**HOPE**

**WE HAVE A BLESSED HOPE!**

The Psalmist David said in **Psalms 62:5** – My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my Expectation (Hope) is from Him. **Ps. 39:7** – And now Lord, my Hope is in thee. **11:5** – Thou art my Trust. **Ps. 146:5** – Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose Hope is in the Lord his God.

***Written By: Tommy Romans Dec. 2014***

**EXPECTATION**

**Proverbs 10:28** – The Hope of the Righteous shall be Gladness. **11:7** – When a wicked man dieth, his expectation (hope) shall perish.

 To understand this message, let’s see what Hope and Expectation really means! [To have a great desire and longing for something and looking forward with anticipation of receiving it. To expect with confidence of obtaining something good!]

 You see, Faith and Hope go together. Faith is present tense while Hope is future. Faith believes God’s Word regardless of circumstances. Faith doesn’t walk by sight but plants its feet solid on the promises of God. This kind of Faith gives substance to Hope. Faith says – I believe God right now and it gives birth to Hope. Faith will keep you going until the thing you Hope for materializes. You have a great desire for something good and you are anxiously waiting, looking and longing to obtain it. You know it is real, you are sure it is coming and you are excited. You long to take hold of the thing Hoped for and embrace it. The Sweet Holy Ghost in you is the Spirit of Hope. She looks out into the future, looks over the horizon beyond the shades of gloom and says – “Child, just hold on, it is coming! Keep going.” When you have Hope, she will produce a joy in you as you wait for your answer.

**MORE THAN A WISH**

 Let’s look for a moment at the picture of a sinner who doesn’t know God and has not the Saviour. They

have no eternal life abiding in them. They are lost and undone without Jesus. They can only wish for things to be better but have no true hope. They cast their money into wishing wells, chase fake rainbows and seek for fortune and fame.

They build their homes and dreams in this world on sinking sand. They spend their wealth in vain for something to satisfy. After all their labors and all their endeavors seeking fulfillment in this world of pleasure, they still find themselves empty. Just vanity and vexation of spirit, says the Bible! As a result, many turn to alcohol, dope and pills seeking a high to fill the void inside. Then when this fails, they give up on life. If you could visit the psych wards, hospitals and prisons you would see a pitiful case of hurting humanity, men and women who have lost all hope because they saw no way out of their troubles and dilemmas. They couldn’t handle it anymore. There was nothing left and they just gave up on life. The man or woman without God can only wish for things to be better or different, but Christian has Hope!

**A FALSE HOPE**

 Let’s take a little walk right now. Follow me! As we walk, there’s a breeze in our face, the air is muggy and hot. As we make our way across a grown up field, you can hear as our feet step on the tall brown grass and dry weeds. It’s late summer and you can sense fall in the air. It’s been a prosperous summer, full of life, blooming flowers, singing birds and beautiful green. But it won’t be long now till the leaves turn color and die. They will soon drop to the ground and decay. The trees will soon be bare. The landscape will appear dead – winter is coming. We come now to a pond. As we walk up to the edge, we gaze around us and the Holy Ghost begins to speak to us in the Book of Job. He shows us the picture of the sinner and hypocrite who has no Expectation – no Hope! Death and emptiness describes the sinner without God. But the Christian has Life! You see, Christians don’t really die, they just make a transition into Everlasting Life!

 As we stand near the pond we see two plants growing in the mud and mire of the water’s edge. God now begins to speak to us a message ---

**JOB 8:11** - Can the Rush grow up without mire? can the Flag grow without water?

 **12** - Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

 **13** - So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

 **14** - Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.

 **15** - He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

**THE REED AND THE RUSH**

 The Rush and the Flag were two Reeds which grew on the outer edge of a pond or marsh. They were tall slender stems that were shiny and green. These plants had one common characteristic – they were hollow inside! God asks the question in verse 11 – “Can they grow without water?” While it is yet in its greenness, it withers before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God. The hypocrites hope shall perish. Their trust is like a spiders web.

