

4Ws live in hope

LIVE IN HOPE WITH JOY

MAY 2, 2021

WORSHIP

Today, Christ Be Magnified, Living Hope

WELCOME

What is the best news you have received this week?

WORD

1 PETER 1:3

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,...

(READ 1 PETER 1:1-9 FOR FULL CONTEXT)

A recent article had become viral putting a term to what many people are feeling today: **LANGUISHING**. Many are experiencing discouragement, despair, and depression. How can we then navigate through these tough times? Dr. Victor Frankl, an Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist, and Holocaust survivor, shared that prisoners did not live long when they felt or heard that all hope was lost. He said, “**sudden loss of hope and courage can have a deadly effect**” and this seems to be the same story we are learning to face. Hope is not optional; it is FOUNDATIONAL!

Thankfully, the Bible is full of hope! The word hope and its many alterations appeared in the Bible **175 times**, and one letter of an apostle comes at the forefront of this search for hope. We begin a book study of **1 Peter**, in a series called “**LIVE IN HOPE**”. The main banner of this letter is hope. Faith is the title deed of our hope (**Hebrews 11:1**) – the reason why we can have hope is because we have faith in a living Person, Jesus Christ. This biblical HOPE is a certainty and is not wishful thinking. It is working alongside FAITH (**Romans 8:24-25**). In tough times, we ought to live in hope! Let us learn from the letter that Peter wrote to a people facing persecution, hopelessness, and calamities despite their faith in the Lord:

1. WHO WERE THE RECIPIENTS OF THIS LETTER?

The recipients of Peter’s letter were believers whom he described as “**ALIENS**” (v.1) – scattered in a land that was not theirs. By this time, the gospel has spread and persecution of the believers had also increased. Peter wrote to those believers who were in the area of modern-day Turkey. They were dispersed out of their own land either by necessity or by brute force of persecution but they brought with them the Gospel, the news of Christ’s work on the cross to provide salvation for people. In the same way, we are aliens/sojourners/pilgrims on earth. We are just passing through because this is not our home.

Peter also called them “**CHOSEN**” (v.1). This word in Greek is **EKLEKTOS**, and is sometimes translated as “elect”. It means you are of high importance—valued and considered precious. How were believers chosen? Verse 2 shows the involvement of the Triune God: **God the Father**, whose **foreknowledge** has determined His choosing of us despite our flaws and natural tendencies; the Holy Spirit, whose “**sanctifying work**” is one that purifies and prompts us to respond to the love of God; and **the Son, Jesus Christ**, in whom, having been sprinkled with His blood, we now show reverence and obedience to. Peter gives a slight allusion to the Old Testament culture:

- 1) There was sprinkling of blood when a covenant was made in Sinai (Exo. 24:8) – **pointing to our being chosen**
- 2) Sprinkling of blood was also applied when Aaron and his sons were anointed (Exo. 29:31) – **alluding to our role as priests or carriers of the Good News**
- 3) After being healed, lepers healed are then sprinkled with blood (Lev. 14:6-7) – **reminding us that we are to live for Him alone**

Aside from these descriptors, Peter also used “**born again to a living hope**” to describe believers (**1 Peter 1:3**). While many people mistakenly think being “born again” is a religion, it is actually a foundational definition of being renewed and redeemed by God. We are born again—reintroduced and given new nature to a living hope!

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2. WHAT IS LIVING HOPE?

Through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, we who believe are given a promise of an eternal, living hope. The inheritance promised to us in being born again is “**imperishable, undefiled**” , and “**will not fade away**” (1 Peter 1:4-5). Many people put their hope on riches, material gains, temporal successes, and the like but nothing is permanent in this world. If we place our hope on these temporal things, we will be disappointed. But this hope and promise of great inheritance is “**reserved**”, “**protected**” and will be fully manifested when we meet Jesus again.

1 Corinthians 2:9 gives us a picture of what we hope for in Christ—no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and definitely beyond our greatest imaginations. That is why it is really important to know God through His Word, and discover His heart for us!

3. HOW WILL THIS IMPACT OUR LIVES?

1 Peter 1:6-7 gives us an encouragement, after knowing this great promise of living hope. Because of the certainty, you don't have to be afraid of trials. With HOPE, with JOY, you can greatly rejoice! Peter gives his readers undergoing tough times of persecution this perspective: in the context of eternity and the promise that is to be fulfilled, all the trials and testing are just “**for a little while**”! Many people think, “you are a Christian, you will not be sad”. That is not true! There are times when we are distressed or discouraged, as we are human beings. But we don't stay saddened for a long time if we get the right perspective. The certainty of our hope in Jesus.

Trials are also purposeful. It is not given just for the sake of suffering. It is to test the genuine faith we claim to have. Like gold being refined, our faith is made stronger in the various challenges we face. With the promise of a living hope, even as we undergo tough and challenging times, we can hope in God as Psalm 42:11 says. 1 Peter 1:8-9 shows us that FAITH and HOPE go together. Grammatically, every time you are distressed and have problems, you must make it a habit to greatly rejoice. When you are tried, or grieved, you must recalibrate your mind, and make it a habit to be joyful. God wants us to realize that we can have JOY, habitually be JOYFUL, because of this living hope. JESUS is coming again and one day we will meet Him and experience the promised inheritance.

Our SALVATION has a great impact on this hope. Speaking of the past, present, and future tenses of salvation respectively, we are saved from the penalty of our sin JUSTIFICATION (Ephesians 2:8-9); saved from the power of sin SANCTIFICATION (Philippians. 2:12-13); and will be saved from the presence of sin someday GLORIFICATION (Romans 8:16-18). The problem of people without God is that they are separated from Christ, living lives without hope (Ephesians 2:12). They live with a sad philosophy in life—purposeless, without joy, and perpetually gloomy. God wants us to believe by FAITH, and by believing abound in hope (Romans 15:13). Our hope is anchored on this amazing truth: CHRIST in us, the HOPE OF GLORY (Colossians 1:17). Having this perspective will enable us to see our current woes and challenges as mere, temporal struggles that are no match to the sustenance of joy and peace which can only be found in Christ. We therefore will live in hope with JOY because of these promises!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

How is secular hope different from biblical “living hope”?

2. Setting It Right

In what ways can living hope change your attitude amidst the current frustrations brought about by the pandemic? What do you commit to change in order to live in hope with great joy?

3. Living It Out

If this living hope can impact your life greatly, how can you share it with others?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for hearts everywhere to turn to Christ, our Living Hope. Extend help to your family and community who are in need. Share the hope that you have in Christ in any given opportunity.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation
- Wisdom and timely, effective response to the pandemic

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends



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