

Bryan Station Baptist Church

ORGANIZED 1786

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

INDEPENDENT

MISSIONARY

VOL. 14, NO. 11
AUGUST, 1983

"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;" Colossians 1:5.

Hope has been defined as expectation of future good. Hope is the faculty of the soul that anticipates the future with a sense of peace or pleasure. All men have hope of some sort. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast; Man never is, but always to be blest." (Pope) Hope is one of the principal springs that keep mankind in motion. Without hope, human endeavour would sicken and die. Without hope of a harvest, the farmer would not plant and cultivate. Without hope of pay, miners would not go to their work. Without hope of profit, the merchant would close up shop. Without hope of happiness, lovers would not go to the marriage altar. "In all the wedding cake, hope is the sweetest of the plums."

Whether hope is an asset or a liability may seem like a strange question for debate. But the question is not so one-sided as one may at first judge. A. McLaren: "It may well be a question whether on the whole it has given us more pleasure than pain." And he goes on to say that hope has seldom been a

true prophet. It has held out prizes never won. It has made us toil and struggle and aspire and fed us on mighty husks. Either we have not got what we expected or have found it to be less good than it appeared from afar. It is true that many a hope has ended in disappointment. It is true that hope often lies to us. Not half of the good things we have expected and hoped for in life have ever been realized. As a pastor, I have entertained many hopes that have ended in utter disappointment. I have expected faithfulness in church members who have been a disappointment. I have hoped for cooperation from those who never gave it. The hope of a happy home has turned out to be a lie with many a husband and wife. Parents have entertained hopes about their children that never came true.

All this has caused one poet to write:

"Hope tells a flattering tale
Delusive, vain and hollow.
Ah! Let not hope prevail,
Lest disappointment follow."

But another poet writes in defense of hope and says:

"Hope! Of all ills that men
endure, the only cheap
and universal cure."

And Wordsworth expresses doubt about the worth of hope in these lines:

"Hopes, what are they?--Beads
of morning
Strung on slender blades of
grass;
Or a spider's web adorning
In a straight and treacherous
pass."

So much for hope in general. The New Testament has much to say about hope. Christianity lays hold of hope and professes to supply it with certainty and support.

The gospel tells of a hope that is both sure and steadfast, to which the soul may be safely anchored.

I. Let us look at some of the adjectives used to describe the hope of the gospel.

A. It is called "a good hope through grace." II Thessalonians 2:16. This hope is a well-founded expectation. This hope is no illusion; it does not come from fumes of fancy or the play of imagination. It is not mere desire where the wish is the father to the thought. This hope will not end in disappointments and torments. This hope carries with it full assurance--something

every other hope lacks.

B. It is a "lively or living hope." It is no poor, pale ghost brightening and then fading; fainting and then reviving and fainting again. This hope never dies. This hope is immortal till its work is done and hope is swallowed up in realization.

C. It is called "the blessed hope." All other hopes may pass into sorrow. The gospel hope gives lasting joys. In all earthly hopes, there is an element of unrest.

D. It is referred to as "the glorious hope." It is a hope we will never be ashamed of. It is the hope of the glory of God--the hope that one day we will be conformed to the image of Christ. The hope of some is that they shall die like a dog and have no future existence. Others hope that when they die they will go to purgatory and after so much prayers and payments finally get to heaven. But the glorious hope is that when we are absent from the body, we will be present with the Lord. This hope is the hope of a glorious resurrection of the body to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. This hope is the hope of heaven with all its delightful service and associations.

II. The ground of this hope. This hope rests upon faith in God's word about the value of the death and resurrection of Christ. When this book is found to be a lie, our hope will die. When the blood of Christ is found to be of no value to a poor helpless sinner, our hope will turn to despair.

Our text uses the word hope objectively, that is, in the sense of things hoped for. It is not the grace of hope, but the object of hope. The things hoped for are laid

up in heaven. And they had heard about these things in the gospel.

In Hebrews 11:1, faith is said to be the substance of things hoped for. The word for substance literally means that which stands under. Faith stands under our hope to support it. When faith is strong, hope is bright.

III. Oliver Goldsmith once said that "Hope, like a gleaming taper's light, adorns and cheers our way."

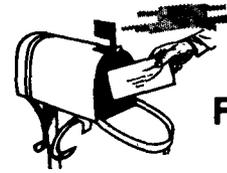
A study of women workers in a factory showed that at the end of the day's work some were limp with fatigue; some bright-eyed and wide-awake. All had worked the same number of hours. It was found that most of the bright and wide-awake ones had plans for the evening--some of them not very noble and godly--but they were expecting a good time, and their hope of a good time had a good effect on their bodies and spirits. The tired ones had nothing to look forward to.

Christians may live life on tip-toe-bright and wide-awake -- because of their bright prospects in life's evening. When the day of life is over, there will be a good time in glory.

To be occupied with the hope laid up for us in heaven will make us better Christians, for he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself.

