

Hope

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[0 : 00] Today I'd like to speak about the subject of hope. The Bible uses the word hope as a word to express our sure confidence and trust in God by our faith.

He's taken us from having no hope to having real hope. And we read about that in Ephesians 2 from verse 12. It says, So it says there you were without Christ, separated from him, afar off, far away.

Many people in our world have no hope. They've lost hope. They despair and their lives are filled with trouble. It has been said that life with Christ is an endless hope.

Without Christ, a hopeless end. You used to have no hope, it says. You were without God in the world. Now, in Christ, you are made nigh because of the blood of Christ.

You've gone from having no hope to having a sure eternal hope. So let's look today at four characteristics, if you like, an A, B, C, D of this hope that we have.

[1 : 29] And the first point I'd like to make is that this hope is an abundant hope. God gives hope. God is our source of hope. And it's hope that's abundant.

It's an abundant hope, overflowing and bountiful hope. God gives to us abundantly. Abundant mercy. Abundant grace. Abundant life. It says in Romans 15, verse 13.

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Certainly there is hope.

Hope for the future. Hope when all seems hopeless around us. Hope when circumstances lead us to feel like giving up. He gives us joy and peace in believing.

Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. You can't be too sinful that God's great grace and the power of faith in his finished work cannot save you. Grace can abound.

[2 : 28] Hope can abound. It says Isaiah 59, verse 1. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear. God is able to work to save.

And hope can abound. Yes, even in the most hopeless of situations. Hope can overcome your troubles. And hope can defeat the enemy. Hope can bring joy and peace in believing.

Certainly we have abundant hope. And the hope that we have has a strong foundation because it's Bible hope. Bible hope. We see that hope comes because of God's word.

Hope comes because of his promises. Our hope is based on that, on his precious promises. And it tells us in Romans 15, verse 4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Certainly this is our source of hope, the word of God. And we can learn patience. We can learn perseverance. And we can have comfort of the scriptures. It brings us hope.

[3 : 36] The scriptures were given, it says, for our learning to bring us comfort. And we have a book in which we can have wholehearted confidence. We have a sure hope.

It's definite. It's certain. It's absolutely true. God's word. Place your hope in its message, in its truth. Samson and David and many other celebrated men full of the Holy Ghost fell into grievous sins.

Job and Jeremiah cursed the day of their birth. Elijah and Jonah were weary of life and desired death. It's been said no one has ever fallen so grievously that he may not rise again.

Conversely, no one stands so firmly that he may not fall. If Peter and Paul and Barnabas fell, I too may fall. If they rose again, I too may rise again.

So said Martin Luther. 2 Corinthians 4 verses 16 through 18, it says, For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

[4 : 41] For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, for the things which are seen are temporal.

But the things which are not seen are eternal. So let's learn to view situations in the light of eternity. How much will this matter? 20 or a thousand years from now?

It puts things into perspective. The third point I'd like to make is that this hope that we have is a certain hope. This hope that we have is sure and it is strong.

That's the sense of the word hope here. There's an expectancy, an assurance to it. We can be confident that this hope will stand. We can have a sure hope. We can have a sure and certain hope. A certain hope. A hope that is sure and strong. And we can be confident that this hope will stand. This sure hope is talked to us about in Hebrews 6 verse 19. In Hebrews 6 verse 19 where it reads, Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

[5 : 49] It's saying here it's sure and it's steadfast, an anchor of the soul. Has your soul found this anchor? There is inner power from our faith in Christ. Even when we face trials and trouble.

Two frogs fell into a deep cream bowl and one was an optimistic soul, but the other took the gloomy view. I shall drown, he cried, and so will you. So with a last despairing cry, he closed his eyes and said goodbye.

But the other frog with a merry grin said, I can't get out, but I won't give in. I'll swim around till my strength is spent. For having tried, I'll die content.

Bravely he swam until it would seem his struggles began to churn the cream. On the top of the butter at last he stopped and out of the bowl he happily hopped. What is the moral?

It is easily found. If you can't get out, keep swimming around. Let's not give in to despair. When things seem hopeless, let's persevere in faith, trusting our great God to help us through.

[6 : 49] What's more, this hope that we have is a death-defying hope. It's a death-defying hope. This hope that we have can stare death in the face and know the promise of everlasting life.

We can have hope in facing death. We have a great joy and a sure confidence, even in facing death itself. We have hope beyond the grave, as we read of in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 from verses 13 through 18, where Paul writes, For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words. We have this hope because of his life, eternal life. We have a living saviour, a living hope, a lasting hope.

[8 : 19] And this hope that we have is alive, life eternal. 1 Peter 1 verse 3 says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

There is hope for our world, for our lives. There is hope and confidence, even in the storms, that life can send our way. Two men looked out through the same bars.

One sees the mud and one the stars. Depends what your perspective is. Depends where you're looking from and what you're looking unto. It says in 1 Peter 3 verse 15 that we have a hope that is within.

1 Peter 3 verse 15 reads, Our one and only hope is the Lord Jesus and we want to share him with those around us.

Are you feeling like your life is hopeless? You're feeling helpless, powerless, hurting? The world offers little hope. We see the news. Things seem pretty hopeless as far as the future.

[9 : 34] Modern society offers no real hope for mankind. We can have a single-minded purpose, that hope that we have. When Luther's puppy happened to be at the table, he looked for a morsel from his master and watched with open mouth and motionless eyes.

And he, Martin Luther, said, Oh, if I could only pray the way this dog watches the meat. All his thoughts are concentrated on the piece of meat. Otherwise, he has no thought, wish or hope. Let our hope be steadfast. Let our hope be strong and firm. Our life goal to please God. God has a plan for your life.

Perhaps you're going through a time where you feel you're really being tested. God is in the salvage business. He takes people that some would count to be just junk. And he makes something useful out of those who have wrecked and ruined their lives.

It's been said God doesn't ever send a rainbow until first there has been a storm. It may take a test to make your faith and hope stronger still. Paul talks about not being moved away from the hope of the gospel.

[10 : 42] In Colossians 1 verse 23, he writes, It's the gospel, the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ that truly gives us hope.

Have you this hope? Friends, it's abundant. It's Bible. It's certain. And it's death-defying. He wants to take you from hopelessness to hopefulness.

In Christ, you can know that hope that endures beyond the grave. That hope that you can have as an anchor of your soul. That hope that you have that you want to share to others around you.

That certain hope that is in Christ. I trust that you may know that wonderful hope for your soul as you put your faith in Christ today.