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Important Lessons On The Hope God Has For You!



By Steven J. Hogan

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In my early years as a Christian, there was an often-asked question, *“What happens when a believer dies?”* The usual answer was, *“Well, he goes to heaven.”* Being in heaven is a correct answer, but it’s elementary, it’s simplistic. In the past 25 years, I have learned that there’s much more than just heaven. And I thank God for teaching me wonderful truths about our future, the hope that is for all Christians. On this blog site, I have talked a great deal about our hope, but since it is so critically important for our lives, I am compelled to keep teaching on it. My purpose today is to share with you a number of truths about this hope that God has given you.

1. Prophecy tells us what will be happening in the end-times, but we also need to know how we should live during these years leading up to Christ’s coming. You can have head knowledge, all this information about the birth pains, the Antichrist, Christ’s return, the rapture, etc.,

but you also need heart knowledge. You need love, faith, joy, holiness, and you also need hope. Only as you have hope can you truly live, grow, and succeed as a Christian. *“Let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.”* 1 Thess. 5:8

2. Hope is all about the future, and having hope means you are thinking about the future God has in store for you. Your hope is not about the past or the present, but about a God-planned and glorious future. This truth about hope for the Jews is conveyed in Jeremiah 29:11-12 – *“‘I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not calamity, to give you a future and a hope.’”* But the principle communicated here speaks to us, for the plans God has for our future relate directly to the hope He wants us to have today.

3. *“Hope for the future”* can be a statement or a command. As a statement, *“hope”* is a noun and is what you need to know. As a command, *“hope”* is a verb and is what you need to believe. If you have no hope, it’s because you don’t know or don’t believe what God has told you in His word. Having hope means you are hoping for, you are looking forward to God’s promises being fulfilled. *“If we hope for what we do not see, we wait eagerly for it.”* Romans 8:25

4. The hope God has for you is described in His word. That is, having this hope in your heart means you need to know what God’s word says about it. It’s obvious that God does not tell you everything about your future, but enough to excite and encourage your heart. *“Whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope.”* Romans 15:4-13

5. The foundation of our hope is Jesus Christ. The Christian, and all he says and does, now and forever, is to be centered on Christ. All aspects of our hope are related to Christ, whether it’s worshiping Him, serving

Him, being blessed by Him, or having fellowship with other Christians. *"… Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Col. 1:27). *"… Christ Jesus, who is our hope."* 1 Timothy 1:1

6. Hope is not about the end-times, about what happens before Christ returns – it's about what happens at, and after, Christ's return. Having this hope, knowing and being excited about the great future God has for you, will help you endure all the difficulties you will encounter before Christ's coming. *"… your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."* 1 Thess. 1:3

7. Hope is not worldly or fleshly, what you might achieve, but heavenly and spiritual, what only God can give you. And God not only gives you hope, but promises you that He will fulfill His hopes for you, and that's because He is always faithful. *"May the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely… at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you and He will bring it to pass."* 1 Thess. 5:23-24

8. Having hope, at its essence, is having faith, is believing God's promises to you about your future. That is, you cannot have hope without faith. *"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for… By faith he* (Abraham) *lived as an alien in the land of promise… for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God."* Hebrews 11:1, 9-10

9. At its heart, hope is an expression of God's future love for you. God loves you every single day of your life on this earth, but hope tells you how He will wonderfully and perfectly show you His love you in the ages to come. *"Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."* Rom. 5:5, Psalm 23:6

10. Hope informs you that your future in a perfect heaven with Jesus

Christ will be much better and brighter than your time on this sinful earth. *“He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, crying, or pain; the first things have passed away”* (Rev. 21:4-5). *“The day of one’s death is better than the day of one’s birth.”* Ecclesiastes 7:1

11. If you have hope, then you will be excited about, waiting for, and looking forward to what God has in store for you. Trusting in the people and things of earth leads to disappointment, but what God has planned for you will please and satisfy you like nothing you have ever experienced. *“Fix your hope completely on the grace to be given to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”* 1 Peter 1:13

12. The godly men and women of the past had hope, this faith for the future, for they were looking for the fulfillment of what God had promised them. Having this hope helped them to persevere, to not give up, to keep going for God. *“For by it the men of old gained approval”* (Heb. 11:2, 6). *“By faith Moses… choosing rather to endure ill treatment… he was looking ahead to the reward.”* Heb. 11:24-26, Job 19:25-27

13. Having hope does not mean you are just thinking about the future – it means you are living today in view of the future. 1 Thess. 1:9-10 sums up the life of a Christian – *“… how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.”* A godly Christian is both serving the Lord and waiting for Him. 2 Tim. 4:1-2 instructs pastors, *“… in view of His appearing and His kingdom, preach the word.”* God’s word must be taught with the coming of Christ and His coming kingdom in mind. Matt. 6:9-10

14. Hope keeps you from worrying about the past and being overwhelmed in the present. Having hope is positive, forward looking, and keeps you pressing ahead and making progress for the Lord. *“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ*

