

MARKS OF A CHRISTIAN – REJOICES IN HOPE

Romans 12:12 “Rejoice in hope. . .”

“I hope it doesn’t rain tomorrow.” This is what you say when you have plans for an outside activity the following day. Saying you hope it doesn’t rain doesn’t mean you have confidence about tomorrow’s weather. Rather, hoping for no rain merely voices an expectation or desire with no assurance your hope will come true. Your hope guarantees nothing.

The word “hope” is found in the English Standard Version (ESV) Bible 142 times. The Bible’s use of the word hope is far different than you hoping there will be no rain. Biblical hope is grounded, based on, guaranteed by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. . .” (1 Peter 1:3-4)

What does living hope mean? First, your hope is not based upon you, your dreams, or anything within you. Your hope is as certain and sure as the fact that Christ is alive as opposed to some uncertain wish or desire. Jesus says to you, “because I live you shall live also.” (John 14:19) Your eternal life is as certain and sure as Jesus’ Easter resurrection. You have His promise to personally come to take you to be with Him (John 14.)

Your Hope in Christ Jesus marks you as a Christian. This hope which is God’s gift to you through His gift of faith in Jesus Christ is foundational to your life on earth. Daily you rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. (Eternal life in heaven.) This means you can rejoice even when you suffer, experience disappointments, or fail to achieve your earthly goals. You will always have the hope that God’s love has poured into your heart by the Holy Spirit. (Paraphrase of Romans 5:3-4)

The Psalmist writes in Psalm 146:5 “Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God . . .” To your hope Jesus said, “. . . the one who endures to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 10:22)

Prayer: O LORD Jesus, my hope is in You! Let not the cares and concerns of this world overshadow this hope. Send the Holy Spirit to strengthen it in me through the knowledge You have given me of the living hope that is mine through Your resurrection. Amen.

Seek where you may To find a way That leads to your salvation.
My heart is stilled, On Christ I build, He is the one foundation.
His Word is sure, His works endure; He overthrows All evil foes;
Through Him I more than conquer.

Seek whom you may To be your stay, None can redeem his brother.
All helpers failed; This man prevailed, The God-man and none other,
Our Servant-King Of whom we sing. We're justified Because He died,
The guilty being guiltless.

Seek Him alone Who did atone, Who did your souls deliver.
O seek Him first, All you who thirst For grace that fails you never.
In ev'ry need Seek Him indeed; To ev'ry heart He will impart
His blessings without measure.

My heart's delight, My crown most bright, O Christ, my joy forever.
Not wealth nor pride Nor fortune's tide Our bonds of love shall sever.
You are my LORD; Your precious Word Shall guide my way And help me stay
Forever in Your presence.
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