

## Everyone Everywhere, Growing in Faith. Everyday Faith Event 2023 - Hope

One of the greatest pieces of dialogue that the world of literature has ever received, was from the author J.R.R. Tolkien, when he penned the following conversation between Frodo and Gandalf in the Fellowship of the Ring.

*"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."*

Gandalf's words in the same way that Jesus birth, death and resurrection draw us deeper into the pursuit of something far greater than we would merely be able to manage on our own. For Frodo the words of Gandalf spur him onto an epic quest, a quest that would not have been possible if it was not for the wise counsel of friends, family and mentors found within the fellowship and the telos of one day seeing the Shire again.

In the same way, for followers of Jesus, the hope that has been set before us by his birth, ministry, death, and resurrection, inspires us daily to walk deeper into relationship with him and in pursuit grow deeper into relationship with God and the call that he has placed on each of our lives.

To live without hope in this world we would be led to believe is easy. After all the gods of materialism and consumerism or the secularisation of society would have us believe that hope is not something we need in order to live life in all its fullness, after all we are able to have anything that we want if we are willing to give our all to it.

But that is simply not true, each and every person whether they be a Christian or not is drawn to hope in something, because we are people who are born of narrative, we live and breathe story, that push us to see something hopeful in our future.

In the same way that the stories of Gandalf and middle-earth gave the fellowship a telos within their quest, as we pursue daily a relationship with Christ and fix ourselves on the hope that he has set before us, our faith and participation grow.

Jesus calls us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our strength and to love our neighbour as ourselves. A command for how we as followers of the risen Christ are called to live daily. And in doing so, we will find that the pursuit of living that Godly life, not only increases our faith in Christ like the lands of Jabez but pushes us deeper in to God's missiological purposes, to see something new of the kingdom and ultimately the one who reigns above all.

Reflection by Stephen Miles

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