

One Hope

Ephesians 4:4
Romans 8:23-25

Introduction: Hope is as necessary to the human spirit as oxygen is to the body. Without hope a feeling of senselessness, of purposelessness, takes over and utterly destroys life.

What is hope? Hope is “*desire, with the expectation of getting what is desired*” (Webster). One cannot hope for what he does not both desire and expect to receive. The man dying in his sins does not hope to go to heaven, because he does not expect to, though he may have the desire. The man dying in his sins does not hope to go to hell, because he does not desire to, though he may have that expectation.

Life can become difficult and harsh; we may think things cannot get better. But there is hope in Christ. There is no hope comparable to hope in Christ!

Our text shows that we are to have a hope that is beyond the life we live in this physical realm. We find the same basic concept in ***1 Corinthians 15:19***.

I. Where There Is No Hope.

A. No hope without Christ.

- 1.** Paul said that before the coming of the gospel the Gentiles were “***that at that time you were without Christ...no hope***” (***Eph. 2:12***).
 - a.** This does not mean that the Gentiles did not have hope at all.
 - b.** They had not acknowledged God (***Rom. 1:21-25***).
- 2.** The Gentiles, prior to the gospel, “***walked according to the course of this world...and were by nature children of wrath***” (***Eph. 2:2-3***).
- 3.** Those without God and Christ and are full of the world have no hope.

B. Modernism.

- 1.** Slightly acknowledges the teachings of the Bible.
- 2.** Modernism reduces its hope to “pie in the sky in the sweet by and by.”
- 3.** Social-gospelism is a manifestation of modernism. It is all here now.
- 4.** Modernism is devoid of hope.

C. Premillennialism.

- 1.** This is the theory that everything in the Bible points to a return of Christ to a rebuilt Old Testament Israel.
- 2.** This is a very popular doctrine among the denominations.
- 3.** The hope would be, not to go to heaven, but to go to Jerusalem.

D. Atheism.

- 1.** Atheist advances unbelief under the guise of higher intellectualism.
 - a.** Atheists will mock the Bible.
 - b.** Yet, the Bible is filled with encouragement for such things as reasoning, knowledge, wisdom, etc.

2. Remember this important point about atheism: Atheism does not offer any hope in a life to come, it also does not offer any reason for living in this life. Atheism can only offer a most empty existence.

II. The Christian's Hope.

- A. We have hope due to two reasons.
 1. God cannot lie (**Heb. 6:18**).
 2. God will keep His promises (**Titus 1:2**).
- B. The gospel is for the foundation of our hope (**Col. 1:5-6, 23, 27**).
- C. The hope of Christians is linked to two things—the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His second coming.
 1. The resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - a. His resurrection gives us hope for our resurrection (**1 Peter 1:3-5, 20-21; 1 Jn. 3:2**).
 - b. This is a resurrection toward eternal life (**1 Jn. 2:25; 5:11**).
 2. The second coming of Jesus Christ.
 - a. Looking with anticipation (**Titus 2:13**).
 - b. So that we be not like others—without hope (**1 Thess. 4:13-18**).
- D. Having hope like this anchors our soul (**Heb. 6:19**).

III. One Hope And Unity.

- A. The worldly, Modernists, Premillennialists, Atheists all congregate in groups of like interest.
 1. This provides them with a feeling of security.
 2. They draw strength through the realization that there are others who think like they do (no matter how flawed that thinking might be).
- B. Christians likewise obtain some security and draw strength through association with those of common aspirations.
 1. How often do we hear of “support groups.”
 2. The church is the ultimate support group.
 - a. Look forward to the same goals.
 - b. Desire the same happiness beyond the grave.
- C. Have you ever noticed the close association of faith and hope? (**Heb. 11:1**).
- D. Having the same hope and being unified by it is possible (**Heb. 6:11**).

Conclusion: As we have seen, one cannot have this hope without Christ. Why don't you obey the gospel today/tonight? HBRCB.

[I am indebted to two articles in Truth Magazine for thoughts and material. One was by Ron Halbrook, January 22, 1976 and the other by Mike Willis, December 4, 1980]