

## Hope for the Soul

Hope is among the three finest themes of the Christian life (1 Corinthians 13:13) as it is included in the midst of faith and charity (God-like love). Is it proper to use the word, “hope,” within the setting of laziness, waste or wishes? During such times, people are heard to say, “But, I hope the results are good anyway.” Is this the New Testament way of using the word?

Hope is the opposite of seeing and possessing something (Romans 8:24). Yet, hope is essential in God’s plan. It is part of God’s design that we live by hope, which is the anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19) that is sure and steadfast. This anchor of the soul is urged to be a ‘lively hope’ (1 Peter 1:3). The resurrection and ascension at the Lord’s coming should be filled with this hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13-16). Those who reject the Lord and the Lord’s way are without this hope (Ephesians 2:12). In the expression, “I hope the Lord will be favorable to me,” does this take into consideration the continuing way of neglecting God’s will, laziness, wasting one’s life and just wishing things to turn out well?

The New Testament use of hope centers itself in the Christian’s life. There is one hope (Ephesians 4:4). We are taught to live hope (Ephesians 1:18) and to enjoy the hope of the glory to be fulfilled in us (Colossians 1:27). Hope is not taken by a tablet or a pill. It is not an empty wish. Rather, hope is the result of a life being lived by faith, which undergoes trials and endures experiences, and patience and results in hope, the positive force of the Christian life (Romans 5:2-5). In fact, it is set before us and is based on God’s promises (Romans 12:12). We are to answer others who ask us about the ‘hope within us’ and answer with meekness and fear (1 Peter 3:15).

When seed is planted in the ground, there is an effort made by watering it and supplying it with a favorable climate (sometimes a greenhouse) in order to allow the seed to grow into a plant supplying fruit. In this process, we hope for a good crop and profitable investments. Hope is not the expression of a life continuing to live in neglect, wasting days and years and wishing for a different outcome.

*By: Robert D. Rawson*