

## Are You Living In Hope?

“Hope” is one of the most precious and optimistic words that adorns the human language. Few things are more comforting in a hospital emergency room, following a tragic accident or illness of a loved one, than for the doctor to appear and say, “there is hope.” Moreover, when a loved one dies, to say, “he died in hope.”

Thinking about the subject of hope brings to mind three facts. First, there is a hopeless state (Ephesians 2:12; Romans 1:18-32; 6:23). Second, there is a way of hope (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Colossians 1:27; Titus 2:11-13). So surely all of us realize that to “die in hope” one must “live in hope.” Since the Bible amply demonstrates to us what it means to live in hope, let’s take note of some excellent examples of hope.

Job was a wonderful example of hope. He was a righteous man (Job 1:1, 5, 8). Though he was persecuted and tormented, Job retained his righteousness (Job 1:11-2:10). The reason why Job could do all this is because he lived in hope (Job 19:25-26). He knew that his redeemer lived and he stated that in his flesh he would see God.

Abraham was another astonishing example of hope. Hebrews 11:8-19 explains that Abraham had hope when it came to his departure from Ur of the Chaldees. He hoped for a better country. After God promised him a son and Isaac was born, God told Abraham to offer Isaac. Abraham was going to carry out the death of his only son because he had hope that God could raise him again from the dead. Hope carried him through the most uncertain days of his life.

Peter was a good example of hope. He was a man with a history of trouble (Matthew 14:22-31; 26:34, 58, 69-75). Yet, he was a man whose faith grew (Acts 4:18-20). The reason why all this happened was because he was a man who lived in and taught others to live in hope (1 Peter 1:3-9).

Paul is our final example of hope. In his early life, he was a persecutor of Christians (1 Timothy 1:13). As a Christian, he suffered much persecution himself (2 Corinthians 11:23-28). Here was a man who lived in hope (2 Timothy 1:8, 12; 2 Timothy 4:6-8). He could go through year after year of tireless, unceasing work for the Lord because he had a hope of what would come after this life.

Hope accomplishes much in our lives. First of all, it sustains and one can see this through the four examples cited above. Second, hope purifies us (1 John 3:1-3). Third, hope anchors us in heaven (Hebrews 6:18-19). Fourth,

hope causes rejoicing (Romans 5:2). Fifth, hope inspires one to give reasons for that hope (1 Peter 3:15).

Hope is desire plus expectation. Surely all desire to go to heaven; but, do you really expect to go? The only way in which you can expect to go to heaven (and have true hope), is through obeying the will of God!

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