

**Reaching Your Potential
Through Faith – Joy – Hope
April 14, 2017**

Stewardship: *Luke 8:5 A sower went out to sow his seed. NKJV:*

- **You must sow your seed to receive a harvest**
- **You must sow with expectation**
- **You must be consistent in your sowing**
- **You must sow your seed in good ground**
- **You must be patient for the harvest** (*Galatians 6:9-10 NKJV And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*)

Potential Defined: All you can be, but have not yet become
All you could do, but have not yet accomplished

Think about that definition. Now think about your potential! If you had asked me five years ago if I had reached my potential in ministry, I would have probably said yes.... But I would have been wrong! NONE OF US HAS REACHED OUR POTENTIAL.

Only God knows your true potential...God's Plan for you:

I know the thoughts and plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11 Amplified).

Our ultimate potential is found in the Holy Spirit dwelling within every believer. The more we study the Holy Spirit and learn to work with Him, the more of our potential we realize.

God plants hopes and dreams in our hearts. But it is up to us to pursue those dreams to fulfillment.

Three Words that will help you work with the Holy Spirit to reach your full potential.

Now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13 NKJV).

Tonight I want to talk about two of these words... **Faith and Hope.**

Faith

*Now faith is the **assurance** (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses] (Hebrews 11:1 Classic Amplified).*

*What is faith? It is **the confident assurance** that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead (Hebrews 11:1 Living Bible).*

Listen to the different words used to describe faith:

- Assurance
- Confidence
- Substance

Let's take each of the words listed above to help us define faith

"Faith is Assurance" - Assurance is the state of being confident in a condition or outcome.

"Faith is Confidence" – Confidence is **believing**, in particular it is believing God and the scripture.

Not confidence in yourself or your abilities – **But Confidence in the Holy Spirit within....** *"Christ in you is the HOPE of GLORY" (Colossians 1:27)*

"Faith is substance". Webster defines "substance" as anything that has mass and takes up space. **So faith is a building material of sorts.**

From "Quantum Faith" by Annette Capps: "

Faith is an unseen energy force. It is not matter, but it creates matter and actually becomes matter. **Faith energized words convert energy to matter. Faith is the raw material from which all matter is made.** It is the invisible substance from which your physical world was and is created. **God used faith-substance and word-energy to create the universe (Genesis 1).**

HOPE

*Now faith is the substance of **things hoped for**, it is the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1 NKJV)*

Hope defined: Hope is a happy expectation for good. Hope is a picture of what you expect to receive from God, based on the Word of God.

So we could read Hebrews 11:1 like this:

Faith is the substance God uses to create the thing for which you are hoping and He does it with his Word and our words.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND HOPE

- **Faith is a product of your spirit, while Hope is a product of your mind.**
- **Hope is the object of your faith.**
- Faith must have an object and hope is that object.
- Without hope your faith will not work.

If you are going to reach your full potential you must have faith and you must have hope... actually I think hope comes before faith!

Let's spend the rest of tonight dissecting this next verse, because it will show you have to always have the hope necessary to ACTIVATE your faith:

May the God of hope so fill you with all joy and peace in believing (through the experience of your faith) that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may

abound and be overflowing (bubbling over) with hope (Romans 15:13 Amplified Bible).

This verse illustrates how God gives us hope.

Do you feel hopeless?

Well, I believe when you leave here tonight, you will be overflowing with hope.

1. God is a God of Hope.

- God never gives up on you.
- He never changes His mind about you.
- God always has a plan to give you a future and a hope.

I know the thoughts and plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11 Amplified).

2. God fills you with JOY to give you hope.

- Joy is not happiness.
- Joy is not emotion, although it causes emotion

*James 1:2 My brethren, **Count it all joy when you fall into various trials.***

The Greek word used is “**bebeomai**” and give the idea of looking forward. It can actually mean to “*lead your mind forward*”.

Bebeomai = to lead your mind forward. (Please put this up on the screen)

Joy defined: To lead your mind forward, beyond your circumstances, to the promise of God. (*Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the **JOY that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV).*)**

Jesus could get through the cross because He could see beyond the cross. That's gives us the correct definition of Joy: **The ability to look beyond our circumstance to the promise of God.**

- A strategy for victory encourages us to lead our mind forward, beyond our current circumstances, to the fulfillment of God's promises.
- Joy inspires hope.
- Joy leads us from earth's point-of-view to God's point-of-view.

One more scripture on Joy: *The joy of the Lord is your strength (Nehemiah 8:10).*

With our understanding of the word "Joy", we could read this verse like this:

The ability to lead your mind forward to the promise of God, will give you strength.

BACK TO OUR TEXT

May the God of hope so fill you with all joy and peace in believing (through the experience of your faith) that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound and be overflowing (bubbling over) with hope (Romans 15:13 Amplified Bible).

3. If you choose to believe the promise placed before you **PEACE WILL COME TO YOUR SOUL (MIND AND SPIRIT).**

- Believing is a choice
- God's part is to place the potential of the promise before our mind.
- Our part is to receive the potential of the promise and believe the promise more than we believe our circumstances.
- Remember, your mind is a battlefield and that "Picture called Hope" will be challenged.

God is a God of Hope. He has plans and possibilities for your life. In order to bring those plans into reality, God places a possibility, based on the promises in the Word of God before your mind...JOY...

WHEN YOU MAKE THE CHOICE TO BELIEVE THAT PROMISE PLEASE COMES TO YOUR MIND.

It is in this atmosphere of peace the Holy Spirit can begin to form a picture in your mind called HOPE..

ALL OF THIS IS GIVEN TO US BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

For Abraham, human reason for hope being gone, hoped in faith that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been promised. He did not weaken in faith when he considered the utter impotence of his own body, which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old, or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief or distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God (Romans 4:18-20 Amplified Bible).

Even though it was humanly impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have a child, Abraham chose to continue to embrace the promise. He did not allow his human inadequacy to affect his faith.

If we consider our circumstances or abilities, we may weaken in faith. Keep your focus on the promise and remember nothing is impossible with God. Abraham saw his dream become a reality because he chose to believe God and live a life of praise and worship.

HOW ABOUT YOU – IS ALL HUMAN REASON FOR HOPE GONE?

REACH FOR THE PROMISE – PRESS TOWARD YOUR POTENTIAL.

As for you also, because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope. Even today I declare that I will restore double to you. (Zechariah 9:11-12 NKJV).