

Hope is Part of Salvation



Hope (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue with our theme for this week which is, "Hope."

I'd like to begin by recapitulating, in brief, what I've been saying in the previous talks on this theme. First of all, there are three great abiding spiritual realities in the Christian life: faith, hope and love. Each is essential to the fulness of Christian living. Hope is produced by the new birth. We are born again into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The third fact I've already covered by that quotation, "Hope is based on Christ's resurrection." Fourth, hope looks forward to Christ's return. This is the blessed hope that is set before all true Christians. Fifth, the source of hope is God's love. Sixth, this kind of hope motivates us to holy living. And seventh, this kind of hope produces confident, radiant Christians.

Just say those once again. They're so important:

1. There are three abiding realities in the Christian life: faith, hope love.

2. Hope is produced by the new birth.

3. It's based on Christ's resurrection.

4. It looks forward to Christ's return.

5. It's source is God's love.

6. It motivates us to holy living.

7. It produces confident, radiant Christians.

Now, in my talk today, I'm going to deal with hope as an essential part of salvation. Most people with any kind of Protestant or Evangelical background (and that's not to exclude people from other backgrounds), but most such Christians are in some way aware that you cannot have salvation without faith. We're probably familiar with the famous statement, "The just shall live by faith," and so on. Well, that's perfectly true, but it's not the whole truth. What I want to emphasize in this particular talk is that you cannot have salvation without hope, either. Hope is also an essential

part of salvation.

Listen to what Paul says in Romans 8, verses 24 and 25:

> "For in hope we have been saved [or, by hope we have been saved], but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it."

Notice again, that hope turns toward the future; faith is in the present. But, Paul says, "...in hope [or by hope] we have been saved." In other words, hope is an essential part of being saved. Without hope we do not have valid salvation. And then Paul goes on to point out that hope produces perseverance. He says, "...if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it." And perseverance, again, is essential to salvation. Many different passages of Scripture emphasize that we have to persevere in our faith and in our Christian living until the consummation of that faith. So hope is essential to salvation.

This is brought out very clearly in another passage of Paul's writings in Colossians, chapter 1, verses 25-27, which I consider to be one of the most beautiful and exciting passages of the New Testament. And believe me, there are a lot of beautiful and exciting passages in the New Testament. This is what Paul says:

> "I have become [the servant of the church] by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fulness, The mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. 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."

Let me read that last verse again:

> "To them [that's the saints of God] God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Paul is telling us that he was commissioned by God to present to God's people, to the church, the word of God in its fulness. And then he goes on to explain what the word of God in its fulness brings to us; the full presentation of the truth of God's Word. He talks about a "mystery," which "has been kept hidden for ages and generations."

Now the word "mystery" in the Greek of the New Testament time, had a special meaning. There were certain mystery religions into which people were initiated through secret rites and only those who'd been through the secret rites and been initiated could enter into these religions. So, I'm saying that to explain that the word "mystery" does not mean something which can never be understood, but it means something which can only be understood by the initiated and is the condition for entering into something. So Paul says the Christian faith contains a mystery, something that was kept hidden for ages and generations. All the great men of previous ages and generations; all the philosophers, all the wise men, all the kings and the conquerors never knew this mystery. It was reserved for us, in this dispensation. Paul says it is now disclosed to the saints. Doesn't that make you feel excited? Are we not privileged to be those to whom this mystery, which was never before revealed, even to the wisest of men, is now disclosed?

What is the mystery God wants to make known among the Gentiles? The glorious riches of this mystery more literally in Greek, "the riches of the glory of this mystery." Paul almost runs out of words trying to explain how exciting this mystery is. What is the mystery? Now it's not presented in some great philosophical treatise with long, complicated words that most people can't understand. You know I was a professional philosopher; I always appreciate this. I remember reading in the works of the philosopher Kant, Emmanuel Kant, one sentence which extended for two pages without a period. Well that's not the way the Bible reveals mysteries. So this glorious mystery is revealed in three short words. What is it? Christ in you. That's the most exciting thing that can ever be revealed to humanity. That Christ, the eternal Son of God, by the Holy Spirit, can be in us; in us as individuals; among us as the people of God. And this is the hope of glory. What's the hope of glory? Christ in you. Christ in me. This is the secret which God has reserved for us. Don't you feel privileged? Don't you get excited when you think about that? But have you realized what it means to have Christ in you? It means you have the hope of glory.

