

A LIVING HOPE

Intro

1. Def. of hope: “happy anticipation of good”; “confident expectation of a blessing”.
2. Illus. of hope: Our outlook upon a future move from London to Hueytown.

1. The Death of Hope

A. Job’s depression; complaint against God - Job 14:

1. Life is “few days” and full of trouble, turmoil - 14:1.
2. Tree, hope for renewal after being cut down - 14:7-12.
3. Hope destroyed, eroded like mountain - 14:18-19.

B. Altered perspectives:

1. Problem(s) block out or negate positive thoughts, redeeming values. Pain, loss, failure, disappointment magnified. View of life distorted.
2. View of God distorted. His love, care, mercy, promises are obscured. He is cold, distant, unconcerned, unfair.
3. Death of hope: Things will not get better because they **cannot** get better. Things won’t change; I can’t deal with it; what’s the use in trying?

C. Some deal with death of hope through:

1. Resignation - No energy, enthusiasm; pessimism or apathy in all their words.
2. Drugs - Dull the pain of hopelessness.
3. Violence - Rage vented upon others; some turn rage against themselves.

2. Living Hope - Eternal Life

A. What is a solid foundation for hope? What is there that can be confidently expected for our ultimate benefit?

1. Health? Taken away. Children? Disappoint. Fame? Elusive. Money? Unstable.
2. These are false hopes, and our society is encouraged (even by “religious” leaders) to place its confidence in them.

3. In fact, there is **nothing** in this world that can adequately serve as a basis of hope. We can enjoy the good things of this life, but what will we stake our eternal welfare on?

B. Hope of eternal life - life with God.

1. The essence of the promises made to Israel and all nations:
 - a. Ac 23:6; 24:14-15; 26:6-8 - This hope based on centuries of promises.
 - b. Tit 1:2 - Promise extends “before time began.”
2. The basis for such happy and confident expectation:
 - a. I Pe 1:3 - It is a **living** hope, not a dead empty one. The resurrection of Jesus is the ground for such hope. It is the “firstfruits” (I Cor 15:23).
 - b. I Pe 1:21 - This hope is grounded in the very person of God.
 - c. Col 1:26-28 - Christ **in us** is the hope of glory.

C. Apart from Christ, there is not basis for hope beyond death.

3. Maintaining Hope

A. Hope survives for generations:

1. Lk 2:25, 38 - Hope for **first** coming of Messiah remained.
2. Hope for **second** coming of Jesus remains 2000 years later only because **individuals** have kept it alive.

B. Our salvation depends upon being “not moved away from the hope of the gospel” (Col 1:23).

C. Hope is one of the most noble aspects of human character. When based upon truly desired objects, it can withstand time and circumstance.