

The Life of Hope

1 Peter 1:3-9

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There is a biblical way to expect great things from God and attempt great things for God that is not about personal ambition. Having a robust understanding of biblical hope is that way! After his greetings (1 Pet. 1:1-2), Peter breaks into excited praise about the living hope of God (v3).

6 characteristics of this “living hope” from God (vv. 3-9):

1. This hope is dependent on God’s mercy

‘According to his great mercy,’ v3

The Israelites possessed hope not because they deserved it, but because of God’s great mercy towards them (Deut. 9:4, 6). Similarly, the hope we have is dependent on God’s mercy. We can tell if we are hoping rightly by looking at how we respond when we do not get what we had hoped for. Our ultimate hope is dependent on God’s mercy! When the hope we possess is one we know we do not deserve, that is the biblical hope dependent on God’s mercy.

2. This hope is a gift from God

‘...he has caused us to be born again...’ v3

This is the language of spiritual new birth. There is no living hope without being born again. Being spiritually reborn begins with God’s initiative. The new birth and the hope we experience from it are gifts from God. We need to properly see our hope as a given position before it can inform our emotions. The living hope is a gift offered to us as a believer of Jesus Christ that can never be taken away.

3. This hope is grounded in the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ

‘...through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...’ v3

The truth upon which this hope is standing is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are standing on the solid rock of the risen Christ! As believers, our lives re-enact the gospel with many J-curves (dying and then rising). We must develop an eye for the rising! The resurrection power of Christ now lives in us, so hope again!

4. This hope anticipates a glorious, future inheritance

‘to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading,’ v4

This inheritance is significant: it is salvation and eternal life that is incorruptible, unstained, and will stand the test of time. The inheritance that God has prepared for us is exactly what we perfectly admire. Though we cannot fully experience it now, it has our names written on it (v5), so hope in it!

5. This hope helps you to endure the testing of your faith

vv. 6-7 – While the living hope gives joy, we will encounter sufferings and trials in this hostile world. The sufferings in life for a believer are never meaningless; they are necessarily to do the good that God intends for us. The sufferings and trials are also for the testing of the genuineness of our faith, not our performance. Oftentimes, it is the greatest failures of our performance that reveals that we have passed the test of faith.

6. This hope helps you to see Christ not with your eyes, but with your heart

‘Though you have not seen him, you love him.’ v8

Peter commended those who had loved Christ despite not having seen Him. As believers, we see not with our eyes but with our hearts. It is the God-given living

hope that keeps the vision of our hearts clear to behold Christ spiritually (v9). Hope is the light in the darkness for us. Hope is what enables us to expect great things from God and attempt great things for God, so hope in Him!