking. (Story about the heat in the hall, only one side warm.)

1 Cor 12;13-25, one body, many parts, for many purposes, the least being the most important.

Story of Nicola..... she is 24, knows nothing of the bible but we asked to read John 2; 1-12, the wedding of Cana.

Asked what she got, from reading the scripture, she said "only they knew". After prompting her and looking at the story together I understood that none of the guests knew what Jesus did, except the disciples and the servants that did what Jesus told them (verse 5). This opened up my understanding and the importance of applying the word.

We must encourage and be encouraged to discover, and allow other to discover, what is in the word. Most importantly, share what we discover with others, for increase and to avoid error.

My dad did a lot of jigsaws and he would lay out the pieces by guessing, looking at the colour or shapes, and as the pieces fitted in there right places he would have to move them from where he thought/guessed they fit to their proper place.

We only get the full picture when all the pieces fit together. Sometimes a piece can be almost right in shape and colour that my dad would slot it in the wrong place, which meant he would be lost later in the puzzle, he found himself confused.

It would take a fresh pair of eyes to spot the mistake, which was only glaringly obvious to him after it was pointed out, then everyone could see it. The jigsaw would never be complete without that smallest of inputs.

Oh Lord. Help us, application, application, application.

The Word is the foundation of all things. And yet how many of us do what I call brush read, like each morning working our way through the bible in a year or two.

Nothing wrong in that, in fact is very good but it can become boring, just doing our duty, taking it in thinking oh I know all this or, or maybe I don't understand what I'm reading or why it's even wrote.

Eph 4; 10, He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. He gave us the comforter, the Holy Spirit, to lead us in to all truth – to lead us to the King of Glory, to meet with Christ and therefore God.

Christ knows all things, is in all things, and has not left us empty but has given us all the tool we need.

Like any good/skilled worker, we must learn what the tools are and what there for, how to use them, and that only comes by doing.

Talking to Paul on Friday about deconstructing the word, not changing it, but really digging, dig until you find that pearl of great value.

Taking to someone last week and John 1; came up... we took the verse,

The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it. Take this verse yourself and see what sense you make of it.

We are interested in finding the substance of Christ so that we can place our feet upon it, next time I speak we will look at this further.