 What are you saying to us Lord? The Hopes and joys of the sinner and hypocrite is compared to a Reed and a Flag which grow in the soft mire around the water’s edge. They appear shiny and strong and full of life but they are known for their frailty and they wither so fast! They are so fragile, the wind can easily bend them and break them. So is the man who serves not God. O sinner and backslider, you may appear alright outside, you may look like you’re stable and strong, but don’t you realize you are empty and hollow inside? You may go along steady for a while but troubles will soon come and you’ll not be able to stand. You have not the Blessed Saviour to lean on. The winds of God’s judgment will soon blow and you will be gone, because you have no Hope!

**THE FANCIFUL SPIDER**

 O precious soul, who doesn’t have Jesus and the Hope He gives, you have built your house by trusting in this world, but your trust shall be a Spiders Web! You see, a spider’s web is the spiders house which is woven from his own bowels. He busily spins his own silk.

 Spiders are a creature of their own fancy. They weave an artfully designed web that’s full of the prettiest rectangles. The little strands criss cross each other in a beautiful pattern and are securely tied off to their anchoring points. Being proud of its work and accomplishment, it then wraps itself in it and calls it home. The spider leans upon it, holds fast to it for support.

 Listen to me children of darkness, ye who live in sin and don’t serve God – you may take comfort in your outward prosperity, pride yourself in your homes, cars and nice clothes, but don’t you know you’re not secure. It will all one day be easily swept away like a cobweb when God comes to purge His house. Can I tell you, earthly prosperity will fail, the world’s goods and pleasures cannot endure but will pass away. In the end, the deceived multitudes who thought they were alright, their confidence will fail and at death, their expectations and Hope will perish! O soul who is like the Rush and the Reed, you have no self-sustaining power, you cannot take refuge in lies. Sinner, you stand ready to break at any moment. Wake up! You are destitute of God – you have NO HOPE when death comes!

**A BLESSED HOPE IN THE LORD**

 Did you know that good things come out of Hope? **JEREMIAH 17:7** – But Blessed is the man that Trusteth in the Lord and whose Hope the Lord is. **Vs. 8** – For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters and that spreadeth out her roots by the river and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful (worried) in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. (This is the picture of a Christian who puts their Trust and Hope in God.)

 Hallelujah, isn’t it amazing when God shows you something? Just now as I finished the scripture above the Holy Ghost revealed something!! Why did God call the tree Her? Why did He not say – It spread out its roots, or His roots? Why didn’t the Holy Ghost say His leaf shall not wither? This is a picture of a Mother! God did not leave women out of the ministry. It is the mother who produces and brings new life into the world. A Godly Spirit filled woman has a special touch in the Church. Her influence is great. She is a caring figure that little ones look up to! O the Blessedness of her ministry. She goes deep in the Lord, draws from the nether springs, drinks in the water and bears fruit for those around her. She knows how to nourish the young and teach them. The Church needs her Spiritual mothers that know how to comfort and guide the younger! In **Psalms 1:1-3** – The psalmist David speaks of the tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth **HIS** fruit in **HIS** season; **HIS** leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever **HE** doth shall prosper.

 Children, God has work for each of us to do.

**DON’T LOSE HOPE!**

 Children, trials are going to come. Have you ever been tempted to lose Hope in a hard trial? Sometimes we get in a place that we see no way out. Things get worse and we begin to lose inward strength. Many people are there right now – they see nothing good to hold on to and they die away inside their spirit. A Jewish man named Viktor Frankl tells in his book titled - “Mans search for meaning” which I read, about him being in Nazi Germany’s prison camps under Hitler. He tells of his years trapped in the indescribable horrors of Auschwitz and Dachau. He said, “I was transported there like a despised animal, given 2 minutes to strip naked or be beaten. All the hair was shaved from my body and I was condemned to a living death.” His own father, mother, brother and wife died in the camps from torture and starvation or were sent to the gas ovens. His existence was full of cold, fear, starvation, pain, lice and rats, exhaustion and terror. He said, “I was dehumanized.” Frankl wrote – “I was able to survive because I never lost the Quality of Hope.” He said - Quote – “Those prisoners who lost Faith in the future were doomed.”

 When a prisoner lost Hope, he let himself decline, becoming subject to mental decay. “He would die from the inside out” Frankl said this would happen quite suddenly. One morning a prisoner would just refuse to get up. He wouldn’t get dressed or wash or go outside on the grounds. No amount of pleading by his fellow prisoners would help. Not even the threatening of the prison guards would have any effect. Losing all Hope, he had simply given up. When a prisoner lost Hope said Frankl, He lost his spiritual hold.

