

Faith vs. Hope – Kenneth E. Hagin

Central Truth: It takes a positive faith – a now faith – to get positive results.

When Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (I Corinthians 13:13), he was not inferring that hope and faith are not important. Each has its place, and one cannot be substituted for another. We cannot substitute love for hope. Neither can we substitute hope for faith. Yet so many people try to receive things from God on the basis of hope rather than faith.

Faith Is Now

Hope looks to the future. It is always future tense.

Faith is now. Faith says, “I’ll receive the answer right now. I have it now.” It is not hoping that gets the job done, it is believing. Someone said, “Well, I believe I will receive my healing – sometime.” That’s not faith, that’s hope, because it is looking to some indefinite future time. Faith says, “I receive my healing – now!” In one modern translation of the New Testament, the familiar verse in Hebrews 11:1 reads, “Faith is giving substance ... to things hoped for.”

If you need healing, you don’t want it in the future – you want it right now, especially if you’re in pain. If you are seeking the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, you want to receive now – not at some future indefinite time. If you need salvation, you cannot put it off to the future, for that may be too late. I have talked to people who told me that they hoped to be saved. Yet some of them are now dead. They left the world unsaved, because salvation that is based on hope never comes to fruition.

Ephesians 2:8, 9

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 10:9, 10, 13

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The above verses point man to the plan of salvation. We see that it is by faith – not hope – that we are saved. Jesus promised that He will not cast any out who come to Him, but will save all who “call upon the name of the Lord.” Therefore, we don’t need to hope that He will save us. He said He would.

How Do We Get Faith?

Faith, we know, grows out of the Word of God. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Another translation of this verse reads, “Faith is the warranty deed, that the thing for which you have fondly hoped is at last yours.”

Faith is “the evidence of things not seen,” as we read in Hebrews 11:1. To illustrate, you might hope for finances to meet a certain obligation, but faith gives you the assurance that you will have the money when you need it. You might hope for physical strength to do a job that you must do, but faith says, “The Lord is the strength of my life” (Psalm 27:1). In other words, faith says the same thing that the Word of God says.

Unbelief is really taking sides against God’s Word.

There are those who talk unbelief and take sides against the Word of God and then wonder why God’s Word doesn’t work for them. If we want God’s Word to work for us, we must side in with it.

Many times when I ask folks who come for prayer in my meetings if they believe that they will be healed they answer, “Well, I sure hope I will.” I simply tell them that they won’t for we receive from God by faith, not through hope. Still others will answer my question by saying, “Well, I want to.” But I tell them, “You might want

a new Cadillac, but that doesn't mean you'll get one. You see, just wanting to won't get the job done."

It is not hoping or wanting, it's faith that gets the job done.

You will not receive from God because you hope. Nowhere does the Bible say that when we pray, we shall receive what we hope for. God's Word does say, however, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Jesus also said, "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). Not hoping, but believing.

Notice in the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" – that the verb used is present tense. Remember, if it's not now, it's not faith. Faith is present tense, hope is future tense. Even though you might say that you believe, if you are putting it into the future, then you are not believing, you're hoping. In order for it to work, it must be in the right tense – the present tense. Some people are always believing that God is going to do something for them, but faith believes that He has done, and is doing.

An example of faith vs hope:

Several years ago while preaching in the state of Oklahoma, a lady who hadn't taken a step in four years was brought to the service one night for prayer. She was an older woman in her seventies, and the doctors had said that she would never walk again. At the close of the service when we were ready to have prayer for the sick, her friends brought her forward and sat her down on the altar. I knelt in front of her, laid my hands on her and prayed. Then I said, "Now arise and walk in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

She did her best to get up, but all the time she was crying and praying, "Oh, dear Jesus, please heal me, please let me walk, oh, please ... please!" She continued

in this vein for some time until finally I was able to quiet her enough to talk to her. I asked her, “Sister, did you know that you are healed?”

Astonished, she looked up at me and said, “Oh, am I?”

“Yes,” I said, “you are healed, and I will prove it to you from the Bible.” Then I opened my Bible to I Peter 2:24, handed it to her and asked her to read the verse aloud. She read, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed.” I asked her to repeat the last phrase, and she read, “... by whose stripes ye were healed.”

Then I asked her the question, “Is ‘were’ past tense, future tense, or present tense?”

“It is past tense,” she answered.

“If you were healed by Jesus’ stripes, then you are healed now, aren’t you?” I said. A smile spread across her face and her eyes lit up with new understanding. Then I told her, “Just lift your hands and look up to Him. Begin to praise Him because you are healed, present tense. Because you are healed – not going to be, you are ... now.”

With child-like faith she looked up and said, “Dear Lord Jesus, I’m so glad I’m healed.” She hadn’t walked a step and therefore had no physical evidence of healing whatsoever. Yet she said, “I’m so glad I’m healed.”

I turned to her and said, “Now my sister, arise and walk in Jesus’ Name.” Immediately she jumped off that altar like a sixteen-year-old, and walked, leaped, ran, and praised God.

You see, we had to help her to get it in the right tense – for faith is present tense. As long as we are struggling to receive, hoping to see the answer sometime, it won’t work. That is just hope. Faith says, “It’s mine, I have it now.”

Hope, of course, used properly is most blessed and beautiful.

We have a Blessed Hope in the soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the righteous dead, the rapture of the living saints, the hope of heaven, and the hope of seeing our loved ones and friends. We thank God for that hope. But this is all future tense. Jesus is coming, whether we believe it or not. He is coming because the Word says so. The Resurrection will take place whether we have faith or not. The dead in Christ will rise to meet Him in the air, whether we believe or not. Our faith, or lack of faith, will not affect these events. Jesus is coming back again, for the Word says that He will. This is the Blessed Hope that all Christians look forward to.

***But it is faith, not hope, that can change the impossible to the possible.
It is faith, not hope, that brings healing and victory.***

Hope is a good waiter, but a poor receiver.

Too many times I've heard folks say, "I'm hoping and praying ..." or "All we can do now is hope and pray." If that is all you are doing, you're defeated. It takes a positive faith – a now faith – to get positive results.

Memory Text: "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (I Corinthians 13:13).

Faith in Action: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22).