

1 Corinthians 13:13 (Donald F. Rule) 206769

Pella Conference: 2011, Faith, Hope, Love - the Springs of Everyday Christian Life (13:13)

Address—Don Rule

185 We have a home above. From all defilement free a mansion which eternal love prepared. Our rests to be. The Father's gracious hand has built that blessed abode from everlasting. It was planned, the dwelling place of God. The Savior's precious blood has made our title sure. He passed through death's dark, raging flood. To make our rest secure. Verse five. Thy love, most gracious Lord, our joy and strength shall be, till thou should speak the gladdening word that bids us rise to thee. Just make a comment of something that I was convicted of this morning and the. Prayer meeting We sang 3 hymns and. We were seeing in the second hymn and. Yep, properly turned on in my soul that I was speaking the words at least directly to the Lord Jesus. And I was not consciously communicating directly to the Lord Jesus. Rather, I was singing a song. It's I want to point out to you that in verse five, when you sing it, you are speaking directly to the Lord Jesus. Hopefully we will do it consciously. #185. Anything on that? Real.

With me please to 1st Thessalonians chapter one. Recession, chapter one. And verse 2. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you and our prayers. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith. And labor of love and patience of hope. In our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. Now Revelation Chapter 2. Revelation chapter 2 and verse 2. I know thy works and thy labor. And thy patience. First Corinthians, chapter 13. First Corinthians chapter 13 and verse 13. And now abide. But faith, hope, charity or love? These three. But the greatest of these is love. Now turn back with me to 1st Thessalonians Chapter one. God has chosen to. Communicate to us through his vessels. And I'm thinking particularly at the moment of the New Testament writers, the apostles mainly. In ways that have a line of thought or truth connected with the servant that communicates it in the case of the Apostle John. It is through his gospel, through his epistles, through his revelation, that we have particularly brought before us the character of God as light and love. Communicated to his creature by giving him eternal life. And the character of that life of God. So we have life and light and love running through John's epistles, the apostle Paul, we find if we go through his what the Lord gave him to give to us, we find faith, hope, and love. Are characteristic of John's epistles, and I would like to at least introduce. That thought in a few of the places where it's brought before us as well. It's found in Jude, it's found in Peter, It is found consistently. Also, it can be found in John's epistles as well. But it's particularly given to the apostle Paul to bring before us those three things. Light, I'm sorry. What we have here in First Thessalonians Chapter One faith. And hope and love, or faith and love and hope. Faith. Love and hope. Are the springs of everyday Christian life. These believers were newborn when this epistle, this letter was written to them. They may only have been believers for a matter of weeks, and so in the very beginning of their Christian life.

There was presented to them that which came from the working of God in their souls, in faith and hope and love. And those three things animate our Christian lives. The. They are to be the everyday spring. Bubbling up and flowing out in our lives. Faith. Hope and love. And I would just say right at the beginning, and perhaps part of the reason that the Lord has enabled me to think about it and enjoy it recent times is I have come to see that when a person is depressed or cast down. Inevitably, one or more of those three things is missing in their everyday life. And I would say to you this afternoon. If you find yourself depressed or cast down. Or some way overwhelmed with trials in your life. The Lord would strengthen you and provide for you in the area of faith and hope and love. We find it brought initially before us here in the third verse that we already read. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. This was written to Christians in contrast to Judaism, because you don't have those three things characterizing Judaism. Judaism, that had been properly the religion of God's people on earth prior to Christianity, did not bring these three things as the characteristics of life in them. For example, the Jew didn't have it when things were properly before God, until he had to step in in his governmental ways. They could live by sight. They didn't have to live in hope of something. A Jew could righteously and properly live before God in the present and in connection with the earth. What he had faith in was particularly faith in what was seen in contrast to faith in what was not seen. But your life and mine is different. The Christian life is a life that has faith in the unseen. When Thomas saw the Lord Jesus and resurrection, he said he wouldn't believe unless he saw him. And he's Speaking of the future of the Jewish remnant that that he represented. And the Lord said to him, OK, you've seen and now you believe. But blessed are they which have not seen and yet have believed. And so every one of us who have embraced Christianity have embraced it as having faith in that which we can't see. It's an unseen. World in contrast to a scene world. The Jew had present hope in things that if he was faithful and obedient to the rules. He was to prosper. In his life in a natural way. Christianity because it connects itself with what is what unseen. Presents to us hopes. That are beyond the present and beyond our sight. And God calls us to live our daily life. In the living reality of the hope. In the living reality. Of that faith which lays hold of God in that which is not seen. Love. God's a source of it, and even in Judaism the emphasis wasn't really on love. It's true that love would fulfill the law perfectly, love of God and love of man, and it was brought out as the principles on which the Law was built. But nonetheless, the real requirement of the Jew was righteousness. But Christianity that has been brought to us takes us beyond that to something better, and it takes us into that relationship with God, which is the fellowship of love and between ourselves and God. Here were new believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and what does it say about them there? And this is remembering without ceasing. Paul says they'd only been, he'd only been with them a few weeks.

