

Oaks-West Church of Christ

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October 25, 2020

Faith, Hope, Love

by George Slover

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father;” (1 Thessalonians 1:3)

Paul’s first letter was to the church of the Thessalonians. He expresses thanks to God for the fruit of the gospel in Thessalonica. He singles out three fundamental traits - faith, hope, and love. He was encouraged by their energetic operation among the saints there.

Faith is a firm persuasion, conviction, or trust in the unseen. Though one has never seen God, having examined the evidence they believe and trust in him. When one fully trusts God they respect his authority and willingly yield to his will. Thus, it is a work of faith.

Love involves a high regard, goodwill,

or benevolence toward others. It manifest itself in deeds of kindness toward others. In this context love is coupled with “labor” – a word which is best rendered as toil and pain. However, when coupled with love, such effort is no longer a burden, but a work of the highest motives.

Hope is a confident expectation of the future. Jesus Christ and his appearing is the object of our hope. God’s people eagerly await the Lord’s appearing with the eternal blessings he will offer. Because of this promise, God’s people are able to patiently endure the trials of life and fix their eyes on these rewards.

These three – faith, hope, and love are inseparable graces. Faith must always work by love. (Galatians 5:6) Hope is connected to love “because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” (Romans

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5:5) Faith is “the substance of things hoped for.” (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is the root from which hope and love spring forth and bear fruit. Later in the letter, Paul exhorts them to put “on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.” (1 Thessalonians 5:13)

Love must be guided by faith and hope. Hope is only a dream without faith and love. And love and faith can be motivated by hope. Paul is thankful that these three graces are actively operating among the saints of Macedonia. What about you?

That One Pearl

by Warren Berkley

Yesterday I preached from Matt. 13, The Pearl of Great Price (see Matt. 13:45,46).

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

Shouldn't it occur to us, the merchant in this story wasn't just looking for any pearl. It wasn't like a quick shopping trip or treasure hunt, where you find something that resembles the best, and you take it, saying to yourself, “Ok, that was easy. This will do.”

That's what people do about religion. While there may be something better, they settle. To open the Bible and read and study and search and find, is an extended

use of time and energy. Why not just find something that looks like the real thing?

Yet this merchant – whose efforts are commended – did not settle for a duplicate, the artificial or something to just “get by.” His quest was directed to “ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE,” and when he found it, he gave “all” he had to receive it.

Kingdom blessings offered by God through Christ cannot be duplicated by man, and any artificial “pearl” cannot deliver what the authentic promises. In your quest to find God and serve Christ, diligently read and use what the Bible says. Then when you see clearly what is offered and required, give all your life to have it. Be thankful and committed.

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.



Upcoming Ladies' Bible Classes - Tuesday, November 10 at the building.

Services for rest of 2020 - The elders have decided to continue with the current service times of 10:45 am Sundays and 7:00 pm Wednesdays for the remainder of the year. We will reevaluate in December. Thank you for your support and encouragement as we make these difficult decisions! --DT for the elders

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.



Please remember the following individuals in your daily prayers:

June Owens
Jack Wilson
Jerry Richardson
Karen Hallmark
Shirley Perkins' brother, Leon
Morgan O'Hair
Dinah Williams
Joy Ulrich
Kevin Barth
Tyler Hairston
Anna Urquhart
Dot's son, Hank

And continue to pray for each other

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

We have many that face challenges on a daily basis and need your prayers as well.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

