

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE (Col 1:1-6)

A. In O.T. times God punished His unfaithful people by means of foreign armies.

1. He once enlisted Babylon to capture, plunder & destroy Judah & Jerusalem.

B. God's prophet Jeremiah witnessed that destruction.

1. He begged Judah to surrender, as the LORD had commanded them to do, because if they would then they could save the city & their people.

2. But they wouldn't listen, & so 100,000 were killed, 1 million were taken captive; Jerusalem & Solomon's temple were ransacked & burned.

3. Afterwards Jeremiah sat on a hill overlooking the ruinous heap of the city & wrote the Lamentations (Lam 1:1-3; 3:19-26).

4. He lifted his eyes from the desperate conditions, & rather than despair he found a reason to hope.

a. The LORD promised to restore (Jer 16:14-21), so Jeremiah prayed for it (Lam 5).

[Hope is the answer to despair. God has provided a reason for His children to hope, & that hope is in Christ.]

I. WHAT IS HOPE?

A. **Defined:** "elpis", in the NT, favorable & confident expectation. It has to do with the unseen & the future (Rom 8:24-25). Hope is describes (a) the happy anticipation of good (Titus 1:2; 1 Pet 1:21); (b) the ground upon which hope is based (Acts 16:19; Col 1:27); (c) the object upon which the hope is fixed (1 Tim 1:1). (Vine's)

B. **The gospel** of Christ calls all Christians together in view of "one hope" (Eph 4:4).

1. Eternal life in Heaven—the object of our hope—is not just wishful thinking, or a whimsical dream about the future; it is a matter of certainty!

2. The Hebrews writer reminded us that God made a promise to Abraham, & then God confirmed that promise with an oath.

a. God’s promise to Abraham was enough, but God went the extra step & swore by Himself that He would keep his promise to Abraham.

b. God did that for Abraham for OUR benefit!

Heb 6:18-19 – ...*we might have strong consolation*, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. 19 *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure & steadfast, & which enters the Presence behind the veil*, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus...

3. The hope of a Christian is based on the promise of God who CANNOT lie (Titus 1:1-3); it is IMPOSSIBLE for Him to do so (Heb 6:18)

[The hope God offers to us in the gospel is based on a certain reality.

Hope is one of the spiritual blessings that belong to those who are “in Christ” (Eph 1:3; Gal 3:27), therefore...

C. For the Christian, Hope Is A Gift.

1. How do you give hope to someone when they are in despair? *By what you give them.*

2. In much the same way, God has given us hope?

a. Paul described the Lord Jesus Christ as “our hope” (1 Tim 1:1).

b. Jesus was not only God’s gift to demonstrate His love for us, Jesus came that we might have a more “abundant [everlasting] life” than we could ever experience on this earth apart from Him (John 3:16; 10:10) – what a gift hope is!

D. Hope Is When Christ Is In Us.

Col 1:27-28 – To them [the saints, the church] God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**. 28 Him we preach, warning every man & teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

1. Peter is a good example of how “Christ in you” becomes the hope of glory.
 - a. Peter began his relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ by saying, “Depart from me...” (Luke 5:8)
 - b. But then Peter left his trade to follow the Lord (Luke 5:11)
 - c. Peter even, misguidedly, took up arms to protect Jesus (John 18:10)
 - d. But soon after that Peter denied Him (Matt 26:74)
 - e. After Jesus died, Peter tried to forget Him (John 21:3)

- f. But Jesus restored to Peter to his service as one who would fish for men (Luke 22:32)
- g. At last, Peter stood boldly in defense of the Son of God (Acts 4:12, 19-20, 5:29)
- h. Jesus Christ had finally been “formed in Peter’s heart (cf. Gal 4:19), which gave him HOPE!

1 Pet 1:3-5 (At the end of Peter’s life) – Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

E. Hope Is Our Anticipation Of Receiving The Gift.

1 Peter 1:4-5 [begotten again to a living hope] – to **an inheritance incorruptible & undefiled & that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you**, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Thess 5:8-9 – But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith & love, & **as a helmet the hope of salvation**. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but *to obtain salvation through our Lord J. C.*

1. The Christian's hope is not blind to his difficulties, but he is equipped to rise above his earthly circumstances.

[With the helmet of salvation, we are able to raise our heads during our trials, so that he may have a clear view of our hope.]

II. WHAT WILL HOPE DO?

A. Hope Will Keep Us From Despair.

1. And the way we react to our trials will determine whether or not we are people of hope.

2 Cor 4:8, 9, 14 – We are hard-pressed on every side, **yet not crushed**; we are perplexed, **but not in despair**, 9 persecuted, **but not forsaken**; struck down, **but not destroyed** --14 **knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus, & will present us with you.**

2. We cannot choose hope over despair unless we choose to be with those who have chosen hope over despair: God's people (church).

B. Hope Will Keep Us From Self-Reliance.

1. David would never have endured the trials he had, if he had only himself to rely upon.

Psa 27:7-14 (David) – Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me, & answer me. 8 When You said, "Seek My face," My heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek." 9 **Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation.** 10 When my father & my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take care of me. 11 ~~Teach me Your way, O LORD, & lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.~~ 12 ~~Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, & such as breathe out violence.~~ 13 I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. 14 **Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, & He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!**

C. Hope Will Keep Us From Quitting.

1. Do you ever get so discouraged that you just want to lay down the armor & get out of the battle? You're forgetting some things...

2 Peter 1:5-11 – But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 ***For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.*** 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so ***an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.***

D. Hope Will Help Us Overcome Fear.

1. There are many things about life that can cause us fear; & without hope our fears lead to despair, & despair will lead to self-destruction (sin).
2. Peter & the Jailor were no longer fearful after learning about the eternal hope of a Christian ([Matt 26:74](#); [Acts 16:27](#)).

E. Hope Will Help Us Live Worthy Of Our Calling.

Eph 4:1-4 – I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to ***walk worthy of the calling*** with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness & gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body & one Spirit, just as ***you were called in one hope of your calling...***

1. People who do not live worthy of the calling do not have this one true hope.

CLOSING

A. The world lives without hope ([Eph 2:11-12](#)), & hopelessness leads to despair.

1. No wonder people live for the moment, or look for ways to get out of this world.
2. Let those of us who live in hope continue to see our great need for it, but also let us listen for the faint cries of despair from people who live without hope because they live without Christ

Rom 5:5-9 – Now *hope does not disappoint*, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6 **For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.** 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** 9 **MUCH MORE THEN**, having now been justified by His blood, we **shall be saved from wrath through Him.**

GOD’S PLAN FOR OUR SALVATION:

Hear the gospel of Jesus Christ; read it in your Bible: Acts 2; 3; 13; 17; Rom 10:17

Believe Jesus to be Lord and Christ, the Son of God and Savior: Acts 2:36; John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30-31; Acts 4:12; Titus 1:4

Repent of your sins: Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 1 John 3:4

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ: Matt 10:32-33; Acts 8:37; Rom 10:9-10

Be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins: Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet 3:21

Be obedient to the Lord, He will be your Judge: Titus 2:11-12; Heb 5:9; 2 John 9; Rev 2:10; John 12:48