



Lesson Seven: Hope in Christ.

Introduction. We have considered the great emphasis Scripture places on the subject of hope. In a world of hopelessness, hope is essential to faith in Christ and salvation itself. The Christian can rest his or her hope in the promises and blessings of God and the future hope of glory in Christ. The hopeful disposition afforded to Christians can grant strength, joy, and peace of mind, but without Christ all things upon which we might place our hope will ultimately disappoint. The examples in Scripture of those who demonstrate hope allow us to have confidence that hope placed in God will be realized. We end our study with a final lesson considering some things the Bible teaches about hope in Christ.

I. God is the God of Hope.

- A. In the Old Testament the Lord was described as “the hope of Israel” (Jer. 14:8; 17:12-13).
 - 1. Faithful Israelites were urged to place hope and trust in God (Psa. 71:5-6).
 - a. A formulaic expression repeated three times in the Psalms encourages hope when one feels discouraged (Psa. 42:5, 11; 43:5).
 - 2. The law was given so that Israel would hope in God (Psa. 78:5-7).
 - a. God was to be their hope “forever” (Psa. 131:1-3; cf. 71:14).
 - b. Even in great trial, remembrance of God’s mercies can bring hope (Lam. 3:19-23). Even in the “day of doom” God remains the hope of His people (Jer. 17:17).
- B. In the New Testament God is to be viewed in the same way.
 - 1. God is, for the Christian the “God of hope” (Rom. 15:13).
 - 2. Scripture foretold One in whom “the Gentiles shall hope” (Rom. 15:11-12; cf. Isa. 11:10-12).

II. In this Age, Christ is Mankind’s Hope.

- A. It is still true that faith and hope are to be in God (1 Pet. 1:17-21). Jesus Christ is God in the flesh (Matt. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:16 NKJV).
 - 1. For the Christian, Jesus is our hope (1 Tim. 1:1-2).
 - 2. In Christ there is “one hope” (Eph. 4:4-6).
- B. God created man in the hope that he would seek God (Acts 17:26-28).
 - 1. This refutes a concept that God has predestined a limited atonement of a select few—hope that is seen absolutely is not hope (cf. Rom. 8:24).
- C. Allowing Christ to live in us through faith is the “hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).
 - 1. A Christian can be moved away from the “hope of the gospel” (Col. 1:21-23).

Conclusion. Throughout the history of God's interaction with mankind He has encouraged man to set his hope in Him for our needs. The "hope of Israel" is the same "God of hope" taught in the New Testament. Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, is the "one hope" of man in this age. God created us in the hope that we might seek a relationship with Him. The Christian can look forward to the "hope of glory" that will be revealed in the salvation that comes in Christ. This hope will come, so long as he or she is not "moved away from the hope of the gospel." Christians must maintain hope firmly to the end.

Discussion Questions

1. Fill-in the blanks from the formulaic expressions repeated in Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5: "Why are you _____, O _____? And why are you _____ within _____? _____ in _____, for I shall yet _____ For the _____ of His _____" (NKJV). What does this mean? _____

2. When the Psalmist speaks of the Law of Moses being given so that the Israelites might set their hope in God, to whom does he state they were to "make known" the Law (Psa. 78:5-7)? _____

- Is this something we should do with the Law of Christ? _____
3. Paul appears to paraphrase Isaiah 11:10-12 in Romans 15:11-12. Who is this One described as the "root of Jesse"? _____
4. If Paul tells Timothy that man's hope is now in Christ (1 Tim. 1:1-2), how can it be that in Christ our faith and hope are still in God (1 Pet. 1:17-21)? _____

5. It is popular in our world today to imagine that there are "many paths" to heaven and many things for which people can hope and still have eternal life. What does Ephesians 4:4-6 indicate regarding this view? _____

6. Paul makes the remarkable declaration to the intellectuals of Athens that God created man "in the hope" that human beings might "grope for Him and find Him" (Acts 17:27). If the Calvinistic teaching is true that God has foreordained the individual salvation and condemnation of every human being from birth could it truly be said that God did this "in hope"? _____
What does Romans 8:24 teach about hope that shows the problems with this view? _____

7. What does Colossians 1:23 indicate needs to happen to prevent one from being "moved away from the hope of the gospel"? _____

Explain this: _____

