

Hope



THE ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL

Lesson Five: The Benefits of Having Hope.

Introduction. We have seen that there are many things Christians have upon which they can set their hope, but having things for which to hope doesn't automatically cause us to see the value of living with a hopeful disposition. In this lesson we will consider two sides of this issue. First, we will examine the benefits of having hope, and second, we will consider what hope is left to us if we choose to reject God in Christ.

I. Three Benefits from Having Hope. We can identify three types of benefits taught in Scripture that come to Christians as a result of having hope.

A. Strength and Security.

1. Strength of heart comes to those who hope in God (Ps. 31:21-24).
2. The "hope of salvation" is a "helmet" of protection (1 Thess. 5:7-10).
3. As we noted in our previous lesson, hope in things "set before us" is an "anchor of the soul" (Heb. 6:19-20).
 - a. Hope reflects a trust in the promises and providence of God that grants strength to endure hardship, trial, and temptation.

B. Joy and Peace of Mind.

1. Happiness comes to those who hope in God (Ps. 146:1-7). The realization of God's ultimate care means that God's people can be "happy."
2. The hope of the righteous will cause "gladness" (Prov. 10:27-30).
3. Christians *rejoice* in hope (Rom. 12:10-12; 5:1-4; Heb. 3:5-6).
 - a. Blessings set before us that promise joy and peace of mind allow the Christian to experience joy and peace of mind through all circumstances.

C. Spiritual Blessings.

1. We hope in God because He is our "portion" (Lam. 3:24-26).
2. God is pleased with those who hope in Him (Ps. 147:7-11).
3. The one who hopes in the Lord will be blessed (Jer. 17:7-8).
4. The Christian's hope will not disappoint (Rom. 5:5).
5. The one who finds heavenly wisdom will not find his hope cut off (Prov. 24:13-14). For the one who finds it "there is a prospect."

II. Without God Hope will Disappoint Us.

- A. The hope of the hypocrite will perish (Job 8:11-14; cf. 11:20; 27:8; Pr. 11:6-8).
- B. Hope remains while one is alive (Ecc. 9:4-5), but in the grave there is no more hope of salvation (Isa. 38:17-19).
- C. Those who die outside of Christ have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13; Eph. 2:11-13).
- D. There is hope in life when man turns back to God (Ezra 10:2-3).

Conclusion. Without hope in Christ man cannot have the strength, joy, and peace of mind that comes from knowing that eternal life lies before us. Life in Christ is not free from all suffering, but the child of God has the comfort of a sure relationship with God that can sustain us through the worst of times. These benefits make it important for the Christian to maintain a hopeful disposition throughout his entire earthly service to God.

Discussion Questions

1. What did the Psalmist feel at one point before coming to recognize that God strengthens the heart of “all who hope” in Him (Ps. 31:22)? _____

2. Explain how the “hope of salvation” offers protection as a “helmet” (1 Thess. 5:8). _____

3. In the passages we considered that promise happiness and gladness to those who put their hope in God, does the Holy Spirit teach that such a person will never face unhappiness (Ps. 146:1-7; Prov. 10:27-30)? _____

4. Explain the sense in which God may be seen as our “portion” (Lam. 3:24). _____

5. In what two things does the Psalmist say God takes pleasure (Ps. 147:11)?
1) _____
2) _____
6. In Jeremiah’s description of the blessed one who hopes in the Lord, to what does he compare such a man (Jer. 17:8)? _____
What is meant by saying this thing will not “fear” or “be anxious”? _____

7. In speaking of the “hope of the hypocrite,” explain the phrase “whose trust is a spider’s web” (Job 8:11-14)? _____

8. In light of the contrast between the hope of the “unjust” perishing when he dies (Prov. 11:7), what type of deliverance “from trouble” is promised to the “righteous” (Prov. 11:8)? _____

9. In Paul’s words of comfort to the brethren in Thessalonica, who are the “others” whom Paul says “have no hope” (1 Thes. 4:13)? _____

