

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

Eph. 4:4

Sermon by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. The religion of Christ is a religion of HOPE -- Col. 1: 27; I Pet. 1:3; I Pet. 3:15; Matt. 12:21.
2. Without hope, life becomes utterly meaningless.
3. HOPE means: Desire and Expectation.
 - (1) Hope implies a possibility of attaining the object hoped for.
 - (2) Where there is no possibility of attaining, there can be no hope.
 - (3) We hope to see tomorrow, which is possible, but we do not hope to see yesterday, which is impossible.
 - (4) No man hopes for what he expects, but does not desire -- I expect to die, but do not hope to die.
 - (5) I desire enough money to be debt-free, but I do not expect to be debt-free -- I have no grounds for expectation. I cannot say I hope to receive enough money to be debt-free.
4. Both desire and expectation must meet in one before there can be hope.

I. THINGS THAT EXCITE DESIRE

1. The one consuming desire of the Christian is Eternal life.
 - (1) Eternal life is more than simply having eternal existence.
 - (2) Eternal life is full and free communion with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Angels, and all the redeemed in a spiritual environment where sin never comes with its blighting influences -- Matt. 25:46.
 - (3) Eternal life is a life of bliss, and this is the DESIRE of every Christian -- Rev. 21:4.
2. What excites within us that desire for Eternal life with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit?
 - (1) God's promise of REST from all that brings unhappiness and dissatisfaction here -- Heb. 4: 1, 9; John 14:1 - 6; Rev. 21: 4, 22 - 27; Rom. 2:7.
 - (2) Our condition of unrest, failing health, trials, disappointments, and heartaches here cause us to desire something better -- 2 Cor. 5: 1 - 10; Phil. 1: 23 - 24.
 - (3) The torments of Hell as just punishment to the sinner causes us to desire eternal life -- Matt. 25: 41,46; Mk. 9:48; 2 Thess. 1: 8 - 9; Rev. 20: 10, 15.
 1. The population of hell, the most horrible group of souls -- Rev. 21: 8; Gal. 5: 19 - 21; I Cor. 6: 9 - 10.

II. THE GROUNDS OF OUR EXPECTATION

1. Since we cannot hope for that which we do not expect to receive, we look next for the grounds of our expectation.
2. What right do we poor, frail, sinning creatures have to expect to live with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in heaven?
3. CHRIST is the GROUNDS of our HOPE.
 - (1) Christ was the hope of Israel -- Acts 28:20-- Christ was the fulfillment of all Hebrew expectations.
 - (2) Christ is the hope of the Gentiles -- Matt. 12:21.
 - (3) In Christ we have a LIVING HOPE -- I Pet. 1:3.
 - (4) Paul speaks of the "*Lord Jesus Christ which is our hope*" -- I Tim. 1:1

- (5) Col. 1: 27
4. What right do we have to expect eternal life from Christ?
 - (1) He promised it -- Mk. 10: 29 - 30.
 - (2) He is preparing a place for us -- John 14:1- 3.
 - (3) He is coming again to reward those who look for Him -- Matt. 25: 31 - 46; I Thess. 4; 13 - 18; 2 Tim. 4:6 - 8.
 - (4) He died for our sins -- Heb. 2:9; I Pet. 2:24; I Pet. 1: 18 - 19; Matt. 26:28; I Cor. 15:3.
 - (5) He was raised from the dead for our justification -- Rom. 4:25.
 1. We have an ever-living Savior -- Rom. 6:9.
 2. He is our Hope of the resurrection -- I Cor. 15: 13 - 17.
 - (6) He is our High Priest -- Heb. 4: 14 - 16; I John 2: 1- 2.
 5. Another grounds for Hope of eternal life is God's PROMISE of eternal life:
 - (1) *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"* --Tit. 1:2.
 - (2) Regardless of how unworthy we have been, how poor we are, how weak we may be, we have God's promise.
 6. The third ground for our Hope is God's OATH:
 - (1) He promised, and then swore that He would fulfill the promise -- Heb. 6: 13 - 19.

III. THE PLACE OF HOPE IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hope is one of the THREE important virtues in the life of a Christian-- I Cor. 13:13.
 - (1) God uses faith, hope, and love to bring about our eternal salvation.
 - (2) By faith we appropriate God's saving grace -- Eph. 2:8; Rom. 5: 1 - 2.
 - (3) By love we perform our part without murmuring -- John 14: 15; I John 5:3.
 - (4) By hope we hold to the promises of God -- Rom. 8: 24 - 25.
2. Our hope is our anchor in the time of storm -- Heb. 6: 18 - 19.
 - (1) The soul is pictured as a ship in troubled water; hope is the anchor which is cast within the veil.
 - (2) As the ship's anchor goes out of sight to find a holding place, so hope goes within the veil, to the things unseen and eternal, and finds its holding place in the person of Christ.
3. We are saved by Hope -- Rom. 8:24.
 - (1) Our hope causes us to do right.
 - (2) It guards us against doing wrong.
4. Hope bears the fruit of purity -- I John 3:3.
 - (1) The impure have no hope -- Gal. 5: 19 - 21.
 - (2) The man who has hope lives unspotted from the world -- James 1:27.
5. Hope bears the fruit of Joy -- Rom. 5:2; Col. 3:4; Rom. 12:12.
6. The Word of God gives us Hope -- Col. 1: 23; Rom. 15:4.

CONCLUSION

1. A strong hope in the things unseen and eternal is the only thing that can save us from the appeal of the things material in this materialistic age in which we live -- Heb. 10:34.
2. Our hope will be realized at the second coming of Christ -- Tit. 2: 13; I Pet. 1:9.