

## Thankful For Faith, Hope, And Love

Ponder: Thankfulness for faith, hope, and love in other people

Scripture: “We give thanks to God always for you all . . . remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ . . .” (1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3, NKJV).

When you hear of faith, hope, and love together, you might think of 1 Corinthians 13:13 where Paul wrote that these three things would abide even after miraculous gifts ceased. Years before Paul wrote to Corinth, however, he commended the Thessalonians and thanked God for their “work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope” (1 Thessalonians 1:3). And during his first Roman imprisonment, Paul once again thanked God, this time for the Colossians and their “faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” their “love for all the saints,” and “the hope which is laid up for you in heaven” (Colossians 1:3, 4).

Faith is not mere mental assent of the existence of Jesus; rather, it is our confident, obedient trust in Him. Because we believe He is the Son of God, and because we place our trust in Him, we gladly obey Him. This goes far beyond our initial obedience in repentance, confession, and immersion. As with the Thessalonians, ours must be a faith that works.

In fact, that faith must work “through love” (Galatians 5:6). Paul wrote that even mountain-moving faith that didn’t have love was useless (1 Corinthians 13:2). He went on to describe numerous things that love does – not that it merely feels emotionally, but that it does actively (e.g. it suffers long, rejoices in truth, bears all things, etc.).

The same confidence in Jesus that motivates us to work also gives us hope. Did not our Savior say He was going to prepare a place for us, and would receive us to Himself, that where He is, there we may be also? (John 14:1-3). This hope is not mere wishful thinking! Biblical hope is a strong desire coupled with a confident expectation of receiving that which we desire – namely, an eternal heavenly home with Christ. As we anticipate that home, let us have the same “patience of hope” the Thessalonians had.

I am thankful for the work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope shown by my brethren where I assemble and all over the world. May God help us to maintain that faith which works through love as we look forward to dwelling together with the Lord forever!

Song: “Count Your Many Blessings”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for our brothers and sisters who encourage us by their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope. Please bless them, and help us to encourage them and they do us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.