

Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!

1 CHR 16 : 11

Current Link

At the beginning of 2020, Pastor Daniel gave us a verse for the year ahead. God had previously given me this verse earlier on Christmas morning.



The verse was Hebrews 11v1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

No one could have had any idea that we would need so much hope this year. This verse mentions faith and hope and where would we be without our faith and our hope?

There are so many verses in Scripture referring to our hope - that is our future hope. We have all held onto hope throughout this year. The rainbow motif has popped up everywhere which is a sign of God's promise; a sign of hope. An acronym for hope is 'Hold On, Pain Ends' and this pain will end.

We hold onto the hope which only the Lord can give. Many people have endured much pain and heartache. We need hope and we, as believers, have a living hope.

So, in this new year we have a hope of better things to come.

Proverbs 23:18 says, "For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off."

As Paul writes in 1 Timothy 1:1 "...Jesus Christ is our hope."

I have read somewhere that "hope can be ignited by a spark of encouragement."

As we begin this new year, let us encourage one another and ignite our hope in the Lord. Our human hope pales in comparison to biblical hope. We have a solid hope as Hebrews 6:18-19 says: "...we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor to the soul, firm and secure..."

EVETTE THOMPSON

Speak Gently

Speak gently, it is better far To rule by love than fear. Speak gently, let no harsh word mar The good we may do here,

Speak gently to the erring ones; They must have toiled in vain. Perchance unkindness made them so; Oh, win them back again.

Speak gently, 'tis a little thing Dropped in the heart's deep well; The good, the joy that it may bring, Eternity shall tell.

SUBMITTED BY A CHURCH MEMBER



First Steps Mums & Tots

Happy New Year to all our helpers. It is good to remind ourselves in these uncertain times that we have a faithful and loving God. Psalm 117:2 says, "For great is His steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever..."

We have missed seeing you all on Thursday mornings but look forward, God willing to meeting again in the autumn.

MARGARET MORRISON



SERMON TITLES FOR JANUARY:

- SUNDAYS:**
- 3/1/21 - AM: Pastor Geoffrey Ward / PM: Pastor Geoffrey Ward
 - 10/1/21 - AM: Andrew Morrow (IBC Student) / PM: Stephen Spence
 - 17/1/21 - Pastor Daniel Ashby - AM: Standing In The Hall Of Faith (1) / PM: Mark (30): "Anointed For Burial"
 - 24/1/21 - Pastor Daniel Ashby - AM: Standing In The Hall Of Faith (2) / PM: Mark (31): "The First Supper"
 - 31/1/21 - Pastor Daniel Ashby - AM: Standing In The Hall Of Faith (3) / PM: Mark (32): "Sorrowful Saviour and the Dozing Disciples"

NOTE: All Sun & Wed services now ONLINE from 10/1/21 to 6/2/21

Please note: Our pastor will be on holiday from 28th December to the 11th January.

Quote of the month:

"As the church we're not to point the finger. As the church we're to reach out a hand."

Daniel Ashby (Sunday 29th Nov 2020 AM, online service) on the topic 'Defining Humanity - Unyielding in Defending the Unborn'. Ask for a CD or listen online at <https://lisburnbaptist.org/>

Fear Not Little Flock A Meditation for 2021

Luke 12:4-6 & 22-32

I want to carve the words **fear not little flock** over the entrance to the year 2021.

In John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, in a conversation between Hopeful and Christian at the beginning of their pilgrimage, Hopeful declares that fear tends much to man's good, and to make them right. As the conversation proceeds, he asks Christian how he would describe fear. Christian responds that true or right fear is discovered by three things:

1. By its rise; it is caused by saving convictions for sin.
2. It drives the soul to lay fast hold on Christ for salvation.
3. It creates and maintains a great reverence of God, for His Word and His ways - keeping the soul tender, and making it afraid to turn from them to the right hand or to the left, to anything that may dishonour God, break its peace, grieve the Spirit, or cause the enemy to speak reproachfully.

That is a description of the fear of the Lord being the beginning of knowledge. But the fear that we are focusing on in our passage is of a different character. This passage helps us to confront the fear that is misplaced and which robs the believer of peace.

Fear not despite the apparent power of the opposition (v4)

As we enjoy our comfortable circumstances, there are others throughout the world who, because of their devotion to Christ, are in prison cells, refugee camps or in homes with the barest of necessities and provisions. But public life in the West is becoming increasingly hostile towards any outward manifestations of Christianity and while that concerns us, the Saviour's words are that we should not fear. So regardless of what 2021 holds in store for us, we should not fear despite the apparent power of the opposition.

Fear not because of the intimate oversight of a faithful God (v6-7)

There are two aspects to this point. The first is a watchful God watches over his flock for their protection; but we also need to remember that a watchful God sees the behaviour of the individual sheep.

Therefore, the confidence that ensures we don't have a misplaced fear, should also be accompanied by the concern that our lives are governed by what one writer describes as the Forgotten Fear - a fear of God. For the believer, that fear is not of the variety that causes us to cower in a darkened corner lest we attract divine displeasure. But it is a fear fed by faith and the knowledge that as redeemed children of God our desires should be after the things of God. In a world of glittering, hedonistic celebrities, where the trite and the superficial are glorified and fleeting attention is courted, we do well to remember that we are not unknown and we are not unseen - we enjoy the intimate oversight of a faithful God.

Fear not because of the certainty of the Father's provision (v32).

There is an aspect of the 'already and the not yet' in these words.

In the closing verses of Matthew 25 we encounter the judgment scene. In verse 34, when the sheep have been separated from the goats, we read that "the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" What a marvellous position to occupy! A prepared people, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before Him (Ephesians 1:4).

We are destined for a place prepared since the foundation of the world.

Fear not little flock!

JONATHAN KEARNEY



fear not little flock

Fellowship Link

Deaths:

As a church fellowship we send our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Hugh Baird who has passed into the presence of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Births:

Congratulations to Stephen and Joan Wright (grandparents) and to Naomi and Andrew Dempster on the birth of baby Samuel Stephen.

Congratulations to Stephen and Heather Aicken (grandparents) and to Naomi and Aaron McClatchey on the birth of baby James.

- Pastor: Daniel Ashby
- Secretary: Peter Spence
- Treasurer: Ernest Reddick
- Elders: Noel Spence, Victor Watson

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