

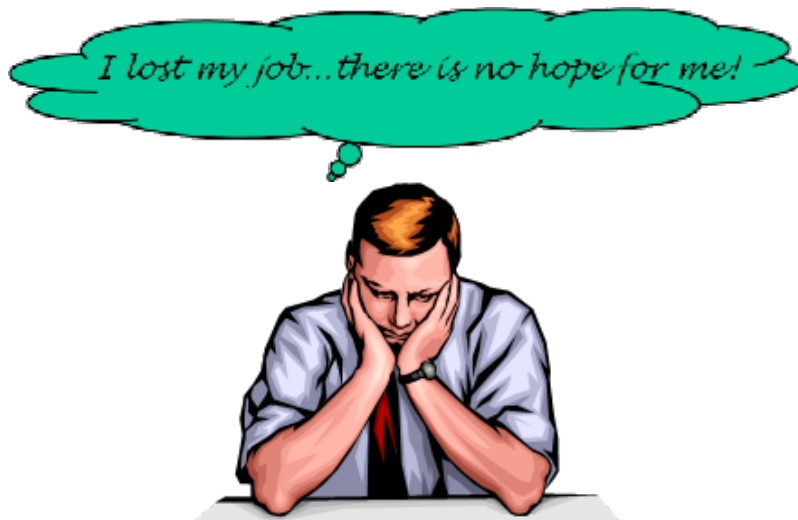
HOPE

Hope for the hopeless and help for the helpless!

"We hope the insurance check comes in or we won't get to have much on the table this week."

"All efforts to find the baby alive is quite hopeless."

"Our hopes of getting a new home was exasperated last week when the bank foreclosed on the one we are living in now...What are we going to do? All hopes of having a home in the future is lost."



"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness...." Good song...but what does it mean?

To one that doesn't understand the assurances of Christianity...and its promises, the following is heard from the hurting, the people going through trials, troubles and tragedies in life: "Hope is unsure...Hope is something longed for and maybe wishfully expecting...why is hope such an important thing for a Christian when it offers no assurance?"

Hope = trust or reliance; a feeling that what is wanted will happen; anticipation or expectation. To expect and look forward to gain.

Nothing despairing or discouraging here...just a picture of a person that gives full allegiance to seeing aspirations fulfilled.

"I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus name. On Christ the Solid Rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand."

The opposite of hope is hopeless (without hope; despaired of).

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. This inheritance is 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.*



Peter expresses joy...abundant joy for the hope that one can have in knowing that Jesus resurrected from the dead...and we have the inheritance of being with him if we place our faith and trust in Him.

Note:

- **30 years or so after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, Peter wrote something encouraging to the beleaguered Christians of Asia Minor.**

- **They were being:**

- abused by overbearing bosses (2:18),
- threatened by unbelieving spouses (3:1, 6),
- and ridiculed by skeptical neighbors and associates (4:14).

On the horizon loomed the possibility of a much more violent form of persecution (4:12-18).

It was a very anti-Christian society.

The question raised for these believers is the same that we should pose for

ourselves today.....how can we have the power in times of great stress and anxiety not just to endure the evil day, but to be joyful and to fill our lives with the fruits of righteousness (Phil. 1:11), ie. deeds of kindness, projects of mercy, labors of love?

How, when your life is in jeopardy, or your job, or your marriage, or your

health, or your respect in the community--how can you rise up with joy and bless those who abuse you and devote yourself to labors of love?

Strength and power of character in the very best of circumstances...

How do you do it?

Peter says...spend yourself in love to others when your own life is falling apart, This takes a power of soul which is utterly beyond us. If that is what we are called to do, then the power has to come from some source greater than the human soul.

Listen to what Peter writes:

Having purified your souls, by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brothers, love one another earnestly from the heart (1:22). Beloved, I beseech you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage war against your soul. Maintain good conduct among the gentiles so that in case they speak against you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation (2:11,12).

- **Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.** He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges justly (2:21-23).
- **Do not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling; but on the contrary, bless; for to this you have been called, that you may obtain a blessing.** For "He that would love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking guile; let him turn away from evil and do right; let him seek peace and pursue it." (3:9-11)

Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins (4:8).

There is no slackening in the summons to live like Jesus even when life is really tough. So Peter doesn't lighten our load by saying we don't have to live like Jesus in hard times. Instead he writes something to give us the power to love and praise The power with which Peter aims to equip these beleaguered saints is the power of hope.

- **When Peter says in 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,"** That calls to mind a similar phrase in James chapter 2, namely "dead faith." "Faith without works is dead" (2:26), James says. 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.

Do you live a life fully trusting...fully active in the assurance of your salvation...and heaven with the Lord Jesus?

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.

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All Other Ground is Shifting Sand**