Jesus." Phil. 3:12-14

15. One reasons for trials is so you grow in hope, so that you look forward to that time when all your difficulties and problems will be gone. This looking ahead will keep you moving ahead and enable you to get through trials, even the present crises in our country. In the middle of the storm, you need to know that the Son will shine again. *"Not only this, but we exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance... and hope does not disappoint..."* Romans 5:3-5

16. To endure, to persevere, you have to have hope. You will experience difficulties in life, but the hope God gives you motivates you to keep going for Him. This will especially be true during the great tribulation, when you will be hated and persecuted like never before. *"They will deliver you to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name* (difficulties)... *He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other"* (hope). Matthew 24:9, 31

17. Hope is one of the keys to being holy, to not being fleshly or worldly. Fixing your eyes on Jesus and His coming to make you like Himself and take you to heaven has a holy, purifying effect on your life. *"When He appears, we shall be just like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. Everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."* 1 John 3:2-3

18. Hope relates to your salvation, for when Jesus Christ comes back your salvation will be complete, for then you will be glorified. The grace to be given you when Christ is revealed is glorifying grace, that which will perfect you, and enable you to perfectly worship and serve the Lord in the ages to come. *"...having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved..."*

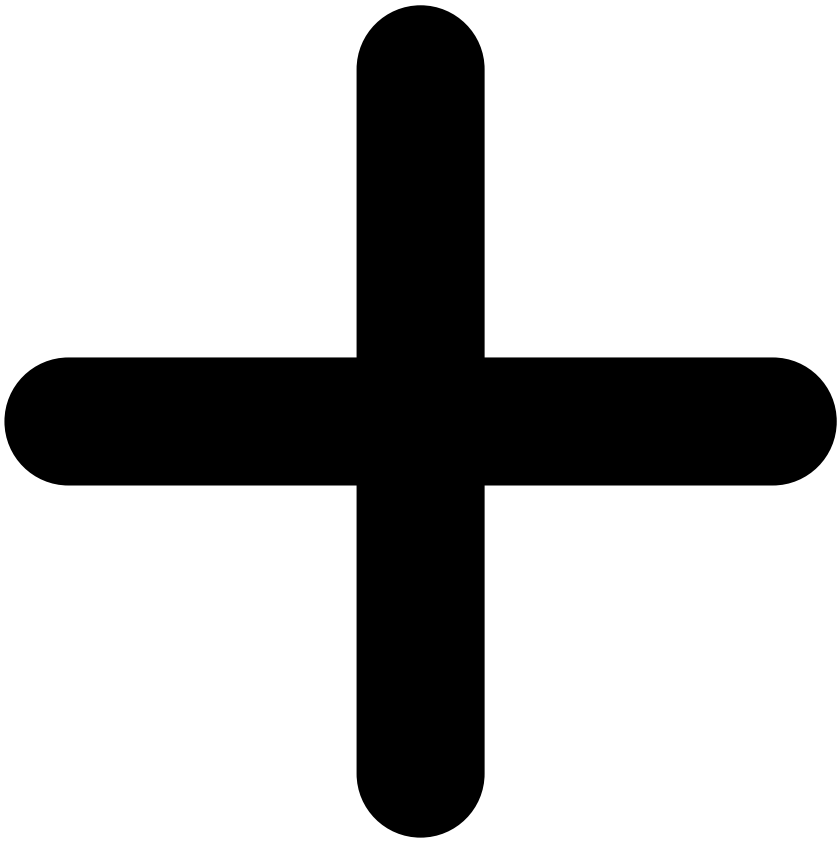
Rom. 8:23-24, 1 Thess. 5:8-9

19. Hope is an anchor for your soul. Knowing the certainty and glories of the future helps you through the uncertainties and problems of the present. The winds will blow, and the waves will pound, but the hope of a God-solid future helps secure and stabilize your life in the present. *"This hope we have as an anchor for the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast…"* Hebrews 6:17

20. What is this hope God wants you to have at this time? It's being with Jesus (John 14:1). It's having a powerful, glorious, immortal and spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:42-44). It's being able to perfectly love and worship God and Jesus (Rev. 5:13). It's having a heavenly home (John 14:2-3). It's being with loved ones and other believers (1 Thess. 4:13-14). It's receiving an incredible inheritance (1 Peter 1:3-4). It's having no pain, sorrow or sickness (Rev. 21:4-5). It's being greatly rewarded (Matt. 25:21). It's having a satisfying and God-glorifying purpose (Rev. 5:10). It's having fullness of joy and pleasures forever (Psalm 16:11). Next week's post will explain these aspects of your hope in more detail.

You need hope! Pray for it, and God will give it to you! *"I pray that the eyes of your heart are enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints"* (Eph. 1:18). *"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. This post is dedicated to all my dear friends who have suffered through the years, and having experienced and exhibited the grace of God, are ones who have hope, and are looking forward to being in heaven with Jesus. Here is a related article I encourage you to read, *"You Have to Have Hope."*



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