

HAVING HOPE IN A HOPELESS WORLD

Text: Romans 4:18

Key Word: Hope

Key Thought: God Is Our Foundation for Hope

There is a world of difference between wishful thinking and hope.

The Bible is full of examples of people who lived their lives in a hope that couldn't be shaken because it was grounded in truth and not wishful thinking. A wish for something is quite different than hoping for something. **Hope has a foundation that will stand in the time of testing and trouble.** It cannot be moved though the earth shakes, the seas toss and the wind blows.

“Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’”

Romans 4:18

Hope is an interesting concept in the Word of God. There are a number of types of hope. Each one carries a wonderful truth for us to live by. When we apply these principles in our lives, we can live a life of Hope in a Hopeless World. What kinds of hope are spoken about in the Scriptures.

I. A LIVING [Lively - KJV] HOPE (I Peter 1:3)

II. A PURIFYING HOPE (I John 3:2,3)

III. A BLESSED HOPE (Titus 2:13)

IV. AN ENDURING HOPE (I Peter 1:13)

I. A LIVING [Lively - KJV] HOPE (I Peter 1:3)

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth **into a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”*

I Peter 1:3

The hope of the Bible is a firm conviction that God is in control in spite of the consistent difficulties we face. We may not see immediate results but true hope is able to stand fast in a future that will offer new life. **A Living Hope abides in the heart of everyone who has put their trust in God.**

I. A LIVING [Lively - KJV] HOPE (I Peter 1:3) (Contd.)

“Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes it is written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest.”

I Corinthians 9:10

If a farmer was not convinced of the law of sowing and reaping he would never plant a crop. They prepare the soil year after year. They purchase the precious seed. They plant in spite of the yearly possibility of a complete crop failure. They look ahead in hope that their efforts will not be in vain. They have a living hope that the seeds they plant will begin by dying before bringing forth an abundant crop.

We likewise have a living hope because our Lord was willing to die for each of us. Yet through His death came life - abundant life. Death was conquered. Sin was dealt its final blow. The door was open into heaven by way of the blood.

Peter began his letter by offering his readers' hope in what appeared to be a hopeless situation. After the death of Tiberius Caesar came Caligula followed by Claudias Nero's 13 year reign and then by Domitius Nero whose 14-year reign of terror was unmatched. His fury and tyranny brought about such cruelty that he even had his own mother, brother-in-law, sister, wife and instructors (Seneca and Lucan) put to death. He commanded Rome to be set on fire in twelve places and then he placed the blame upon the Christians whom he had severely persecuted.

Emperor Titus followed in the footsteps of the tyrants preceding him and in the year 70A.D. had more than 11,000 Jews destroyed while 17,000 were sold as slaves and 2,000 were reserved to be devoured by wild animals or slain by some other act of cruelty. The Roman catacombs stand as a witness to the 3,000,000 Christians who were buried therein.

By the year 300 A.D. there were at least 10 notable persecutions recorded in the history books against God's people. The apostle Peter was given these words of hope to ensure these upcoming martyrs that their death would not be in vain.

II. A PURIFYING HOPE (I John 3:2,3)

“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

3. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.”

I John 3:2,3

This is the only time that the apostle John uses the word “hope.” This word (“*elpis* - noun; *elpizo*-verb”) means a “*confident expectation*.” It describes the **character of a person** and not just their actions.

“Hope is the anchor of the soul, the stimulus to action, and the incentive to achievement.”

“God makes a promise - faith believes it, hope anticipates it, patience quietly awaits it.”

E.C. McKenzie
“14,000 Quips and Quotes”
p. 242

Hope is closely linked with faith. **What faith births - hope endures.**

“But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.”

Galatians 5:5

The hope that God offers us becomes the leading edge in our battle to maintain a life of purity and righteousness. The Bible makes it clear that there is a purifying agent included in hope. Those who have hope will reflect their belief that there will be a future.

II. A PURIFYING HOPE (I John 3:2,3) (Contd.)

*** Some years ago a hydroelectric dam was built across a valley in New England. The people in small town in the valley were to be relocated because the town itself would be submerged when the dam was finished. During the time between the decision to build the dam and its completion, the buildings in the town, which previously were kept nicely, fell into disrepair. Instead of being a pretty little town, it became an eyesore.

Why did this happen? The answer is simple. As one resident said, “Where there is no faith in the future (hope), there is no work in the present.” ***

Michael Green
“Illustrations for Biblical Preaching”
#678, p. 194

III. A BLESSED HOPE (Titus 2:13)

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

12. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

*13. **while we wait for the blessed hope** - the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,*

14. Who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”

Titus 2:11-14

Biblical hope has an objective focus which is found in Jesus Christ. There is no hope outside of Jesus Christ. A nation that excludes Jesus from its belief is a nation without hope. A godly nation that has turned its back on Biblical truth is the most hopeless nation in the world. Those who keep themselves pure will soon see the Blessed Hope of the ages. Our Lord is soon to appear. Even though we live in troublous times, we can still maintain our hope. God excels in offering hope during times of hopeless conditions.

III. A BLESSED HOPE (Titus 2:13) (Contd.)

*Therefore, I am going to allure her; **I will lead her into the desert** and speak tenderly to her.*

*15. There I will give her back her vineyards and will **make the Valley of Achor a door of hope**.*

There she will sing in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.”

Hosea 2:14,15

God promised the nation of Israel that He would again lead His people into the wilderness. They will establish vineyards as the Lord tenderly leads them. The Valley of Achor (“trouble”) will become a “***door of hope.***” It is here that they will sing with the strength of their youth.

“O Hope of Israel, its Savior in times of distress.”

Jeremiah 14:8a

Likewise for the church, there is a Hope that blesses us. It is the hope that Jesus not only came, died, rose again and ascended into the heavens, but also that He is coming again.

IV. AN ENDURING HOPE (I Peter 1:13)

“Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

I Peter 1:13

Just as a runner would have to gather up his long, flowing garments so as not to impede his running, Peter exhorts the church to prepare themselves for their final stretch of the race of life. They were not to lose hope when they were so close to the finish line. They may feel exhausted but the goal line was worthy of them giving an extra effort. **Hope means little or nothing if it doesn’t take us to our final destination.**

“Hope does not disappoint us”

Romans 5:5a

“But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”

Romans 8:25

IV. AN ENDURING HOPE (I Peter 1:13) (Contd.)

“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.”

Hebrews 6:11

*“Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:
22. Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, **for his compassions never fail.***

23. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

*24. I say to myself, ‘The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him. **[I have hope in Him.- NASB]**”*

Lamentations 3:21-24

God will never disappoint us. He will keep to His Word. Everything He says will come to pass. It may not take place in our timing, but it will come to pass as He said it would.

“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.”

Proverbs 13:12

Fully put your hope in God. He is worthy of your trust. He will see you through the days ahead no matter how bleak they appear to be. He is still the Light of this darkened world. He is **HOPE in a HOPELESS WORLD.**

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Date: June 21/20 (Father’s Day (Pandemic LS & Video) Place: FCA Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Your Kingdom Come - D

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Titus 2:11-14; Hosea 2:14,15; Jeremiah 14:8a

IV. AN ENDURING HOPE (I Peter 1:13)

Romans 5:5a; Romans 8:25; Hebrews 6:11; Lamentations 3:21-24; Proverbs 13:12