

The New Reality

A New Hope

A Quick Review:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!

(Paul - 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Finding Hope's Power

Romans 4:18-21

Hope Produces ...

_____ To _____.

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

Consider these two contrasting statements: "The doors were locked for fear of the Jews" (John 20:19), and, "When they saw the courage of Peter and John" (Acts 4:13). These statements describe the same disciples, and the same opposition. The difference is time. What happened between the first and the second? The Holy Spirit did "not give a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power" (2 Timothy 1:7).

(J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*)

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

(Jesus – John 16:33)

Hope Produces ...

_____ To _____.

The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid.

What can mere mortals do to me?

(Psalm 118:6)

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Paul – Romans 8:31-39)

Hope Produces ...

_____ For _____.

Lostness is a factual condition of the self, of the ruined soul. You either have it or not, just as you either have or do not have a certain physical disease that can kill you. If you have that condition of lostness, you may not know it. Indeed, it is most likely you will not know it, because it is inherently a condition of self-blindness. You need treatment nevertheless, if you are not to be lost forever; and being informed of your condition and what to do about it can help you find relief. Should I say nothing to you merely because you might find it insulting? I must think more highly of you than that. The reality of evil in the human heart is not something to be ignored or treated lightly.

(Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart*)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

(Paul – Ephesians 6:10-12)

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.” But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

(Peter – 1 Peter 3:13-16)