**DON’T LOSE YOUR DREAM**

 In his book “Winning Life’s Toughest Battles”, psychologist Julius Segal wrote about 25,000 American soldiers who were held by the Japanese in POW camps during World War II. Forced to exist under inhumane conditions, many of them died because they gave up. But on the other hand, others survived till they were liberated and went home. There was no reason to believe there was a difference between these two groups of soldiers. Both went through the same experiences, suffered the same things under the same conditions. The survivors were different in one major respect – They confidently expected to be released and they held on to Hope! Within them, they had a Hope that the war would end and they would be liberated. In their conversations between themselves, they kept the dream alive by talking about what kind of homes they were going to have, the jobs they would choose and describe the kind of person they wanted to marry. These blessed prisoners drew pictures on the walls to illustrate their dreams. Segal goes on to point out that researchers have found that a Hopeful attitude can lead to psychological changes that improve the immune system which helps fight off sickness and disease.

 I want to say in commenting on this, we all are going through things that are trying our Faith. Our trials are many. We have fought many hard battles against a raging enemy. It’s been a long war. God’s soldiers are battle scarred, they’re tired and weary. But don’t lose your dream! Don’t give up Hope! **ZECH. 9:12** – Turn you to the Stronghold, ye Prisoners of Hope.

 Come on children, we’re up against it, pressed on every side, there are fears within and troubles without, we are suffering afflictions, fighting a relentless foe, our battles are many. The enemy says – you can’t make it, you’re defeated and not going to win. Because of your troubles the devil says - I’ve got you and you’re not going anywhere.

 I want to say to you, Keep your dreams alive. Talk ye of them often. Exhort one another daily. Hold on to Faith! Keep your Hope alive and your vision clear – we’re coming out of here. It’s been a long dark night. We’ve tasted the salty tears. Endured times of confinement, been in narrow straits when it looked like we’d never come out, battled fears on the left and pressures on the right but we kept going forward through the mists of doubts and confusion. We still believe the Bible, that Faith is the Substance of things Hoped for and the Evidence of things not seen. Our God never fails and He cannot lie. Our Hope is the Anchor of the Soul – both sure and stedfast!

 Listen Church, we are just about home! Our eyes are looking over the horizon where Faith will end in sight. Jesus is coming – He’s nigh at the door. Just any day now we will hear the Trumpet sound, the shout will ring out across the heavens and the Son of God our Redeemer will say – come up hither and we will leave all our troubles behind. But until then, there is something within saying – hold on. It is the Voice of Hope! She is loud and clear! That Blessed Hope is creating a desire that is greater than our troubles. Our anticipation of going home is growing stronger and stronger – the Expectation is building. The Church of praying Saints is getting anxious. She can hardly wait to go! Listen Children, that Hope is now driving us, propelling us forward. Our heart rate is picking up just thinking about it. I can visualize Heaven, streets of Gold, walls of jasper, gates of pearl. I can see beautiful mansions, a River of Life flowing from the Throne of God. The water is clear as crystal. I see the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God. I can see fields of green and the most beautiful flowers. I see Saints who have gone on, rejoicing and clothed in robes of White. My precious Loved Ones are waiting for me to join them and I’m not giving up now. Most of all I want to see Jesus, the one who died for me. He saved me and forgave me and I long to be with Him in a place where we will be eternally happy and forever free.

 I say to you devil and to all my problems, I’m not about to quit! I’ve got a longing deep within and I’m not stopping.

**THE STRING OF HOPE**

 G. F. Watt has a famous painting which he painted called “**HOPE**”. It pictures a poor woman who is up against the whole world. Her eyes are bandaged. She can’t see ahead. In her hands is a Harp, but all the strings are broken except just one. Those broken strings represent all her shattered expectations and her bitter disappointments. That one last unbroken string is the String of Hope. She strikes that One String with everything she’s got, and a Glorious melody floats out over the world. It fills her dark skies with stars. The Artist painted a great truth: Even when all else is gone – **YOU STILL HAVE HOPE!!**

May God Richly Bless my Readers!

**COLOSSIANS 1:27** – Christ in you the Hope of Glory.

**JOEL 3:16** – The Lord will be the Hope of His people.