

He is to me – Lasting Hope

To many people, hope is just an optimistic state of mind or the ability to remain positive with respect to various circumstances in life. The depth and power of hope is recognized when faced with crisis. During days of difficulty, some people lose hope. When Paul was on the voyage to Rome, the Alexandrian ship faced a tremendous storm. After several days the tempest was so severe all hope that they would be saved was lost. Although everyone else in the ship had lost hope, Paul had a lasting hope.

In the midst of all of our difficult circumstances, we can have lasting hope. This hope comes from the confidence we have placed in God almighty.

Ephesians 2 talks about God's rich mercy, great love, and exceeding riches of grace that saves us from our sins. The text makes it clear that this hope is the gift of God. God is so good that He rescued us when we were lost and without hope in the world. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:12 NKJV That at that time you were without Christ ...and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Think about that. This is the condition of many people in the world. They are without Christ, without promise, and without hope.

True hope is more than a positive outlook in various circumstances.

True lasting hope only comes from God. The next two verses give reason for hope and peace in this present world.

Ephesians 2:13-14 NKJV But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

God almighty has provided deep peace and hope by bringing us to Him by Christ Jesus. When we were brought near to God by the blood of Christ Jesus, we received mercy, grace and peace from God. The magnitude of God's mercy, grace and peace has given us hope in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:19 AMP If we who are abiding in Christ have hope only in this life and that is all, then we are of all people most miserable and to be pitied.

We are given two dimensions of this hope in Christ Jesus.

1. There is hope in Christ during this life.

2. There is hope that is beyond this life.

This text compares the eternal hope and the temporary hope we have in this life. I contend that both are necessary for us to live in peace and joy. The greater hope reaches into eternity. In this present life, we need a hope that has deep expectation or belief for something good and beneficial. Hebrews shows faith and hope are closely related.

Hebrews 11:1 NIV84 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hope is a necessary foundation for faith. Faith is established on the hope we have in God's promises. Where your hope is weak, your faith is weaker. It is imperative for us to have strong hope in order to have a faith that works.

So, how do we build up our hope in the good and beneficial things that God has promised to do? To have lasting hope, we must constantly be reminded of all of the benefits that are in Christ Jesus.

Your hope is established on God's strong promises.

Colossians 1:22-23 talks about the reward that is received if we do not drift away from the hope of the good news of the gospel that we have heard. To have lasting hope, we must remain focused on the good news presented through Jesus Christ.

Look at this one promise that the Lord gave in Luke 12.

Luke 12:22-24 NET Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For there is more to life than food, and more to the body than clothing. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn, yet God feeds them. How much more valuable are you than the birds!

Luke 12:27-28 NIV84 “Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!

Luke 12:29-31 NET So do not be overly concerned about what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not worry about such things. For all the nations of the world pursue these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, pursue his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

God has committed Himself to care for you.

He is interested and prepared to take care of the smallest details of your life. Build your hope on everything God has promised through the Lord Jesus Christ.

How many of His promises can you recall? Your hope will be made stronger as you familiarize yourself with the promise of God that is in Christ Jesus. You need to know that you are not forsaken and abandoned like the people of the world.

God is on your side.

Ephesians 2 talks about the time in your life when you were strangers from the covenants of promise.

Ephesians 2:12 NKJV That at that time you were without Christ ...and strangers from **the covenants of promise**, having no hope and without God in the world.

When you were without Christ, you had no hope. The Lord your God is a covenant God. He always takes action on our behalf in response to His covenant.

Watch what God did for us when we were without Christ.

Ephesians 2:4-5 NET But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even though we were dead in transgressions, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you are saved!

This rich mercy and great love has impacted our present and eternal condition. His amazing grace has given us lasting hope.

Philippians 4:19 NET And my God will supply your every need according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Consider what God has done for us. Our trespasses should have excluded us from His promises, but God has rich mercy and great love for us. Through Christ, we have been given many great and precious promises.

You can have lasting hope in every circumstance, because God has extended His glorious riches to us through Christ.

We should consider this promise!

- The promise says: “God will supply all your need...”

- In the midst of your circumstance, think about His promises.
- We have many and various needs.
- We need salvation, encouragement and healing.
- We need help, deliverance, and protection
- We have many needs...

Listen closely to 2 Peter 1:2-4.

2 Peter 1:2-4 NKJV Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as **His divine power has given to us ALL THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO LIFE AND GODLINESS**, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises...

Look at that. God has given us everything we need for life and godly living. Consider the greatness of this promise. God's divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Remember the verse that said: "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8)

2 Peter 1:4 NLT And because of His glory and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share His divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

2 Corinthians 1:20 NKJV For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

This hope that we have in Christ Jesus covers two major areas of concern.

1. It provides hope in Christ during this life.
2. We are given hope beyond this life.

1 Corinthians 15:19 AMP If we who are abiding in Christ have hope ONLY in this life and that is all, then we are of all people most miserable and to be pitied.

We have hope beyond the demands and needs of this life. Beyond your need for forgiveness, salvation, healing, protection... God has provided. God has provided hope that reaches into the heavenly realms. This hope covers more than your need for life and godly living. God has provided a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-4 NKJV Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a LIVING HOPE through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

Most often we consider God's blessings that are in Christ Jesus for daily life and godly living. These profound blessings give us the strength and stamina to live for God without falling back into destructive lifestyles.

God has provided a GREATER HOPE for us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Christ's resurrection defeated the power of hell, death, and the grave. Christ came out of the grave with the keys of death and hell. When He came out in victory, He made it possible for us to be born again to a living, lasting hope. This living, lasting hope is for a greater inheritance than the temporary blessings we receive daily. We have hope of an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you. God has prepared things for you that you have not seen.

How can we know these things that God has prepared in heaven?

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 NKJV But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor

have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

Pay attention to that. The Holy Spirit is constantly searching all of the deep things of God. Our hope begins to soar as the Holy Spirit begins revealing things that God has prepared for us in heaven. These are things beyond compare. God has prepared these eternal riches of glory for those who love Him. Right now the voice of the Spirit is revealing the love gifts that God has prepared.

Why do we have such lasting hope?

Start considering the multitude of things that God has prepared for those who love Him. Consider what Jesus Christ has done when He opened up the way for us to enter into these eternal blessings.

Now the Holy Spirit is speaking words of encouragement and hope. He is telling you, “God has prepared something good for you.” Stop listening to the words of doubt and doom that rob you of this lasting hope. Hebrews 9:24 tells us, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior has entered into heaven itself to appear in the presence of God for us. He has opened up the way for you to enter into His blessings. Jesus is the reason we have this lasting hope.