

September 22, 2002  
AM Service  
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

“A Quality Desired”  
1 Peter 3:13-17

What quality is to be so evident in a Christian's life that it will cause others to question him about it? The answer is found in v. 15. People may ask you to give the reason you have this quality. Do you know what it is? Hope! Yes, hope is the quality that is to be so evident in a Christian's life that it will cause others to question him about it.

Anyone ask you lately for the reason that you have so much hope? Do you have hope?

### **What We Need: Hope**

First we need to define hope.

What is Biblical Hope?

Hope is a confident expectation of good. Hope is based on faith (Heb 11:1 - Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.) Unbelievers can see that Christians have something different; a hope... and only "hope" gives us strength in hardships and persecutions. That is what unbelievers see that even in the midst of trouble we have a hope and a joy and they will want to know the reason for it. Be prepared to tell them.

Hope is not positive thinking or name it and claim it type of faith. It is not selfishly wishing for what you want and believing that wishing for it makes it so. Hope is not a wimpy, doubtful “Gee, I hope so – I hope there will be good.” Hope is a *confident* expectation of the good that God has promised (“being *sure* of what we hope for and *certain* of what we do not see). That's Biblical hope. But what *is* our hope according to the Bible?

What is the Christian Hope?

1 Peter 1:3-5

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Col 1:26-27

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Through our faith in Jesus we have been born again (our first birth was physical, this second birth is spiritual. The first birth was to human parents. In the second birth we became children of God. The physical birth inherited sin and death. The spiritual birth was the forgiveness of sin and the inheritance of eternal life in heaven (Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-kept in heaven for you).

Because of Christ, because Christ is in us we are confident of heaven (the hope of glory). Are you a little disappointed? Don't you want me to say that everything will be good in this life? Why do we have to wait for heaven? We want heaven now! Certainly we put our hope in Jesus right now for the forgiveness of our sin and restoration of our relationship with God. But (1 Cor 15:19) If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.

There is still suffering in this world and will continue until Jesus returns and gives us new bodies. Did you know you are going to get a new body?

1 Cor 15:42-53 NLT

It is the same way for the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies, which die and decay, will be different when they are resurrected, for they will never die. 43 Our bodies now disappoint us, but when they are raised, they will be full of glory. They are weak now, but when they are raised, they will be full of power. 44 They are natural human bodies now, but when they are raised, they will be spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, so also there are spiritual bodies.

45 The Scriptures tell us, "The first man, Adam, became a living person." But the last Adam--that is, Christ--is a life-giving Spirit. 46 What came first was the natural body, then the spiritual body comes later. 47 Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven. 48 Every human being has an earthly body just like Adam's, but our heavenly bodies will be just like Christ's. 49 Just as we are now like Adam, the man of the earth, so we will someday be like Christ, the man from heaven.

50 What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These perishable bodies of ours are not able to live forever.

51 But let me tell you a wonderful secret God has revealed to us. Not all of us will die, but we will all be transformed. 52 It will happen in a moment, in the blinking of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, the Christians who have died will be raised with transformed bodies. And then we who are living will be transformed so that we will never die. 53 For our perishable earthly bodies must be transformed into heavenly bodies that will never die.

As long as we are in these bodies there will be suffering...

## Rom 8:18-25 NLT

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later. 19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, everything on earth was subjected to God's curse. 21 All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. 22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us. 24 Now that we are saved, we eagerly look forward to this freedom. For if you already have something, you don't need to hope for it. 25 But if we look forward to something we don't have yet, we must wait patiently and confidently.

The Christian hope most referred to in the Bible is this future hope.

Acts 23:6-7 (hope of the resurrection from the dead)

Titus 2:13-14 (the blessed hope-the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ)

Titus 3: 4-7 (hope of eternal life)

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life

Hope for the Christian is that this is not our home. Our home is in heaven. Jesus is coming again. He will change us and give us a new body and suffering and sorrow will be no more. This is the hope that expels fear.

### **What We Don't Need: Fear / anxiety**

What would you have if you did not have hope (a confident expectation of good)? You would have fear. That is why Peter quotes from Isa. 8:12 - "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened."

Isa 8:11-14 NLT

The LORD has said to me in the strongest terms: "Do not think like everyone else does. 12 Do not be afraid that some plan conceived behind closed doors will be the end of you. 13 Do not fear anything except the LORD Almighty. He alone is the Holy One. If you fear him, you need fear nothing else. 14 He will keep you safe.

You will not fear, worry or have anxiety if you have hope. Unbelievers see hope that gives us strength in hardships and persecutions rather than fear. We don't fear what they fear.

What is necessary to have this hope?

According to v. 15 if you are to have hope and not fear then "in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord."

### **What We Need To Do: Set apart Christ as Lord**

What does the Christian with hope do?

1 John 3:2-3 - We know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

To "purify" means to be morally and ethically free from the corruption of sin.

Through faith in Jesus, God declares us innocent but we must make the moral choices that will build a holy character. Believers who have this hope of seeing Christ and being like Him will want to purify themselves.

1 John 2:3-6

We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 4 The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

Jesus is the one in control of our life. We believe, trust and therefore obey Him. We know He is always with us and that He is our strength and in the end He will return and we will have life everlasting. What an incredible hope...what do we have to fear? "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander."

One last thing about hope: 1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Hope like faith is a choice and a command. God commands us to have hope. Faith, hope and love are not feelings but an action. We are commanded to have faith, hope and love. Choose to obey that command (especially when it is hardest to do so). Set your hope.

You will have hope and not fear in the midst of trouble if you have set apart Jesus as Lord in your heart.