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HOPE: The Who, What, When, How and Why



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #115 ~

WHO has true hope? The Christian, the believer, the child of God, the one who has been born again. God knows you can't live without it. You have to have it, for this is how He made you, how you are spiritually wired. You need to know that God has good things in store for you. You need to know there's a reason for living, that He will reward you in the future for your work in the present. Having hope for the next age helps you to persevere in the present age, and successfully make it through this life. Now I'm not talking about worldly hopes, I'm talking about godly hope, a God-promised future, what He clearly tells us in His Word.

WHAT is this hope? What are these things God wants you to be excited about? It's being with **Jesus** (John 14:3). It's being in **heaven** (Hebrews

12:22-24). It's being with fellow **Christians** (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17). It's having a **new body** (1 Corinthians 15:42-44). It's experiencing **no pain** or sadness (Revelation 21:4). It's **reigning with Christ** (Revelation 5:10). It's **eternal pleasures** (Psalm 16:11). It's being greatly **rewarded** (Matthew 5:12). But more than anything else, it's being able to wholeheartedly **worship God** (Psalm 84:4). I can't wait! *"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him"* (1 Corinthians 2:9).

WHEN will this hope be realized? When will you begin to see all these good things take place? At the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. *"… in Christ all will be made alive… those who are Christ's at His coming."* 1 Corinthians 15:22-23

HOW do you get hope? First, you need to be saved. As soon as you are made right with God and are forgiven of your sins, you have hope. That's when you know you are going to heaven to forever be with Jesus and all the saints. 1 Peter 1:3-4 says that God *"has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance … reserved in heaven for you."* Once you are born again, you have hope, this present certainty that you will receive a heavenly inheritance, this confidence that you will be incredibly and eternally blessed.

Second, you need to know what God's word says about hope. Romans 15:5 tells us, *"through … the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."* The Scriptures describe your hope. I just mentioned nine different aspects of your glorious hope, all explained in God's word. But it's not just knowing what God says, it's also believing it. It does you no good to know your future if you don't believe it to be true. The saints of old had faith-based hope, for they believed what God told them about the future He had planned for them. *"Faith is the assurance of things*

hoped for." Hebrews 11:1

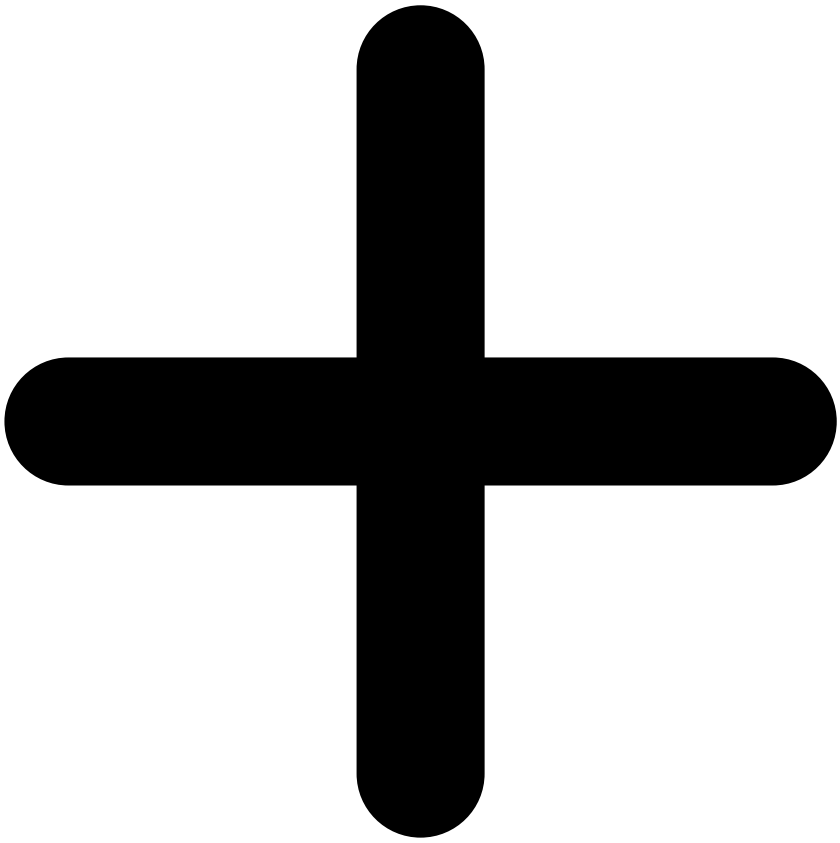
Third, God gives you trials to increase your hope. Now God gives present grace to get you through these trying situations. *"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness"* (2 Corinthians 12:9). But God also gives you the hope of future grace. *"Set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed"* (1 Peter 1:13). This hope of a perfect future helps you get through your present trials, for you know that God will greatly bless you in the ages to come. Your momentary light afflictions are producing for you *"an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison."* 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Fourth, it's good to ask God for hope. Here is Paul's prayer: *"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints"* (Ephesians 2:18). It's a work of God in the heart of a Christian that enables him or her to have hope. We can easily set our minds on earthly things, but it's a God-given hope that sets our minds on heavenly things, on a wonderful future He has already prepared for us. So how do you get hope? By being saved, by reading God's word, by learning through trials, and by prayer.

WHY do I say all this? Why do I keep writing about hope? Because it's vitally important for your life, a quality that is lacking in the lives of many Christians. Think of the five essential nutrients for the growth and health of the physical body – proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. Each of these are critically needed, or else your body won't function properly, will get weak and sick. So too, hope is needed for you to be a spiritually healthy Christian. **When you have hope**, you'll be able to **persevere** (1 Thess. 1:3), you'll **grieve rightly** (1 Thess. 4:13-17), you'll have a godly **perspective** (1 Thess. 5:9), you'll be more

holy (1 John 3:3), you'll be spiritually **anchored** (Hebrews 6:19), and most importantly, you'll be more **excited about seeing and being with Christ** (1 Timothy 1:1). Indeed, the gospel message is hope-full, for it is good news, not just now, but forever. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* Romans 15:13

P.S. I strongly encourage you to read my two recent posts on hope, for they go along with this one. "You Need Hope to Get Through Life" and "Your Great Hope and Most Glorious Future." I cannot emphasize enough the importance of godly hope for your life, and for all Christians.



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