

Hope in Hopeless Times!!!

Rom 15:4, 13

Hope - to desire with expectation of obtainment

A number of years ago researchers performed an experiment to see the effect hope has on those undergoing hardship. Two sets of laboratory rats were placed in separate tubs of water. The researchers left one set in the water and found that within an hour they had all drowned. The other rats were periodically lifted out of the water and then returned. When that happened, the second set of rats swam for over 24 hours. Why? **Not because they were given a rest, but because they suddenly had hope!** Those animals somehow hoped that if they could stay afloat just a little longer, someone would reach down and rescue them. If hope holds such power for unthinking rodents, how much greater should its effect be on our lives.

What oxygen is to the lungs, such is hope to the meaning of life.
Emil Brunner, Swiss theologian (1889–1966)

1 Peter 3:15

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: **and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:**

I) Lacking Hope (Receive) (Solomons Quest left him HOPELESS)

A.Reason

Eph 2:12

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, **having no hope, and without God in the world:**

B. Result

1 Thess 4:13

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, **even as others which have no hope.**

Ps 78:5-7

5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children:

7 **That they might set their hope in God,** and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

II) **Losing Hope** (Remember)

A. From Deception (Jacob)

Gen 37:35

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, **For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.** Thus his father wept for him.

B. From Disobedience (Naomi)

Ruth 1:20

20 And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

C. From Death (Job)

Job 7:6

My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.

D. From Despair (Paul)

Acts 27:20

20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

III) **Living Hope** (Rejoice)

A. Faith that's Working

Heb 11:1

11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

B. Future that's Waiting

1 Peter 1:3-4

3 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,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

From *Parade* magazine comes the story of self-made millionaire Eugene Land, who greatly changed the lives of a sixth-grade class in East Harlem. Mr. Land had been asked to speak to a class of 59 sixth-graders. What could he say to inspire these students, most of whom would drop out of school? He wondered how he could get these predominantly black and Puerto Rican children even to look at him. Scrapping his notes, he decided to speak to them from his heart. "Stay in school," he admonished, "and I'll help pay the college tuition for every one of you." At that moment the lives of these students changed. For the first time they had hope. Said one student, "I had something to look forward to, something waiting for me. It was a golden feeling." Nearly 90 percent of that class went on to graduate from high school.

Small Group Questions

1. Of the three groups of people that was preached about on Sunday which do you fit in? (Be Honest)
2. If you are **Lacking** hope, what can you do about it?
(Read Rom15:13, John 3:16 key word Believing)
3. If you are **Losing** hope, what do you need to remember?
(Read - Heb 13:15, Ps 37:25, Eph 3:20, Ps 46:1, Ps 145:18)
4. If your Hope is **Lively** what should you do to keep it that way?
(Praise, Prayer, Participation)
5. We should be looking for growth and changes in our Christian life what do you Hope to see happen in your Christian walk?
6. What have you seen God do in the past that gives you Hope for the present and future?
7. What does Romans 15:4 mean to you as a Christian and how should we put it to use?

Memory Verse

1 Peter 3:15

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