And because of persecution, he had to leave. But what did he see in them in that short span of their Christian lives he saw in them? A work of faith, a labor of love, and a patience of hope. What was it? Well, I believe, at least in part, if you turn down to. Verse 9 For they themselves show unto us what manner of in we had unto you. Here's the work of faith. You turn to God from idols. The labor of love to serve the living and true God. And the patience of hope, and to wait for his Son from heaven. Those are the springs of your life. Those are the things that. Characterize or should characterize the activity of your life. A faith that acts in daily life, in a relationship with God beyond the scene. A love that would cause you to labor in your daily life. In view. Of your relationship with the one before whose eye you live. And no matter what the trial, no matter what the circumstance, the difficulty of life, God has put before you something that is outside of it, to sustain it, to animate it,

to give confidence in it that you can keep going to the end. And so there is that hope. That is the possession to be enjoyed every day. Can anything happen to you today? That must disconnect you from that relationship of faith. Is there any circumstance in this world that is capable that beyond your control to separate you from God? I say none. Is there anything that could possibly happen to you that would of necessity separate you from His love? Impossible. It's impossible. Is there anything that could possibly happen? In your life today, that would separate you from the hope. That God has given you. Nothing. Nothing. It depends totally upon the power of God to realize the hope that He's given you to live by, and there's absolutely nothing that can take it away from you. We may lose the enjoyment of it, but I'm speaking about the circumstances or the trials of life that would disconnect us from it, that we couldn't live it, that we would have to say, well, yesterday I could live in the enjoyment and in the truth of my faith, my hope, and my love. But not today. No, not today, because look what happened. Nothing, brethren. And so it says in First Corinthians chapter 13. These things abide. These things abide. Faith now abideth faith. Hope and love, there is nothing that. From now, from the day it was uttered, from the apostles day until the rapture, there is absolutely nothing that is going to take them away and is going to take them away from you individually. And the privilege of walking with God in faith and hope and love nothing. They will abide, and they abide for you, and they abide for me all the way to the end. But it's an exercise to live them because you notice, and many have noticed it before, when you get to the Church of Ephesus, which was the first assembly addressed of the seven churches in Revelation chapter 2.

You have the the work, you have the labor, you have the patience, but that which should animate and characterize them as missing. The faith, the hope, and the love are gone. From the description of the walk of the Saints and Ephesus, the ones that receive the greatest truth because of the state of that assembly at the time it received it of any assembly that has ever lived. That is a wonderful communication for all of us, but particularly addressed to them because at the time of the address there weren't problems that had to be taken up with them and so God was free to fully. Express his counsels and purposes of love. To them. But we also see they're the first ones, or the only ones really spoken of specifically, where that faith and that hope and that love had waned in their everyday lives. So it is for us here. To enjoy it. The. Faith that. Trust God for each day. That faith that lives in relationship to God, that doesn't deal with I got to handle this circumstance today. I have to deal with this problem today. What am I going to do about it? How am I going to handle it? And so it is. That I have a God to live with, to live before. Just comment to in connection with this same verse, it says patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ and in the sight of God and our Father. Connected with it is in the sight of God. Our Father means, I believe at least includes the thought that we live. In the sight of God. And consequently, we live with an act of conscience. If I live before the eye of God as I see God revealed Himself to me in his Word, it's going to at times exercise my conscience as to my walk as to my what I'm doing. It also says in or before our Lord Jesus Christ because He is the object of life. He is the one that I want to please in my life. He is the one that I want to follow in my life. He's the one that I want to know better. Each day of my life and I speak, I for us. That we want to know Him. God has given us a thirst that way. We each want to know Him each day better, and the more we live in the enjoyment of Himself each day, the greater is the enjoyment of His love, the more our hearts are constrained by that love. So that we are tender toward anything that he wouldn't do with us. We don't. In a pure sense, we don't want to do it. We said, no, I don't. I'm not interested. Not because the law says I'm not interested. It's simply I can't enjoy the Lord in that activity. I can't do it with the Lord Jesus. And so no, I I prefer his company. And so we the activity of faith and hope and love in US is also connected with an object, the Lord Jesus. That's our hope, isn't it? We have faith, don't we? What's it in? It's in the Lord Jesus. We're waiting for something, aren't we? What is it? To see him, to be with him. And so we we go through each day. Lord Jesus, let's enjoy the day together, if you will. Let's have fellowship with one another, and if I'm going to have fellowship with the Lord Jesus, it's going to be in faith. Because I I can't see them physically at the moment.

