

## Hope

I remember when Mama forewarned us, “There will be no Christmas this year.” I was about 10 years old and deflated. Not that Christmas was anything spectacular at our house, but we usually expected one special item from Mama, and a token gift from our siblings.

From the time Mama made her announcement unto the day Christmas arrived, I kept “hoping” that something, even if it was inexplicable, would deliver one modest gift to me on Christmas day. I imagined a mystery donor, or even that my inimitable Mama would find a way to come through for us. It never happened.

I don’t know if “disappointed” is the word to use, because in all fairness, I was told to expect nothing. I was inescapably bummed to be force-fed fiscal reality. The “hope” I had fathomed was merely “wishful thinking.”

God will not leave us “bummed”. God gives us hope, whereas everything we trust in the absence of God will leave us more than bummed, it will leave us lost! You see, God’s promises are real, his power delivers, and his track record proves it!

First, in God, we have hope because what he promises is real! He promises redemption of sinners, new creatures in Christ, and eternal life. Christ solidified our redemption with his blood (1st Pet. 1:18-19), created us new after his likeness (2nd Cor. 5:17), and raised up from the dead to trail blaze our eternal life (Eph. 2:4-7). God’s promises in Christ are real. They are not just wishful thinking.

Second, in God, we have hope because he has the power to deliver! Say this out loud. “God’s power is infinite, incalculable, brighter than the sun, and eternal. God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.” (Ps. 139; Mt. 19:26; Rom. 8:31; 1st Jn 1:5) God has the power to deliver! We must be willing to patiently wait on God, and to submit ourselves to his word and his method of delivering his power (Ps. 69:1-3; Isa. 40:31). Hope will come, and when it does it

will be a “tree of life!” (Prov. 13:12). God’s power may not come at a time or in a way that serves our expectations, but we will serve to glorify him if we faithfully wait.

Third, in God, we have hope because of his track record! He has proved we cannot count him out. With God, nothing is impossible! God promised two childless old people, Abraham and Sarah, offspring that would outnumber the stars of the heavens and the sands of the sea (Rom. 4:16-21). God promised a bitterly defeated and embarrassed nation (Judah) they would be redeemed, and they would be used to forward the glory of God (Isa. 10:20-23). God “gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.” (Rom. 4:17). Indeed, we have a God of hope, and he has the track record to prove it!

We see weak or dead souls around us and wonder if there is any hope, can they change, can they be helped, can they be saved? Yes, there is hope! We must throw out pessimism which calculates defeat, and work on these souls and on our own soul. There is no need to be bummed or lost.

Real hope saves us (Rom. 8:24-25). God is our God of Hope!

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