

To live a life without hope will lead to depression and great sorrow. Even the slimness of hopes will motivate people to overcome great difficulties in their lives. Sometimes, in the medical field, the possibility of recovery may be very slim, but even that little hope will cause people to go to great lengths to affect the cure.

In the lives of young people and in older people, lack of hope can lead to suicide. Without a purpose to go on, they see as their only alternative to end their existence here. Their lack of hope is caused by their trust in the things of the world – friends, possessions, relationships, etc. Life would be worth living if they only had some glimmer of hope, something that would make it all worthwhile. Is there such a hope for mankind? Is there a reason to carry on?

In Philippians 1:21ff, Paul discusses the hope of mankind in a decision he had to make concerning his life. Paul was faced with what looked like certain death. When he wrote the book of Philippians, he was under arrest, yet he was not in despair. How could he, when facing such dire circumstances, keep his attitude so positive? How could he not fear death, and even welcome it? Verse 23 provides the answer: *“For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.”* Paul had a hope beyond this life – a hope that was better than anything man could offer him.

What is this hope that all mankind can have? Let us examine the picture given to us in God’s word.

There Is Life Beyond This Life

If in this life only we have hope, we are most miserable. If that statement sounds familiar, it is found in 1 Corinthians 15:19. It emphasizes to us that this world offers no hope for us. Friends can let us down. The economy can fail and often does. Our health can fade away. Relationships can dissolve. Possessions can burn down or be stolen.

Nothing in this world is certain. And if we have put our hope in these things, then we will be sadly disappointed.

For the Christian, our hope is in a life beyond this life. Although our lives will come to an end one day (Hebrews 9:27; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), that is not the end of our existence. There is something else for us to face – our judgment (2 Timothy 4:1).

The rich man and Lazarus saw the reality of this in Luke 16:19ff. Both passed from this life, the rich man lifted up his eyes in torments and Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom. As we read this story, we see that both were very much alive in their existence after death.

Clearly, in Revelation 20:14 and 21:8, the Bible shows that the wicked will go into what is called a second death, which is Hell. Matthew 25:31-46 helps us see eternal life for the righteous.

Everyone must understand there is more to life than what we see around us. We are only passing through headed to our eternity (1 Peter 2:11). That there is life after death gives us hope. But, again, this hope is in what?

Heaven – The Eternal Abode Of The Righteous

Heaven will surely be worth it all. These words are a part of a song we sing and help us to understand what gives us hope. Although we may not have the words in the English language to completely describe the beauties of Heaven, we have the words in the Bible that give us a view that should make us want to go there. Words that make all the sacrifices and sufferings we will face worth it all. The fact of Heaven truly makes our life worth living.

Look at how Heaven is described for us:

1. It is eternal (Matthew 25:46). While we cannot really comprehend eternity, the best

way for us to think about it is “never ending”. All the beauties of Heaven will be ours forever once we attain it. The world passes away with the lusts thereof, but those who do the will of God will abide forever (1 John 2:17).

2. It is where there will be no more worldly concerns (Revelation 21:4). Think of a place where there will be no more tears, sorrow, and death. Friends and neighbors are never hurt or die. Accidents and diseases never happen. Unlike life on Earth, life in Heaven will truly be Paradise.
3. Heaven is a place of absolute beauty (Revelation 21:10ff). Think of a place where there are 12 gates of a single pearl each. Or a place with 12 foundations of precious stones. It has a street – a street of pure gold. Of these three descriptions, any one by itself will be worth it, but if we make it to Heaven, we get all three! And, then some!!!
4. The occupants of Heaven make it worthwhile. It gives us hope! Why? Because we will be in a place where there will be no criminals of any type. Wicked people will not be a part of those around us. Only the righteous will dwell in Heaven (Revelation 21:27; 22:14,15).
5. Do you know what really gives us hope? To one day be in a place where God and Jesus are (Revelation 21:22; 22:3). To be in the presence of the Creator and our Savior is the greatest thing of all. Not only will we be with the righteous, but with the ones who did everything to give us this hope. With God and Jesus who loved us so!

How Do I Get This Hope?

If you and I received in the mail the offer for \$1,000,000 and it had no details on how to obtain it, we would throw the mailing away as it would be of no use to us. Or, we would contact the one who sent us the offer, and ask what we need to do to get the money. What we do about this depends on how much we want the money.

When you and I learn that there is a Heaven, we can do one of two things with the information – ignore it or find out what we need to do to get there. What we do about this depends on how much we want to dwell in Heaven? Or, on how much we really want to have hope in our lives.

For us, we do not have to look that hard for what we need to do to obtain Heaven. When we study the Bible, we find those who would receive eternal life. What did they do? In Matthew 25, we find three teachings that help us answer this question.

1. They were prepared for the coming of Christ (Matthew 25:1-13).
2. They served the master faithfully (Matthew 25:14-30).
3. They served others, thereby, serving Christ (Matthew 25:21-46).

In short, they obeyed the teachings of Christ (compare Matthew 28:20). While Heaven is surely worth it all, it is obtained by our obedience (Revelation 22:14). This obedience is not burdensome to us (1 John 5:3) as the goal is worth it.

For those who have never become Christians, you can have this hope of Heaven by hearing God's word (Acts 10:33), believing that message (Acts 2:41), repenting of your sinful life (Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19), confessing the name of Christ (Romans 10:9,10; Acts 8:37), and being baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Thus, bringing yourself out of this sinful world and into Christ wherein are all spiritual blessings

(Colossians 1:13; Ephesians 1:3). This brings you from a life of no hope to a life of hope in Christ (Ephesians 2:12; Hebrews 6:18-20).

For those who are in Christ, but have fallen away, why would you give up an eternity with God, for the pleasures of this world? How sad it will be when those who were once saved lift up their eyes in torments and realize they had wasted their lives. How easy it is to return to Christ (1 John 1:9) and restore that hope. All we have to do is realize that this world is not my home.

Living a life without hope is a sad situation. Misery rules this type of life. Happiness eludes those who have no hope. What little joy they have is momentary at best. But, to have life beyond this life and know that it is ours brings nothing but great joy and gives us the power to handle whatever may come our way (Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:4).

Let us not be those who walk in misery when such joy awaits us!

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the
30th Annual Mid-West Lectures,
"I Know"

To hear or view the complete lesson go to
www.39thStreetChurchOfChrist.org
or contact the

39th Street Church of Christ
15331 East 39th Street
Independence, MO 64055-4240 USA

I Know...

Heaven Will Be Worth it All (And That Gives Me Hope)

by
Charles Coats

© 2012



International Bible Studies
Tract Series