It's going to be with a hope of himself before the heart. That animates the life. And so we would walk in it in that way. Now turn with me. To Romans. Chapter 5. You'll notice as we read these words, faith. And hope and love. So as I read them you can notice where they come in. Romans 5 verse one. Wherefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access, by faith into this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in the hope. Of the glory of God. Not only so, but we glory and tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience, experience and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God. Is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. If you happen to have the Darby translation, you'll notice that. He boasts about three things here. We in verse two, he boasts in the hope of the glory of God, but he says we don't only boast in that. In verse three he says, we also boast. In Tribulations. And then further down. In verse. Find it, Lost it. Thank you verse 11 very thank you very much. We not only so but we also. Boast in the glory or boast in God. Now there's something else about faith, hope and love that's very important. In Revelation chapter 2 where those three things were no longer seen in the church in Ephesus. At least from a picture form. What happens afterwards? Was the Lord or God in his governmental ways, but persecution on the church? Persecution is a wonderful tool of God. To animate faith, hope. And love. I think it was last year I remember seeing a Christian. Speaking, who had been in the West, the United States, but he was from and he lived in China. Where the church people of God there live under constant persecution. And he was feeling sorry. For us. I say that again. He was feeling sorry for us. Because he could see the contrast, he could see that God was using the persecution. To enable the Saints to live. Their lives with. A significant faith, hope and love and what we see in this chapter when it says we boast. In Tribulations. Why? Why would Paul say that? Because he saw the benefit of it. He saw the positive good. Than God allowing it. Among his people. And so in Smyrna. They went into tribulation 10 days, measured yes in length, but to their great blessing.

I think if the Lord brings more of it. We'll learn to boast in it. We will find that we will be thankful when eternity comes. Turn back to first Peter. And you get the same point. It's an important point. So I will look at it in two places. First Peter chapter one. Notice the faith, the hope, and the love. They're threaded all the way through. The Epistles. Verse three First Peter 13 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively or living hope. By the resurrection of Jesus Christ, what hope do you have? You have a hope in a living person. You fear death. Paul didn't fear death. We talked about fear this morning. Why? Well, the very one that his hope was in had gone through it. And the same power that raised to the one that he had his love for that went through it. He says, well, my hopes in a living person that was dead and is alive forevermore. So he had a living hope to an inheritance. This is part of his hope or Peter's Speaking of it and inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. And the fate is not away reserved in heaven for you, it's yours. Enjoy it every day. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Ready to be revealed in the last time? You're kept for it by faith. But then what's he say? Same point that we have in Romans 5. We're in. You greatly rejoice. What are you? What are they going to? Whoa, he's going to rejoice in something. What are you going to rejoice in? Though now, for a season if need be, you're in heaviness through manifold temptation, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though be tried with fire, might be found under the praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Whom having not seen you love, and whom, though now you see Him not yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation. Of your souls. And so

it is, brethren, we. It's the goodness of God that brings tribulation. It's the heart of God sometimes to preserve. Sometimes to animate. But here the trial of their faith was going to be to their future enjoyment and glory. There were crowns connected with life and when life is lived. As God would animate us to live it, he says. When it's all over, I have things I want to give to you, an expression of my appreciation that you lived the Christian life. That you lived it with me. And laying hold of that which was ahead. Now turn over to 1st Thessalonians Chapter 5. For Sicilonians chapter 5. Verse one. But the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves. Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as a travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness. That that day should overtake you as a thief. You're all the children of light and the children of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

