

## Don't Lose Hope

But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

### Psalm 71:14

Hope is defined as a desire for something favorable and confidence in the possibility of its fulfillment, while despair is the absence of hope. There is a distinction between true and false hopes. Some people have blind hope with absolutely no substantiation for a positive outcome. But for the Christian, although God is unseen, there is more than enough evidence contained in the scriptures to give a believer substantial hope that our God will help in the most difficult of circumstances. In the scriptures, Israel's experiences during their journey to the Promised Land, Joshua's victory against Jericho, and David's triumph over Goliath are a few of the many bleak situations that resulted favorably for the people of God. Joseph could have succumbed to despair after being sold into bondage by his brothers, but he persevered with hope in his heart that ultimately the Lord would intend all things for his good.

In today's verse, it is apparent that the Psalmist is experiencing a time of great testing. He is asking to be delivered from the enemy and that the Lord would come and save him. Because of a wicked and cruel enemy, the Psalmist runs to the Lord, his rock and fortress. With God as his deliverer and protector, he proclaims that he will continually honor and praise the Lord more and more.

Though God is ultimately in control, we Christians exist in a broken world. Countless situations will arise in life that will require us to rest in hope. With faith in God, we have the true source of all hope. Some of the things we hope for will have a temporary quality to them. Exodus tells us while in hard bondage in the land of Egypt, the nation Israel hoped to be delivered from their servitude. After they were emancipated, they found new hardships lay before them. Later in the gospels, Bartimaeus' healing from blindness would not exempt him from being subject to other ailments during his lifetime. Even Lazarus who was raised from the dead would ultimately have to die. The one thing that Christians possess above all things is eternal hope. The crucified and resurrected Savior made that possible. In 1 Corinthians the Apostle Paul states: if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. Our ultimate hope must lie beyond this temporary world. When our Lord was preparing the apostles for His departure, He assured them in his father's house were many mansions where He was going to prepare a place for them. The hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord surpasses all other hopes.

Remember that our Lord has said "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. He overcame the world by His death, burial, and resurrection. Because He lives, we can live also...eternally! So, when the trials of this life weigh us down, may we by the Grace of God and the strength of the Holy Spirit say: I will hope continually!

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