

Hebrews 10:23
Let us Hold Fast the Confession of Our Hope
A Devotional Thought

I. Our Text – Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

II. Intro

A. The Romance of the Rose, written in the 13th century by Gillaume de Lorris, is an allegorical dream in which the narrator seeks to win over his lady. It was one of the most widely read and translated works of the 13th century, second only to Dante's Inferno. It is written in the context of all the rules of courtly love.

1. In this allegory a boy is in a garden and sees a rose. Cupid, the god of love, shoots him with 4 arrows and he is wounded deeply and with love for this rose. He then desires to take the rose for himself but is prevented from doing by various characters. He is tormented with love for this rose, but cannot have it. It is under lock and key.

2. And so the boy asks Cupid how can endure the pains of love – that is being in love but not being able to have the one he loves.

3. And Cupid's answer in chapter 27 is hope. Hope will help you bear the ills that come. Hope will conquer through suffering. Hope is courteous and will sustain you.

4. Toward the end of the de Lorris' allegory the boy steals a kiss from the Rose. And the Rose is immediately locked away in a fortress, and the boy is admonished. And in chapter 32 he says his hope is lost. The poem ends with pity coming to comfort him.

5. Later in that century Jean de Meun added to the poem. He changed the ending. And in the first chapter of his addition to the poem Reason comes to the boy and tells him never to despair. Reason recalls what the god of love (Cupid) said about hope (see above). But Reason tells him "hope though courteous and debonair, does not prove certain" but rather breaks her promises.^[1]

a. And Reason will then through much of the rest of this addition to the poem instruct the boy on how to mount a defense against the obstacles keeping him from the rose. And in the end the boy disrespectfully plucks the rose.

III. As I read de Lorris' poem and de Meun's addition I thought about what both of them had to say about hope and how it comes to play in our life in Christ.

A. In our text this morning the author exhorts his readers to hold fast their confession of hope without wavering.

1. That can be kind of difficult sometimes. Our confession that Jesus is our hope in this life and the world to come sometimes comes with pains and difficulties.

- a. We are called to live differently than our culture. We are called to tell people about our Savior who was put to death and then raised from the dead, and sometimes people think we are naïve to believe such things and dismiss us or laugh at us behind our backs or sometimes to our face.
 - b. We believe that a day of judgment is coming when God will examine each of us and hold us accountable for the things we have done in this life and then judge us. This will be a day in which all who have been wronged will be vindicated. That is part of our hope. And if Jesus does not stand up for us and defend us with his life and blood then we are found guilty and condemned for eternity. This view of ours catches ridicule.
 - c. Christians have been and are each day put in prison and put to death on account of the hope of our confession.
 - d. And sometimes it seems that the only thing we have to comfort us is pity.
2. And this is when Reason comes to us and tells us that there is another way. Reason told the boy that hope was courteous and debonair. It was honorable. A good thought. But, it breaks its promises. It can't be relied upon.
- a. And I think we have all heard that voice speaking to us. Faith and hope in Jesus is all fine and good. But look, they don't prove true. Faith and hope don't keep their promises. We pray and our prayers are not answered. We lean on our hope and faith to help us deal with issues in our life and we end up struggling like those who don't have faith – and sometimes our struggles seem greater.
 - b. And then reason begins to tell us there is another way. There are other options we can choose.
 - 1) Live your life as you see fit.
 - 2) Don't take life so seriously.
 - 3) Look out for yourself first and if you think God can help you advance, then use him. If not, keep moving forward. Carrie Underwood has a commercial out now where she says she now lives her life putting herself first – me first.
 - a) Our faith calls us to put God first. Love others and consider their needs as we consider our own– Phil 2:4. Reason has Carrie Underwood going against that. And it sounds reasonable.
 - 4) You only live once. There is even an acronym for this one: YOLO.
 - c. It is difficult holding out hope in Jesus sometimes when reason and our culture can give us all kinds of good excuses to live without hoping in something that disappoints and leaves us with only pity to comfort us. This is exactly the kind of voice that we hear every day speaking to us and calling us away from our faith.

IV. The author to the book of Hebrews calls us to hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. And he tells us why that is the best and most sure route in life to take. He reminds us that God is faithful. The one who made the promises which we hopefully cling to is faithful.

A. God has a track record. It is thousands of years old. It is sealed with the blood of his son. And it has witnesses that attest to its reliability. The Hebrews previously heard those people testify to its trustworthiness. They experienced it. (Heb 2:4). And the author to the Hebrews is about to take us into the stories of the men and women of faith who held onto the hope of God's promises and found themselves approved by God.

B. Living life as we see fit - living it by our own rules and reasoning – what kind of assurances do we have that in the end there will be some satisfaction? What kind of assurances do we have that the things we have done in this life will count forever? What guarantees do we have if we live as we see fit that what we do is right?

1. Reason, like it came to the boy in The Romance of the Rose, might challenge us to take another route. It might tell us that what and who we hope in does not always keep its promises.

2. But Reason is fallible. Reason does not always lead us in the right way. It led the boy in the Rose to disrespectfully pluck the rose. It led him against what was good and against his conscience. He knew he was doing wrong.

3. God's word - living with hope and trust in Jesus Christ – is infallible. He has proven himself time and time again for thousands of years. So, let us hold fast the confidence of our hope without wavering.

4. Reason is fallible. People and their ideas are fallible.

5. Hope may be difficult to believe and cling to at times. Reason may lead us in another direction. But if our hope is in the Lord, he is faithful.

V. God of Grace and God of Glory – is a wonderful hymn. Think about the text and our hope as you read it.

1. God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy power;
crown the ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

2. Lo! the hosts of evil round us,
scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!
From the fears that long have bound us,
free our hearts to love and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,

for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.

3. Cure thy children's warring madness,
bend our pride to thy control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal,
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

4. Set our feet on lofty places;
gird our lives that they may be
armoured with all Christlike graces,
pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
that we fail not them nor thee,
that we fail not them nor thee!

5. Save us from weak resignation
to the evils we deplore;
let the search for thy salvation
be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
serving thee whom we adore,
serving thee whom we adore.

^[1] [The Romance of the Rose \(Le Roman de la Rose\) The Continuation](#) Jean de Meung Translated by A. S. Kline ch 33 –“Love taught That Hope would be my rety, And she would ever go with me. Yet what must I do in this affair? Though she’s courteous and debonair, She doth prove certain in naught, So lovers’ lives are but fraught; She, as their lady, their mistress, With promises doth oft distress.