We have before us in the Memorial Supper, symbols of the gospel which is the ground of our good hope through grace. Let this remind us that our hope rests upon the blood of the Son of God. When that blood loses its power, then we shall lose hope.

Claude D. Cole



From the Mailbox

WE GET LETTERS. . . .

Dear Brother Gormley
and Church:

As one of the members of Wilmington Baptist Temple, I wish to thank you and the church which you pastor for your generous gift toward our land purchase. As Brother Dan has surely told you, we more than reached our goal and will be soon buying ten acres of land.

I was with Brother Dan last July when we visited your home. I was glad to be in your church for the mission conference for Monday night and all day Tuesday. We really rejoiced to hear all the good preaching. The ladies of the church sure fixed some great food--thanks. We also enjoyed our stay Monday night in the home of the Ron Hickey family.

We will be seeing you all again. Again, we say thanks for everything. May our Lord bless you mightily.

In Him,
DeWayne W. Austin

ESSENTIALS FOR A GREAT CHURCH

1. A regenerated church membership.
2. A praying membership.
3. A working membership.
4. A cooperating membership.
5. A membership with a vision and the faith to see that vision become reality.
6. A membership where everybody is somebody.
7. A membership where nobody tries to be number one but everybody is willing to work for the common good.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

By: C. D. Cole

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4:14.

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21.

James is speaking of earthly existence and says our life, our earthly existence, is a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Paul is speaking about the aim or true estimate of life and says his aim is Christ. What is your life? What is your estimate of life? What is your target or aim in living?

Life has been called "the predicament that precedes death." It has been called "a brief and discreditable episode on one of the minor planets." The university upstart who has been on a four-year loaf and the come-home college bred argue that man is composed of crawling masses of carbohydrates headed for oblivion. When we hear men name the name of God in vain, and say by their actions that they have little regard for Him, we are reminded that in a wheat field, the heavy heads of wheat bend over while the mighty ones stand up straight. And so when men refuse to bow in His presence we think it must be because they are mighty headed. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

Three false estimates of life--they might be called the three "T's." They are: things, thrills, and theories.

I. There are those who live for things; their aim in life is getting things, but "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." The leading business in America is junk business. It is not called junk, it is cars and clothes, finery and furnishings, things that will become rusty or moth-eaten. Bryan: "Those who live for money spend the first half getting all they can from

everybody else and the last half trying to keep everybody else from getting what they got away from them and find no pleasure in either half." Rockefeller: "Just a little more." There was a man found dead in a desert. Strapped around him were precious stones worth thousands of dollars, and yet he died for lack of plain drinking water--something absolutely free. So men die with things strapped around them and perish for lack of the water of life which is given without money and price. Getting things is the world's business, but for the Christian it is but a by-product. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God..." William Carey: "I make shoes to pay expenses; my business is witnessing for Christ." These are days when men spend their health getting wealth and then spend their wealth in looking for health. This is a senseless way of life.

II. Then there are those whose estimate of life is found in thrills. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." I Timothy 5:6. There are a lot of animated corpses running around today.

There was a man met by his indignant wife as he alighted from a merry-go-round at the circus. "Now look at you. You done gone and spent all your money and you got off right where you got on; you ain't been nowhere." This is a good description of modern living and can be spelled in three words: hurry, worry, bury. Millions live for pleasure and never have it because they make it a business and not a by-product. Most miserable people on earth are those who scurry around in cars and planes looking for a good time and never finding it; who argue that variety is the spice of life and do not have enough sense to know that you can't live on spice. What a contrast between these thrill-chasers with soda-pop characters and ukelee souls and such men as Paul, Savorala, Bunyan and Spurgeon; men who walked with God and found that at His right hand are pleasures forevermore. Pleasures of sin are short-lived--only for a season; but at God's right hand are plea-

ures forevermore. All these worldly pleasures have a morning-after-taste, but there is no morning-after-taste to the joy of the Lord.

III. Then there are those who estimate life in terms of theories. Discount revelation and from their own darkened minds spin out a web of theories. Josh Billings: "I'd rather know a few things for certain than be sure of a lot of things that ain't so." Men try to find their way through the puzzle of life with the candle of reason. They think but they think without the Bible.

IV. If life's true valuation is not to be found in things, thrills, and theories, then where shall we look? Look where Paul looked. He found life in Christ, and then made pleasing Christ the aim of his life. "I am the way, the truth and the life. He hath the Son hath life." Life apart from Christ is blowing bubbles, looking for ships that never come in. "To live is Christ, to die is gain."

IN CHRIST WE HAVE:

- A love that can never be fathomed.*
- A life that can never die.*
- A peace that can never be understood.*
- A rest that can never be disturbed.*
- A joy that can never be diminished.*
- A hope that can never be disappointed.*
- A glory that can never be clouded.*
- A happiness that can never be interrupted.*
- A light that can never be extinguished.*
- A strength that can never be overcome.*
- A beauty that can never be marred.*
- A purity that can never be defiled.*
- Resources that can never be exhausted.*

--Copied

**READ
THIS COPY
AND
PASS ALONG**