

CHRIST IS LORD



Now, We Have the Privilege of Making Him Lord of Our Lives!

There are certain things that ought to exist in the Church, the body of Christ.

1. We Ought to Realize That We Need Each Other.

There can be no isolation in the Church. If the Church is to be a healthy body, we need the work that everyone can do.

2. We Ought to Support Each Other.

3. In the body there is no question of relative importance. If any limb or any organ ceases to function, the whole body is thrown out of gear. It is so with the Church. "All service ranks the same with God." Whenever we begin to think about our own importance in the Christian Church, the possibility of really Christian work is gone.

4. We Ought to Sympathize With Each Other.

The Church is the whole. The person who cannot see beyond his or her own organization, the person who cannot see beyond his or her congregation, worse still, the person who cannot see beyond his or her own family circle, has not even begun to grasp the real unity of the Church.

Where are you in the midst of these gifts...this service function of the body of Christ?

Find your place...you belong...you are important!

One of the gifts that so many churches need is encouragement...

If a Christian has the gift of encouragement (Romans 12:8)...then he/she should be the one that provides the needed spark that helps those that are discouraged, disheartened, down due to circumstances.

Paul was one of those encouragers (Acts 27:21-26).

When all hope was gone for the men on board ship, Paul told them to not lose courage.

Set an example for others...use your gift for the glory of God...by helping others understand that God has always the best interest at heart for His children.

Will we face trials? Will we face difficult times in our lives? Will we die eventually?

God has something better for us no matter where we are in life!



Living Hope vs. Dead Hope...

When Peter says in 1 Peter 1:13, "hope fully in the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ," he does not mean we should desire it and be uncertain of it.

The coming of Christ is a matter of complete confidence for all the writers in the New Testament.

So the command, "Hope fully," means be intensely desirous and fully confident that Jesus Christ is coming again with grace for his people. Another example outside 1 Peter would be Hebrews 6:11 where it says, "We desire each one of you to show the same earnestness in **realizing the full assurance of hope to the end.** So we can define hope, in the New Testament sense, as full assurance, or strong confidence that God is going to do good to us in the future.

The opposite of a "living hope" would be a "dead hope,

"James says "Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26), That is, faith is barren, fruitless, unproductive (2:20). So "living faith" and, by analogy, "living hope" would be fertile, fruitful, productive hope. Living hope is hope that has power and produces changes in life. This is what "living" means in Hebrews 4:12 where it says, "The word of God is living and effective..." So Christian hope is a strong confidence in God which has power to produce changes in how we live.

Stephen...had the "Living Hope" we are speaking about:

In Stephen's death...we can see:

- **The Secret of His Courage...**
Beyond all that men could do to him he saw awaiting him the welcome of his Lord.
- **Stephen Following his Lord's example.**
The man who follows Christ the whole way will find strength to do things which it seems humanly impossible to do.
- **The Dreadful turmoil finished in a strange peace.**
Peace comes to a man...even in his dying breath, when the man has done the right thing even if the right thing kills him.

As a Christian we are free because of this truth...

Questions for Review:

- **Do you live a life fully trusting...fully active in the assurance of your salvation...and heaven with the Lord Jesus?**
- **Has this teaching helped you to strengthen your faith? If we believe it...we live it. If we live it...we produce living hope in others by doing the works that Jesus tells us to do. God's Word is truth...It is active and powerful. We have that proof in us because we believe though we have not seen.**
- **What areas of life would you like to know more about to help yourself and others to grow in the Lord?**
- **TRAVEL LIFE'S TRAIL WITH THE WORD OF GOD IN YOUR HEART AND SEE WHY LIFE IS WORTH LIVING...AND WORTH DYING?**

**Jesus was the answer for Stephen, Peter, Paul...
AND HE IS THE ANSWER FOR US TODAY!**