

## **Hope in a New Year**

### **January 12, 2021**

#### **Opening Prayer:**

#### **Quick Introductions**

Romans 15:13 “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

#### **What is hope?**

Hope is an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes with respect to events and circumstances in one's life or the world at large. As a verb, its definitions include: "expect with confidence" and "to cherish a desire with anticipation."

“Hope is a match in a dark tunnel, a moment of light, just enough to reveal the path ahead and ultimately the way out.” - Dr. Judith Rich

To have hope is to want an outcome that makes your life better in some way. It not only can help make a tough present situation more bearable but also can eventually improve our lives because envisioning a better future motivates you to take the steps to make it happen.

Hope in general means a desire for things to change for the better, and to want that better situation very much.

- 1. What gives you hope?**
- 2. What takes away our hope? What dashes it?**
- 3. What happens when all hope is lost?**

Dr. Neel Burton, a book author who writes about emotions, writes that he always asks patients for what they hope for, because if they say “nothing” then that is a sign of depression or worse. Having hope is important to the very act of being a human being.

- 4. Is Hope always with us or only in rough times?**
- 5. How is hoping different from wishing?**

I hope I win the lottery!  
I hope everything goes OK...  
I hope I can lose ten pounds

I hope I can quit smoking  
I hope I get an A on this test.  
Can you do it? I hope so...

## **Hope and optimism**

Hope is not the same as optimism. Hope is very specific and focused, usually on just one issue.

I hope he makes it home today  
I hope I get into heaven  
I hope she calls me back soon

### **6. What is the hope of our faith and how does this hope help us in life?**

Our hope comes from God (not politicians, money, actions of other people...)

### **Is hope active or passive?**

Jurgen Moltmann Theology of Hope

"Those who hope in Christ," Moltmann wrote then, "can no longer put up with reality as it is, but begin to suffer under it, to contradict it. Peace with God means conflict with the world, for the goad of the promised future stabs inexorably into the flesh of every unfulfilled present." Such hope, he continued, "makes the Church the source of continual new impulses towards the realization of righteousness, freedom and humanity here in the light of the promised future that is to come."

### **7. I have heard people say hope is weak and useless. Do you agree?**

We don't hope for a great future, we go out and make it happen!

Maybe hope (theology of hope) is our motivator to go out and change the world and to make things the way we hope they would be. Hope is not something that we wait for in the future, hope is that God's promises are happening now in real time and we are called to help bring them about.

### **8. But are there things we cannot "make" happen?**

Maybe this is where faith and trust come into the picture.

### **9. Does Christian Hope help us in this life or is there only hope for after this life?**

**Questions/Concerns/Comments?**

## **Closing Prayer**

Heavenly father, I am your humble servant,  
I come before you today in need of hope.  
There are times when I feel helpless,  
There are times when I feel weak.  
I pray for hope.  
I need hope for a better future.  
I need hope for a better life.  
I need hope for love and kindness.  
Some say that the sky is at it's  
darkest just before the light.  
I pray that this is true, for all seems dark.  
I need your light, Lord, in every way.  
I pray to be filled with your light from  
head to toe. To bask in your glory.  
To know that all is right in the world,  
as you have planned, and as you want  
it to be.  
Help me to walk in your light, and live  
my life in faith and glory.  
In your name I pray, Amen.