

# **The Believers Hope**

**Easter 2012**

# What is Hope?

- I Corinthians 15:12-18 (1226)—Christianity rises or falls on the resurrection of Christ. Paul in writing to the Corinthians tells them and therefore us that if there is no resurrection of the dead and Christ is not risen:
  - Our faith is vain (14)
  - We are false witnesses of God (15)
  - We are still in our sins (17)
  - Those who have died in Christ are perished (18). The Greek word translated “perished” carries the following meanings, according to *Strong’s Concordance*: 1) to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to ruin, 2) render useless, 3) metaph. to devote or give over to eternal misery in hell, 4) to perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed. In other words, if there is no resurrection and Christ is still dead all our loved ones that have trusted in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as the only total and complete payment for sin are destroyed.

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- I Corinthians 15:19—if the hope of Christ pertains to this life only we truly are of all men most miserable because we have placed our trust and hope in something that is not true.
  - I Corinthians 15:1-4—the gospel that Paul preached and that the Corinthians believed was based upon the fact that Christ rose from the dead.
- The concept of hope encapsulates this truth; **it is for the future, not the present, that man exists.** The Greek word translated hope means the expectation of something future: 1) a well-grounded expectation and a gladly and firmly held prospect of a future good, 2) that expected good, that for which we hope. In I Cor. 15:19, the phrase “we have hope” implies that the Corinthians had been hoping, i.e., the endurance of hope through their lives was found in the resurrection of Christ.

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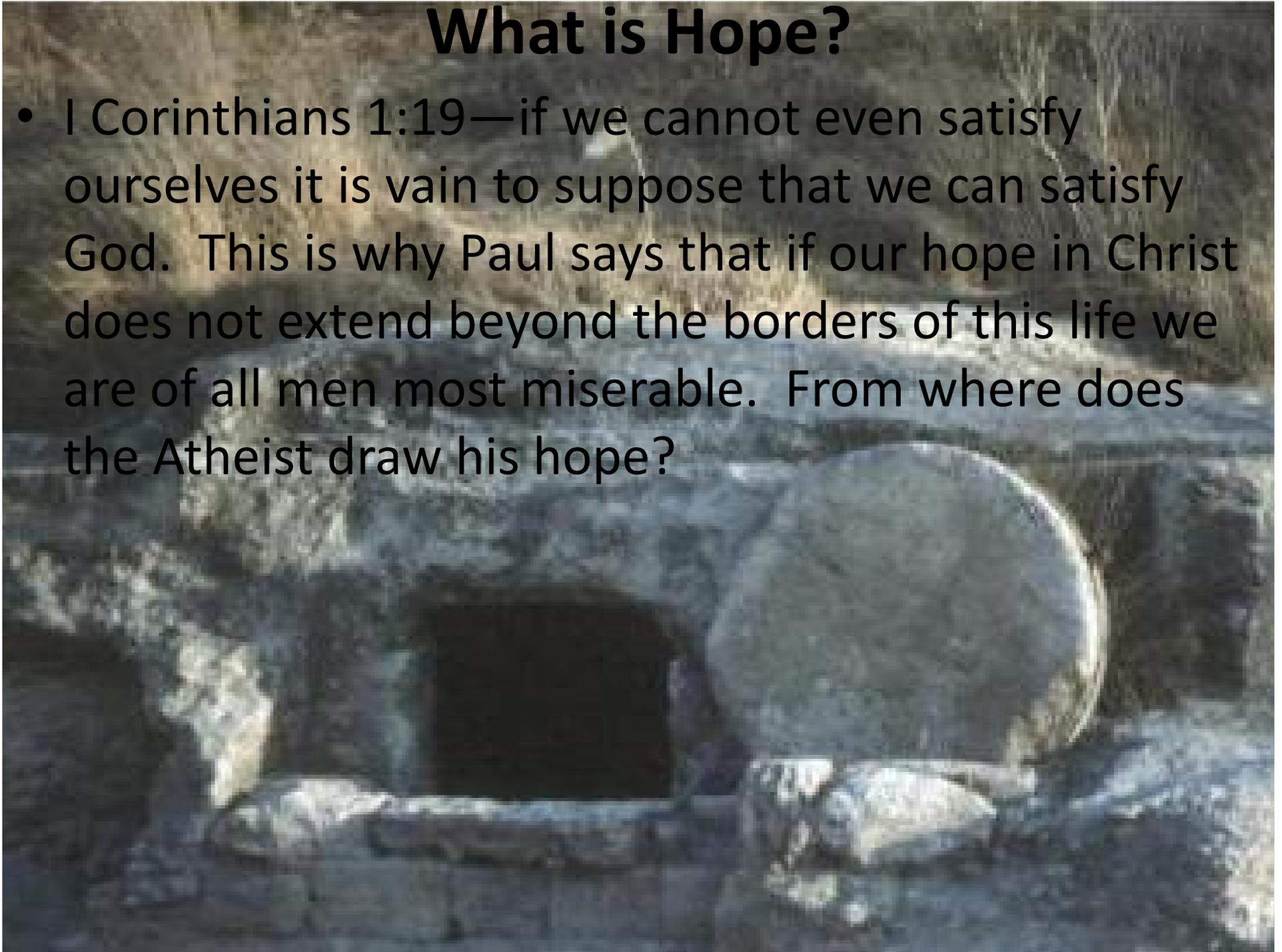
- The English word Hope carries the following meanings according to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*:
  - A desire of some good, accompanied with at least a slight expectation of obtaining it, or a belief that it is obtainable. Hope differs from wish and desire in this, that it implies some expectation of obtaining the good desired, or the possibility of possessing it. Hope therefore always gives pleasure or joy; whereas wish and desire may produce or be accompanied with pain and anxiety.
  - Confidence in a future event; the highest degree of well founded expectation of good; as a hope founded on God's gracious promises; a scriptural sense.
- The definitions of the Greek and English words prove that hope is what moves human being from the present to the future. It is hope that drives us forward through the peril and uncertainty of the present.
  - Read section from notes.