By way of contrast to what I've just been saying, I now want to point out to you the condition of those who do not have Christ in them, those who are outside Christ. Paul describes this very vividly in Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 11 and 12, where he says this (and he's writing to those who are Gentiles and he reminds them what it was like before they knew Christ), and he says don't forget what life was like without Christ. This is what he says:

> "Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called 'uncircumcised: by those who call themselves 'the circumcision' (that done in the

> body by the hands of men)--remember that at time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.'"

Listen to that awful list of negatives. Let me just go through it once again, what cruel words they are: separate from Christ; excluded from citizenship in Israel; foreigners to the covenants of the promise. Have you ever lived as a foreigner in a land that was not yours? I have. I know what it's like to be a foreigner. You don't really belong. Well, that's what Paul is saying about those who are without Christ, they are foreigners, they don't belong. But the last two phrases I think are the most tragic: without hope and without God.

Let me just repeat those phrases. I want to burn them into your thinking. Maybe you are in that category. If so, you need to listen all the more carefully.

Separate from Christ

Excluded from citizenship in Israel

Foreigners to the covenants of the promise

Without hope

and, Without God in the world

You see, there are just two possible conditions to be in. If you have Christ in you, you have the hope of glory; but if you are without Christ, then you are without hope and without God. So you see, how critical it is to know that hope is a part of our salvation. Without hope, we don't have Christ. Without Christ, we don't have salvation. Hope is not just an appendage to salvation, it's an essential part of salvation. We are saved in hope; we're saved by hope. The hope is built on the faith that brings salvation but it's an essential part of the total package. But if we don't have this hope, then we're without Christ. And if we're without Christ, we're without God; we're foreigners; we're excluded, we're separate, we're hopeless. What a terrible condition. Thank God it's not necessary for anyone who hears this message to remain in that condition. Because if you will turn your life over to God and receive Christ, then you will not be without Christ and then you will very quickly know what it means to have in you the hope of glory. May the Lord help each one of us to be sure about these things.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. In my talk tomorrow I'll be sharing that hope is made strong through testing.

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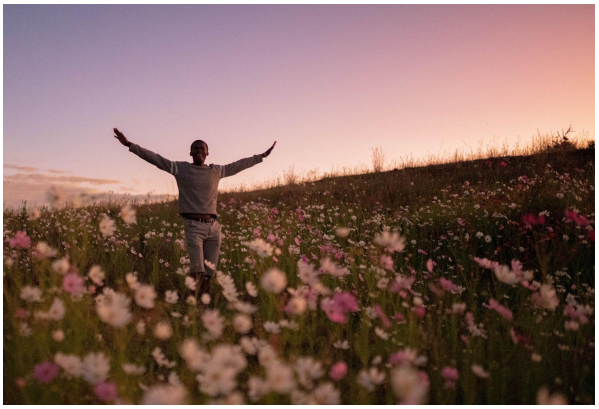

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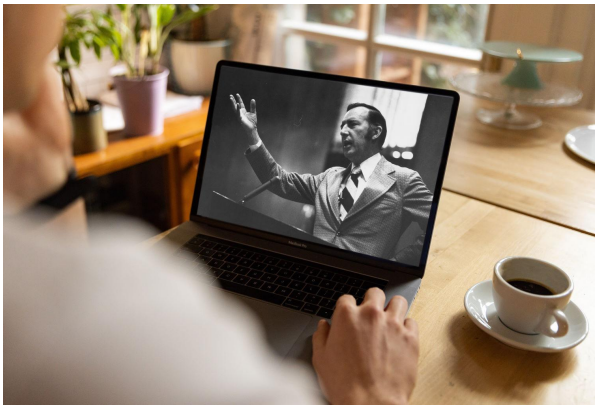

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