

Hope or Hopelessness

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.”
I Thessalonians 4:13

“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”
Romans 15:13

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:”
I Peter 3:15

Introduction:

1. Hopelessness is an evil blight and curse on men; hope is a great gift from God for your joy and peace.
2. Tonight you have one of several thoughts about the future – despair, delusions, or hope. Which is it?
3. A Christian has the word of God to save him from despair and delusions and to give him much hope.
4. A few have shown God and us that you have sustaining hope for victory over terrible circumstances.
5. Life without hope is not worth living, but the Lord, His word, and this church can increase your hope.

What is Hope?

- A. The confidence and expectation that a thing desired will be obtained sometime in the future.
 1. Hope = expectation of a desire (Psalm 10:28; 11:7; 13:12; Philippians 1:20).
 2. Hope for something not desired is dead; desire for something not expected is painful.
 3. If you already have something, then hope cannot be exercised toward it (Rom 8:24-25).
- B. How does hope differ from faith? We do believe they are separate, but yet closely connected.
 1. Faith is confidence in God and His word – Hope is the patient waiting for future things.
 2. Faith gives life and reason to hope – faith is the substance of things hoped for (Heb 11:1).
- C. Hope is not baseless, or it is only fantasy and wishful thinking: it is not delusional optimism.
 1. Hope plans on God’s promises coming to pass, regardless of circumstances or doubts.
 2. Hope expects deliverance by God’s goodness, regardless of circumstances or doubts.
 3. Hope is based in God and His character and His words (Psalm 33:22; 38:15; 39:7; 62:5; 71:5; 130:5,7; 131:3; 146:5; Jeremiah 14:8; 17:13,17; 50:7; Joel 3:16).
 4. Hope is reasonable and can be defined and explained by those truly having it (I Pet 3:15).
- D. It is one of the great graces of Christianity, given by God to His elect people (I Cor 13:13).
- E. The natural man does not have all or any of these glorious gifts of the Holy Spirit to the elect.
- F. It is remembering God is the business of reversal of fortune, both now and in a time to come.
- G. If the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, how much more a saint with hope (Pr 18:14)!

What is Hopelessness?

- A. Hopelessness is belief that nothing will do any good and the future is full of pain and trouble.
- B. Hopelessness is the soul-destroying resignation that there is no relief from within or without.
- C. It is a great curse, no matter the situation. If expectations fail, then quitting is the alternative.
- D. The wicked put their trust in gold and wealth, which is to deny God above (Job 31:14-18); and it cannot do them any good in the real matters of life (Psalm 49:6-14).
- E. There is no hope after death, though there may be for trees cut down and other things with opportunity or potential still remaining (Job 14:7-12,18-22; Ecclesiastes 9:4; Isaiah 38:18).

What are examples of Hope?

- A. Abraham hoped against hope that he might be the father of Isaac in his old age (Rom 4:18).
- B. We may assume Joseph had hope in Egypt, or he would not have obeyed the Lord as he did.
- C. David at Ziklag encouraged himself in the Lord, which was to take hope (I Samuel 30:1-6).
- D. David and Bathsheba lost a sick baby, but they gained Solomon instead (II Sam 12:15-25).
- E. David was forced by Absalom to flee Jerusalem, but he hoped to return (II Sam 15:23-26).
- F. Manasseh was in prison for great sins, but he took hope of forgiveness (II Chron 33:12-13).
- G. Job was hopeless at times, but he was full of hope of a future resurrection (Job 19:23-27).
- H. Hezekiah on his deathbed took hope in the mercy of God for 15 more years (Isaiah 38:1-8).
- I. Even under chastening there is hope, because God is ever merciful (Jer 31:17; Lam 3:18-36).
- J. God gave Israel a door of hope for their repentance as a regathered nation (Hosea 2:15).
- K. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus should build our hope anyone else (Acts 9:10-14; 26:9).
- L. Paul had a confident expectation of a great reward for his ministerial labors (Phil 1:20).
- M. Jesus Christ was made to hope while nursing, as God graciously favored Him (Psalm 22:9).
- N. He saw with great hope the joy set before Him and despised the shameful cross (Heb 12:1-2).
- O. The body of Jesus Christ rested in the grave in hope of His resurrection (Ps 16:9; Acts 2:26).
- P. Hope is even of value at death, because the righteous have good things coming (Pr 14:32).

What are some examples of Hopelessness?

- A. The devils are the most hopeless creatures of all (Matt 8:29; Mark 5:7; Luk 8:28; Rev 12:12).
- B. The wicked at a funeral or cemetery, who are easily put in bondage (I Thess 4:13; Heb 2:15).
- C. The wicked have vain hope, and they use false teachers to build it (Matt 7:21-23; Ezek 13:6).
- D. Many of them resort to alcohol, drugs, antidepressants, and other vanities for their symptoms.
- E. Hollywood is against all three Christian graces, but its entertainment is particularly hopeless.
- F. Compare David and Saul, who went for comfort to the witch of Endor and killed himself.
- G. Job struggled at times with hopelessness in his miserable circumstances (Job 6:11; 7:6), and his hateful friends ridiculed his false or weak hope during his afflictions (Job 4:6).
- H. Solomon's observations and analysis of life prove that all is vanity without God (Eccl 1:1-3)!
- I. If you fail to trust God's timing, you may foolishly lose your hope unnecessarily (Pro 13:12).
- J. The wicked are too stupid to recognize there is no hope in their lives (Is 57:10; Ezek 19:5).
- K. They are so committed to sin and under bondage that they are hopeless (Jer 2:25; 18:12).
- L. The wicked do not have faith in the truth, so they lose their groundless hope (Ezek 37:11).
- M. Some sailors lost all hope of being saved in a ship in a storm, but Paul did not (Acts 27:20).
- N. Gentiles were hopeless before Jesus Christ secured their hope in the gospel (Eph 2:12).
- O. Children with neglectful or overbearing parents often end up very hopeless (Col 3:21).
- P. Nothing should be hopeless ... marriage? God will change your spouse (I Pet 3:1-2), replace your spouse (I Sam 25:37-42), or be your spouse (Ps 73:24-25; Luke 2:36-37; Heb 13:4-6)!

