

INTRO: In the days of the apostle Paul when it came to dying a typical inscription on a grave would be: *"I was not, I became, I am not, I care not."*

But something changed for the better. Catacombs showed evidence of changes that came as the result of one single life, that of Jesus of Nazareth. Before: doubt, confusion, despair, After: **faith, hope and love** had now conquered.

"...A threefold cord is not quickly broken. " Eccles.4:12.

Core of our life- **FAITH, HOPE, LOVE**.. One poet I knew penned: *"In the dark of the night, there shines a light, though the hearts knows the pangs of sorrow, but **faith** still clings and **hope** still springs and **love** still sings of joyful things as we journey toward God's Tomorrow."*

I) WE ARE SPEAKING ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

A) Specifically, God's People Have A Hope Unknown By Outsiders

- 1) *"Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible and achieves the impossible"*
- 2) This is Christian, believing and hoping in the invisible and impossible.
- 3) This is because *"there was one who was willing to die in my stead..."*

B) To Christ's followers it was written:

- 1) Rom. 15:4-from the Scriptures we draw hope.
- 2) Rom. 15:13- the God of hope can fill us with hope.
- 3) Rom. 5:3-5- Even in our bad times we have hope.

4) ILLUSTRATION: Death Or Life Oriented

ILLUSTRATION: Death Or Life Oriented?

II) HOPE BY DEFINITION GIVES US MORE HOPE

A) Hope is *"desire accompanied by expectation."*

- 1) It is not wishful thinking, like hoping a great weather
- 2) Hope believes in fulfilment.
- 3) Hope rests firmly on faith- Heb. 11:1

B) Faith Is Based On Past Events; Hope Looks Ahead

- 1) We believe that certain explorers existed and did this or that
- 2) We have faith in what the Bible says happened. – All in the past!
- 3) Faith is the ground of our hope and hope is the object of our faith.

4) ILLUSTRATION: Hope Needs A Foundation

III) SO WITH THE FAITH/HOPE LINK WE CAN HAVE SPECIFIC HOPES

- A) *"Hope of eternal life"*- Titus 1:2 and 3:7
- B) *"Hope of salvation"*- I Thessalonians 5:8 and Romans 8:24,25
- C) *"Hope laid up in heaven"*- Colossians 1:5
- D) *"Hope of resurrection from the dead"*- Acts 23:6
- E) *"Hope found in the gospel"*- Colossians 1:23

CONCLUSION: With the hope we have, how should we then live? Answer: for the glory of God and expecting a reward.

ILLUSTRATION: What If He Met You?

ILLUSTRATIONS USED IN THIS LESSON

Death Or Life Oriented?

Psychologist Erich Fromm says that people are distinguished by whether they are death-oriented or life-oriented. But the roots of the difference are more than psychological. They spring from that deep level of our being where we decide either to adjust as comfortably as possible to things as they are (death-oriented) or to work as wholeheartedly as possible for things as they ought to be (life-oriented).

We can take a lesson in this from nature. We have seen cocoons hanging from trees and bushes in the Spring. The cocoon provides protection for a wormy creature which is in process of maturing into a butterfly. The beauty and grace of a butterfly is wondrous to behold, but full maturity does not come without a struggle. Biologists have discovered that the struggle to break through the cocoon of old life into new life is absolutely necessary for the butterfly's survival. Without the struggle, the butterfly would die in the cocoon. Without the struggle, the tiny wing-muscles would not develop the strength required to fly free

HOPE NEEDS A FOUNDATION

In 1980, the famous atheist-philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre declared that he so strongly resisted feelings of despair that he would say to himself, *"I know I shall die in hope."* Then in profound sadness, he would add, *"But hope needs a foundation."* This is important to us: the only difference in the two houses Jesus spoke of was the foundation! All weather conditions were exactly alike. One fell under and one withstood the storms. Randy Travis sings in helpless hopelessness, *"The storms of life are washing me away."*

WHAT IF HE MET YOU?

There once was a man so despondent, his spirit so torn up by care and worry that he decided to end it all. He started to walk across the city to a bridge, from which he planned to jump. However, as he walked, he made another decision. He said to himself, *"If, on the way, I should meet someone with a friendly disposition, someone whose manner would bring a ray of hope into my life, I will turn back."* End of story. We don't know whether the poor man jumped or not.

But the story begs this question: *If, while walking toward the bridge, that man had met you, what would he have done?*

BIBLE CLASS ON THIS LESSON

1. How is hope defined?
2. Explain the need for a foundation for hope?
3. Why is it possible to have hope in bad times?
4. In those bad times what does hope do for us?
5. Name the 5 things we have the *"hope of,"* from this lesson
6. What do they all have in common?
7. Now some new material:
 - a. Why do we have hope?
 - i. God, who cannot lie, promised it- Tit. 1:2
 - ii. Confirmed it by an oath- Heb. 6:17-19
 - iii. He is the "God of hope"-Rom. 15:13
 - iv. Because Jesus is our hope- I Tim 1:1
 - v. Because of His resurrection- I Pet. 1:3; I Cor. 5:12-20
 - b. Who can have this hope?
 - i. Those who are in Christ- I Thess. 4:13-14
 1. Outside of Christ there is no hope- Eph. 2:12
 2. It happens when baptized into Him- Gal 3; Rom 6
 - ii. Those whom Christ is in- Col. 1:27
 1. When one is baptized into Christ, he puts on Christ- Gal. 3\
 2. Christ lives in the Christian- Gal. 2:20
 - iii. Those who have been begotten- I Pet. 1:3
 1. Born of water and Spirit- John 3

- 2. Cleansed by washing of regeneration- Titus 3:5
- iv. Those who have been justified- Tit 3:7
 - 1. One is justified by faith- Rom 5:1; Gal 3:24
 - 2. One is justified by Christ's blood- Rom. 5:9
 - 3. We contact the blood at baptism- Rom. 6:1-5
- c. How does the person who has this hope live?
 - i. Purify himself- I John 3:3
 - ii. Rejoice in hope- Rom. 12:12
 - iii. Remain steadfast- Heb. 6:18,19; Rom. 5:3-5
 - iv. Wait- Gal. 5:5