Notice this verse. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith, and love, and foreign helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who loved us that whether we wake or sleep, we should all live together with him. Wherefore comfort one another yourselves together and edify one another even as also you do. Faith, hope and love. Our protection. They are armor. For us in our daily life. It's already been said we live in a world that's wicked. We live in a world that is controlled by Satan. We live in a world that is 1 great Big lie. It's going to end in destruction. The God of this world, the Prince of this world, is Satan. But we're all subject because of the nature of our being and sin. That is born in sin to sink down into the darkness. To walk in the darkness of the night that controls the lives of men generally. But we're not children of the darkness, we're children of the day. And the character of the activity of love and faith and hope in the life lift us, lift the spirit, lift the thoughts, lift the life to be occupied with those things that overcome. The world. That life which is lived in the enjoyment of the Lord Jesus as its object. That life of dependence and obedience upon God that doesn't turn aside by unbelief. Animates the soul to be occupied with something, the Lord Jesus, a person. That the world can't compete with. If a soul is enjoying the Lord Jesus Christ in their daily life, there is nothing in this world that can compete with that. There is nothing that Satan can put before the soul that has a greater attraction and drawing power to the heart that's enjoying the Lord Jesus. There's no power of Satan in it. Satan said to Eve, you will not surely die. God said to Eve, you will surely die. It was an issue of faith, wasn't it? Was she going to believe God, or was she going to believe Satan? She chose Satan. If you live in relationship with God in a simple everyday trust in His person, Satan has no advantage over your soul. Because it's what he offers, or it's what God offers, and if God is there. Livingly in the daily relationship of life, he wins. But if the flesh is allowed to work, if the eye is taken off the object of its heart and its faith. He has every capacity to draw it down into the darkness and into the into the filth. Because. The nature of the flesh is still in US. So it's looked at here is armor, it's looked at as protection. What could the world ever offer us? That we would want to make a choice. To live for it over what God offers us as our hope. Is there anything that the world can present to us that Satan through the world can present to us that? Is better. Than what God has given us is our proper and attended hope to live by day by day.

To look for his Son from heaven. To be with Him, to be like Him, to be in his glory. To have eternal fellowship with God in light. Is there anything here to beat that if you will? Of course not. Nothing even to compare to it. OK, in the last moments, I want to give one living example of a person who lived by faith, hope, and love. We like examples, and I want to give you one example to leave with you. Turn with me to Hebrews chapter 12. Lots of examples in Chapter 11, but the best example of all is Left till last. And it's found in chapter 12. Hebrews 12, verse 2. Looking unto Jesus. The author. And finisher of faith. Who for the joy that was set up before him, that was part of his hope. Who, the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame. And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds. Number one perfect example. This man, this man lived a life. Of faith. And hope. And love. He lived, he could say, in John 15, as my father hath loved me. So have I loved you? He lived each day of his life in the enjoyment. Of his father's love. It was that which animated his soul in his daily life. It was that which flowed out to others. Did he have persecution? Did he have trials? Did he have difficulties in his life? Who would say their lives have had anything like it? But he lived. He was the beginner. Of one who walked the whole path from the beginning to the end of faith. In that which was beyond the site of this world. And for the joy that was set before him, he walked through life. Was it worth it? Was it worth it? If you have opportunity, as I'm sure you will, to speak to him in a coming day. Would you answer? Would you expect if you said to him, Lord Jesus was the life you lived on earth of faith and hope and love? Was it worth it? Know his answer. I'm sure you won't ask the question either because you'll be in a condition we'll all will that we wouldn't even think of asking a question like that then because it'll be so obvious. My brethren. It is obvious it is. There's no other life for us. There is no other life. For us, but one that sets the heart upon the Lord Jesus. That lifts the soul above this sad world that goes on and is animated to seek the good of one's fellow man, that they too might be delivered from the wrath to come. And might join with us. In the path of faith that leads to the glory, and that leads to our eternal. Fellowship with God in light. Let's break.

clickbible.org