# What is Hope?

- Romans 8:24-25 (1201)—it is with the future that hope has to do. This is true of all hope: it is of the Christian's hope that it is affirmed; but it is true of hope, whatever be its character or its object. At least thus much is true, that what we hope for is that which we possess not at present. And it is thus that hope becomes such a stimulus to exertion, such a solace in affliction, such a light amid surrounding darkness, such a stay when no other stay remains. Extinguish hope, and happiness is gone. Let the faintest glimmering of hope remain, and man's misery is not complete.
  - Read section from notes.

# What is Hope?

- I Corinthians 1:19—if we cannot even satisfy ourselves it is vain to suppose that we can satisfy God. This is why Paul says that if our hope in Christ does not extend beyond the borders of this life we are of all men most miserable. From where does the Atheist draw his hope?



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- I Corinthians 15:20-23—those who have placed faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are not perished or miserable because Christ has risen from the dead. Just as sin came into the world by one man so also came the resurrection of the dead. The believers hope is not extinguished upon death it waits for resurrection.
- I Thessalonians 1:10 (1267)—the hope and future longing of our souls is the Lord Jesus Christ. Our hope his inseparably tied to the one who rose again from the dead.
- I Timothy 1:1 (1274)—Christ is the believers hope not only in this life but also for the life to come.
- *Heaven*—should the question be put to almost any Christian — What is it that is the object of your individual hope? the answer, in most cases, would be — Heaven. And this, surely, is according to the word of God.

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- Colossians 1:5 (1262)—THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH IS A HEAVENLY, NOT AN EARTHLY HOPE. Heaven, not earth, is our future dwelling-place. Whatever links of connection there may be in that day between heaven and earth — whatever benign influences the Church may be employed of God to exert on the earth and its inhabitants — heaven, not earth, is our distinctive place and portion.
- Ephesians 1:3 (1249)
- Philippians 3:20 (1260)
- How does one get from here to heaven? There are but two options: 1) death, 2) the return of the Lord to catch away the saints. Both of which are associated with the hope of the believer.

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- *Resurrection*—there is another point on which the faith and hopes of Christians generally are undoubtedly according to God's word. I mean the expectation of being happy with Christ in heaven after death, in case that event should occur.
- Philippians 1:21, 23 (1258)—Paul's desire was to be with Christ
- II Corinthians 5:8 (1233)—and while it is most true, and, in its place, most important, that departed saints are happy with Christ in heaven, it is not this disembodied state, this state of happy, departed souls, which is set before us in Scripture as our hope. This disembodied state is not the full and final object of the believers hope.
- II Corinthians 5:1-3--what is this house which is "from heaven?" Surely it cannot be our disembodied state while in heaven awaiting the resurrection of the body! No, it is the resurrection-body itself which the apostle says we earnestly desire: "if so be," he proceeds, "that being clothed we shall not be found naked."

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- II Corinthians 5:4—it is not death, and a state of happiness between death and the resurrection, for which the apostle waits, and longs, and groans. It is the resurrection- state, the being clothed upon with the house which is from heaven, the swallowing up of mortality in life. Afterwards he does intimate, that even to be disembodied is better than to be in these mortal tabernacles.
  - Read section from notes.

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- *The Coming of Christ*—heaven is our hope; and, that if the Lord should tarry, and we should fall asleep ere He return, we shall be happy with Him in heaven until the resurrection. But it is not this state of separate spirits which is placed before us in Scripture as our hope, but *the return of Jesus*, to raise the sleeping saints, and to change those who are alive and remain, that both being caught up to meet Him in the air, we may thus, in bodies like to His glorious body, be "forever with the Lord." This is the hope set before us as individual believers.
- I Thessalonians 4:13-17 (1269)—what was to assuage the sorrow of the Thessalonians? Was it that Christ had come and fulfilled his word? No, it was the return of Jesus, accompanied by the departed saints.
- I Corinthians 15:51-52 (1227)
- Philippians 3:20-21 (1260)
- I Thessalonians 1:10—in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, the coming of Christ is mentioned in every chapter.

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- I Thessalonians 2:19-20—it was at the coming of Christ Paul expected to have the full joy of the success of his labors among the Thessalonians.
- I Thessalonians 3:13
- I Thessalonians 5:23
- Titus 2:11-13 (1284)—the blessed hope of the church is the glorious appearing of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.
- Titus 3:7—the hope of eternal life extends only to those who have been justified. Only those who have trusted the shed blood of Jesus Christ as the only payment for their sin and Christ's resurrection from the dead share in this hope.
  - Read section from notes.

# Conclusion

- I Corinthians 15:19 (1226)—because we have by faith been identified with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection we are not of all men most miserable. Our hope in Christ does not expire when our life here on earth is over we have a blessed hope that is tied to the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