What is our Hope?

- A. The hope of Israel to Paul was the resurrection of the dead (Acts 23:6; 24:15; 26:6-9; 28:20).
- B. The appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ is our blessed hope (Titus 2:13).
- C. Eternal life is a glorious promise that we expectantly wait for (Titus 1:2; 3:7; I Peter 1:3).
- D. Heaven, the dwelling place of the most High, is the object of our hope (Colossians 1:15,27).
- E. Though we may be troubled here, we will obtain everlasting consolation there (II Thes 2:16).
- F. Our hope and expectation are to be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Gal 5:5).

- G. We shall bask for eternity in the glory of God as His heirs (Rom 5:2; 8:17-25; Col 1:27).
- H. The glory of the future is entirely superior to any present pain (I Cor 15:19; II Cor 4:17-18).

What is Hope good for?

- A. It is the God-ordained and sure antidote and cure for despair, discouragement, or depression.
- B. It is the present expectation of future gladness that sees you through any trials (Prov 10:28).
- C. It provides the basis and motive for patience for persecutions and temptations (I Thess 1:3).
- D. God loves His children hoping in Him, and He will bless them (Ps 33:18; 147:11; Jer 17:7).
- E. Hope is the evidence of eternal life, which should provoke us to maintain it (Hebrews 3:6).
- F. Hope is an anchor for our souls, which are prone to be tossed to and fro (Hebrews 6:17-20).
- G. Hope is a cause for joy, because all that is coming is glorious for the elect (Romans 12:12).
- H. Hope is the cure for envy, because it sees a reversal of fortune (Prov 23:17-18; Ps 73:1-24).
- I. Hope is an agent for holiness, because it directs us to live in light of His coming (I Jn 3:1-3).
- J. Hope is the basis of personal evangelism, because it provokes others to ask you (I Pet 3:15).
- K. There is no cause for despair when you sin, because there is hope of forgiveness (Ezra 10:2).

Where does Hope come from?

- A. It is a gift of God's grace to grant the ability and the basis for hope (I Cor 2:9; II Thess 2:16).
- B. Regeneration, which gives us a new man with hope, is to a hope of resurrection (I Peter 1:3).
- C. Abounding in hope is a blessing provided through the power of the Holy Ghost (Rom 15:13).
- D. Hope comes when a child of God hears and believes the gospel (Job 33:19-28; Col 1:6,23).
- E. It is based on the surest foundation of God's promise, immutability, and oath (Heb 6:17-20).
- F. Parents must build hope in God and in the rest of a child's life (Ps 78:7; Eph 6:4; Col 3:21).

How do I build Hope?

- A. Hope is a choice, and you choose to have hope by addressing your soul (Ps 42:5,11; 43:5)!
- B. Gird up the loins of your mind from discouragement, be sober, and choose hope (I Pet 1:13)!
- C. Choose to put on the helmet of the hope of salvation against despair (I Thess 5:8; Eph 6:17)!
- D. Act with courage upon your faith and hope in God, and He will strengthen you (Ps 31:24).
- E. Increase hope by reading and remembering God's works (Psalm 71:14-24; 78:7; Rom 15:4).
- F. Increase hope by reading and remembering God's words (Psalm 119:43,49,74,81,114,147).
- G. Ask God to give you hope and confirm it (Ps 119:116; Jer 17:17; Rom 15:13; Eph 1:17-18).
- H. Remember how God has delivered you in the past (Rom 5:3-5; Psalm 5:11; 63:7; 116:1-9).
- I. Observe and remember God's merciful deliverances of others (Job 5:16; Romans 5:2-5).
- J. Increase hope by hearing the gospel of the New Testament (Col 1:15; Heb 7:19; II Cor 3:12).
- K. And then take measures to not move away from the hope of the gospel (Col 1:23; Heb 3:6).
- L. You must learn more about the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our hope (I Tim 1:1; Col 1:27).
- M. Remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is proof for our hope (I Peter 1:20-21).
- N. Comfort, encourage, and exhort one another in the church body (I Thess 4:13,18; 5:11).
- O. Good works prove eternal life and build hope (Heb 6:10-11; I Tim 6:17-19; II Peter 1:10-11).
- P. Reject any negative thoughts from the inside or outside about your future. The devil is a liar.
- Q. Do not forget to allow God His timing in matters, for He will come in deliverance (Ps 9:18).
- R. Hate hypocrisy, for the hope of hypocrites is short and vain (Job 8:13-14; 11:13-20; 27:8).
- S. The hope of the wicked is vain and that will not happen (Prov 10:28; 11:7; Matt 7:21-23).

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, "[When Things Seem Hopeless](#)," generates hope in God for bad circumstances and doubts.
2. The sermon outline, "[The Life of Faith](#)," describes and encourages a growth in faith to be great for God.
3. The sermon outline, "[Your Thoughts Can Destroy You](#)," deals with the debilitating effect of negative thinking.