

# What Is Hope?

I was talking with someone this past week and during the conversation they said something like, “I hope so.” It was said about something that to me there was no doubt about, but this person did not seem certain. That got me to thinking about the concept of the word hope.

Hope is the expectation of something promised. Hope is about the reality of something becoming real. Hope deals in acquiring what we want. Hope becomes stronger the closer we get to the reality of it coming to be. In some ways, there is certainness with hope. Let’s ask some questions so that we might think about hope this week.

## What Do We Hope For?

I’m certain everyone here has the hope of heaven. Being with God eternally and with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The hope of, Jesus appearing with His mighty angels bring the Justice of God to realization. To see what we have only believed to be by faith. While we’re talking about that, some wasted or false hope would be – more money in the bank; more possessions; more pleasure; having whatever I want.

## Does Having Hope Make A Difference?

Romans 5:1-6 *“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.*

We should notice that hope does several things for us. It causes us to rejoice in sufferings; it highlights the glory of God; it allows God’s love to be poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Not disappointed.

Romans 8:18-25 *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*

We live in hope of the redemption of our bodies when Jesus comes. The suffering in this life we have endured will not matter in the life to come. We look for the time when we will be set free from the corruption that the whole creation faces. Just imagine: no pain or sickness, no growing old, just perfect bodies to go along with our perfect voices and vision.

Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*

Our hope calls for us to seek the appearance of Jesus bringing His justice to all mankind. We like the first century saints call out Mara Na Tha = “O Lord Come!” We believe this because of our hope in Christ.

1 John 3:1-3 *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so, we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared;*

*but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.*

Our faith will be replaced by sight. Think of Jesus coming in the clouds and for the first time we SEE Him as He is!! I cannot even imagine the power of that sight. The greatness of my feeling of love for Him. Because we have this hope, we purify ourselves. All that we hope for will be worth whatever we must do to remain faithful to God.

## **What Does Hope Do For Us?**

As for me the most important thing it does is it gives me a purpose. I'm a husband and a father. I'm a preacher and an Elder. I've been young and now I'm old. But in all this God at the center has given me a reason to live for Him. Do you remember the two disciples on the road to Emmaus? As they walked along Jesus joined them but they were kept from recognizing Him. Jesus asked them what they had been talking about and they told Him about all the events surrounding the crucifixion and how some of their women friends had arrived at the tomb only to find it empty. Jesus began speaking to them about the fulfillment of prophecy. He went into their home and broke bread with them and then as soon as he divided the bread they recognized Him and He vanished. They asked, ***“Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”***

For these two, their hope was GONE, then realized. Then they got busy sharing the good news with the other disciples in Jerusalem. Hope destroyed with His death – Hope restored with His resurrection! Hope brings joy to these two and it brings joy to us as well.

In Philippians 1:18-26 Paul talks about no matter what happened to him in life or death he would glorify Christ in his body. In other words, Paul was determined to live for Jesus no matter what the world put in his way. Paul attributes this to the hope he has in the power of the gospel. What it had done for him of course, but also what it had done for others.

## **Hope develops patience.**

Romans 8:24-25 *For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.*

James 1:2-4 *Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

## **We wait for the hope of righteousness**

Galatians 5:5 *For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.*

No human is righteous. But, when we are baptized, the Holy Spirit is conferred upon all baptized believers, according to the promise of Acts 2:38, thus identifying those who "by faith" were waiting for the hope of righteousness. While we were once unrighteous in the sight of God, we can now appear as righteous through the blood of Jesus. That is HOPE.

## **We have the hope of eternal life.**

Titus 3:4-7 *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Eternal life is described as thriving and living in 1 Peter 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

Hope strengthens our faith according to Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

## **Conclusion**

We are a people of hope. Only true Christians can claim this hope because of their relationship with Jesus.

Those outside of Christ have no hope in this world or the one to come.