

From Pastor's Desk...

Biblical Hope

The Biblical concept of hope is not mere expectation and desire but includes trust, confidence, and refuge in the God of promise. According to the Hebrew and Greek usage, the word 'hope' is the confident expectation and the sure certainty of what God has revealed and promised to us in the Word.

The Greek noun 'elpis' and its related verb 'elpizo', usually rendered as 'hope' occur in the New Testament (NT) and Old Testament (OT) 55 and 33 times respectively. NT hope has deep roots in OT, where KJV 'hope' translates a variety of Hebrew words, which means 'confidence', 'trust' and 'safety'. Furthermore, the Biblical phrase "hope against hope" means a state of complete confidence in God during a disappointing situation.

NT 'hope' is linked with faith and love (I Cor 13:13), and it is the love that energizes both faith and hope. Our hope is in Christ and His glorious appearance. This hope is established on God's word and it will put us in action. It can change us, our values, and our perspectives of our talent, time and treasures. Therefore, the Biblical hope is not an escape from our real life issues, but an ability to face them with confidence.

*"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name.
On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand."*

God Bless you.

Rev. K. M. Varughese
(Senior Pastor)

Teach, Learn & Practice Hope

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Bible says scriptural teachings bring endurance and ultimately hope, which we exercise through the most influential and powerful institution known as Sunday School.

Sunday School formally called Sabbath School, was started by Robert Raikes the editor of the Gloucester Journal in 1780 with the goal of educating and preventing any crimes among children and adults, who worked in the factories during the week days. Adults and children use to gather every Sunday afternoon seated in one class together. Bible was the text book they used to read and learn.

American Sunday School system was first started in 1790 by Samuel Slater at his textile mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Islands. Gradually with various revolutionary movements and education acts, regular academic schools were run during week days and Sunday Schools focused on Bible learning. It all started with a vision of helping to grow in faith and hope through knowledge, skills and attitude.

The Lord commands to us through the Bible: "Assemble the people before me to hear my words so that they may learn to revere me as long as they live in the land and may teach them to their children" (Deuteronomy 4:10). Let every parents, family, teachers and church members teach, learn & practice hope, and thrive towards living a faithful Christian life for our future generations to emulate.

Bro. Sunil Thomas
(Sunday School Principal)

There is Hope Through Prayer

Bro. Rinoj Mathew

There are times in our lives when we reach the end of our rope and feel burdened with insurmountable trials and challenges and we feel like giving up. But wait!

There is hope through prayers, and it will definitely revolutionize the way we think, act and feel. Phil 4:6-7 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Yes! We pray because God instructed us to pray. Even Jesus prayed to God and He gave us a model prayer in Mathew 6:9-13. Through prayer we grow closer to God everyday.

Prayer is not only talking, but also listening to God and enjoying His presence. Many times we think God is not listening to us. However, we need to patiently remain faithful because God listens to all our prayers, and He will answer us in the right time.

Prayer is powerful because we are in the very presence of God and we submit all our challenges to Him, and He will make us a way. Prayer also determines the quality of our relationship with God. If so, how can we make our prayer lives more effective?

Firstly, we need to keep our hearts and motives sincere. In Mathew Chapter 6, Jesus said that it is a sin to pray insincerely like the hypocrites or pagans. Secondly, He says that you should go into your room, close the door and pray and God will reward you. Many of us tend to pray only with our families or at church but Jesus tells us that we also need to have our own private/personal prayer lives.

The true objective of prayer is not to inform/instruct God (because He already knows what we need or what we going through), but to get our lives in line with His will. So the next time when we feel depressed or lost and want God to intervene, let us fight like a real man, get on your knees, and start praying because *there is hope through prayer*.

-C-R-O-S-S-W-O-R-D P-U-Z-Z-L-E-

