

Hope

Thank you for joining me once again for "It's a Good Life." Recently on this program, I spoke to you about confronting despair. Today I'd like for us to look at the subject of hope. Many times in our lives it seems like everything has just gone wrong. It's gone wrong and it's going wrong. But I want you to know there's hope today in Jesus Christ. And we want to look at those verses. In just a few moments we're going to look at Hebrews 11:1 and Romans 8:24 and several other verses as we look into this subject of hope.

Let me invite you to look at our Website this week, www.LRWM.org. On the Website you'll be able to find Bible study helps that will help you study the Word of God. There are many things on there that you can use in your Bible study, and one of the things that you can do on there is listen to these programs once again... of "It's a Good Life." You can also download transcripts of these programs, "It's a Good Life." You can read along as you're listening to that program. And sometimes when we see something and we hear something at the same time, it really sticks with us more. Let me invite you to look at our Website, and I pray that God will give you a great blessing as you do that.

In Hebrews 11:1, it says, Now faith is the substance of things hoped for... (that means it's real)... the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. It's evident.

In Romans 8:24, it says, For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? That means it's faith. Faith. And hope is the demonstration of things not seen. If you're a Christian I'm sure that, during your Christian life, you've seen things in your life that have proven your faith, the faith that you have in

Jesus Christ. One day it's going to become sight. We're going to see Jesus personally, and then our faith will become sight.

This word "hope" does not mean, "Well, I sure hope it's going to take place." No, this is an assurance that God's giving us in His Word. Hope... this is future tense, as we've read in Hebrews 11:1. In a future sense the things hoped for are the resurrection of the body, the new heavens and the new Earth, the introduction of believers into the heavenly country. That means when we're with the Lord and the possession of eternal glory to be forever with the Lord and never be separated again.

Now, hope, as we look at it in the past tense, is the things unseen. As distinguished from the things hoped for or, in an extended sense, the creation of the world from nothing. We look back and the Word tells us that in the beginning was God and God created all things. We read in John 1 how that Jesus Christ is God and how that He became flesh and dwelt among us. So Jesus Christ is the Creator. We look back to that.

And as we look at past tense, we look at things of history in the Bible, such as the destruction of the world by the deluge, Noah's flood, the miraculous conception of Christ, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension to glory, His mediation at the right hand of God, His government of the universe, and so forth, and it goes on and on. All of this we, as Christians, firmly believe on the testimony of God's Word as if we had actually seen these things taking place. We didn't see them with our physical eyes, but through the eye of faith we see that. It's the hope that we have, the faith that we have in God and through His Word that gives us the hope that one day we're

going to see him face to face. That's the future tense. Past tense is the things that God's Word told us that did happen.

And we now arrive at the passage that was preeminently the faith chapter of the Bible, and we've read that in Hebrews 11:1. And it's easy to see how thoroughly it fits into its place in the whole scheme of this epistle in Hebrews chapter 11.

Judaism as a religious system largely appealed to sight. In other words, I believe the people in Missouri... that's called the show-me state. "Show me and I'll believe it," they say. I'm sure there's saved people there, as well. They've trusted Jesus as Savior. They have the hope. They have the faith. Judaism as I've said is a system largely that appealed to sight, whereas the great realities of Christianity are unseen and only appeal to faith. But the object of the epistle of the Hebrews is to deliver the converted Hebrews from the grave clothes of Judaism which clung to them and to establish them into the liberty of Christianity.

The Holy Spirit naturally dwells long upon faith in the book of Hebrews. And there is much that can be said of hope, but I want to look at the reality of hope concerning the Rapture of the believer, the Second Coming of Christ, and the hope of eternal life in Christ in our study today.

I trust that you'll have your Bible open and ready to study as we look into these Scriptures each time we come together on "It's a Good Life."

In I Thessalonians 5:5, it says, Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober... (take things seriously in other words)... ⁷For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be

drunken are drunken in the night. ⁸But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. ¹¹Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

In I Peter 1:3, I want us to look at that verse. It says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

As we read this verse, I see that the hope of a Christian's eternal life is not a dead hope, but it's a lively hope. It gives us the knowledge by studying and reading the Word of God, especially this verse in I Peter 1:3. It's alive. We don't serve a dead Christ. We serve a living Christ, One Who was crucified, buried, and resurrected. He's alive today, and because he's alive we can be alive by trusting Him as our Savior.

And something else I would like for you to notice is found in Titus 2:13. It says, Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. This is not speaking about the people of the word. The Bible says that everyone who is alive when Jesus actually comes back to sit further on the Earth is going to see Him come back. This is speaking to the Christian who's going to be caught up with Him and we call this the Rapture, the catching away of Christians.

Paul the apostle says that our hope is waiting for the Rapture, the return of our Lord for us who are saved people. Now, some of us will be alive when Jesus comes back for the church.

Some of us will already be gone. The Bible tells us that those who have already gone on, that we're going to be caught up together with them. That's for those of us who are saved and those of us who are alive at the Rapture of the church. We'll be caught up together with those people who have gone on before, and it says that we'll be caught up together with them to be with the Lord... forever to be with Him, and our bodies will be changed, will be fashioned like our Lord and Savior. So I'm looking forward to the time when Jesus comes back for the church.

The hope of the Rapture and Christ's Second Coming is not a frightening prospect but a blessed hope according to Titus 2:13. Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Notice with me in I Thessalonians 2:19, it says, For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? It's not talking about His Second Coming now. The hope of Christ's Second Coming is a joyful hope because of souls saved. In other words, there's a difference in the Rapture of the church and the Second Coming of our Lord.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18 says,¹³But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus... (that's those people who have died and they've been buried and they are not asleep in the sense that their souls are asleep; the body is dead but they are with the Lord, not in body, but it says that "even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him"... that means they have to be with Him now.) ¹⁵For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the

coming of the Lord shall not prevent... (or precede)... them which are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The hope of the Rapture and Christ's Second Coming is a comforting hope. We need to look forward to it, and we need to let other people know that they need to be saved and trust Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Colossians 1:27 says this, To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. The hope of the believer is a hope of glory, not only for the church, the mystery, but also for the Jew. The mystery spoken of here is the church.

Hebrews 6:19 says this: ¹⁹Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. ²⁰Whither the forerunner is for us entered... (That's Jesus Christ. He's already there), ... even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Because Christ has entered in within the veil as our High Priest, we have an anchoring hope. We know that one day we're going to be with Him. Hebrews 6:19 talks about that and we've just read it.

Well, something else. I John 3:3 says this: And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. The hope of Christ's Second Coming is a purifying hope for it stimulates us to abide in Him. Are you looking for Him today? Do you know Him as your Savior? If you've never trusted Jesus

Christ as your Savior, let me invite you to do so right now.

“Lord, come into my heart. I receive You as my Lord and Savior. I believe You died, were buried and resurrected, and your blood, according to the Bible, cleanses from all sin, and I have that hope today, Lord. Please save me so that I can be with You in glory.”

If you'll pray a prayer like that, the Bible says you'll be saved. It's not what I say. It's what the Word of God says.

And if you're a Christian, you need to have that blessed hope going forth and helping other people know that Jesus is coming soon and one day we're going to see Him personally... the hope of glory.

Until the next time when you hear me say, “It's a good life,” may the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.