

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Invitation To Hope

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When the godly pass through the hot crucible of persecution, is there anything that can be offered to truly encourage them? Peter says yes! The apostle responds to Christians who are experiencing various forms of persecution with, “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. . .*” (I Peter 1:3-4).

God’s mercy not only makes the new birth possible in the forgiveness of sins, but is also the basis for giving the “begotten” Christian “a living hope”. This hope is lively and effectual in keeping the Christian focused. The fiery trials can not compare with the glorious future which dominates the focus of the hopeful Christian (*Romans 8:18*).

HOPE CHARACTERIZED

The Christian’s hope is an inheritance unlike any other we could expect to have on earth. Things around us are subject to

decay, but the Christian’s inheritance is “*incorruptible*”. Pollution is prevalent, but the object of the Christian’s hope is “*undefiled*”. Our most brilliant colored flowers fade, but the Christian can expect and inheritance “*that fadeth not away*”. In characterizing the Christian’s hope, Peter tells us what “it is not”. It is “*un-defiled*”, “*in-corruptible*”, and “*fadeth not*” away. Peter characterizes the Christian’s hope by pointing to characteristics we can identify with on earth: corruptible things, defiled things, and things that fade away. Then he says, our hope is not like these things. Maybe the Lord chose to tell the Christian what our inheritance is “not” because we are not able to truly grasp how glorious it really “is”!

FOUNDATION OF HOPE

The resurrection of Christ is the basis for the Christian’s hope. Because He is alive, the hope is living. Since God raised Jesus from the dead, the begotten child of God’s hope is focused upon Him with such power. God glorified Jesus in raising Him from the dead, “*so that your faith and hope might be in God*” (I Peter 1:21). Such power manifested in the resurrection gives the Christian

confidence that his inheritance in heaven will be protected. Peter reminds us that our hope, is “*guarded by the power of God*”. The Christian discouraged by friends, possessions, and even life taken away, can focus upon the hope “*that is reserved in heaven for you*”. This is a reservation backed by the power of God.

FAITH AND HOPE

Hope is an expression of faith. Peter exhorts the Christian “*to set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ*” (I Peter 1:13). We can only set our desired expectations on that which merits our confidence or trust. Peter describes the holy women of old as adorning themselves in subjection because they “*hoped in God*” (I Peter. 3:5). Their hope and trust blended together in humble submission.

Begotten through the Gospel, the Christian has a lively hope that can be verbally defended (I Peter 3:15). Please heed the Lord’s invitation to hope!