

Hope Revealed

R12.2 November 2024 Blog

In the early morning hours of November 6th and throughout the days following, hope was revealed. It was revealed in the hearts of Americans when they awoke that morning, and indeed in the hearts of probably most everyone in the developed world. To be fair, the hope of many individuals was already apparent through their behavior in the months leading up to the election.

Please note that this piece is not political, nor is it about the outcome of the 2024 Presidential Election in the United States. It is, however, about *hope* and more specifically about identifying and weighing the object of one's hope. The topic may be rudimentary for some and new to others. In either case, our hope (excuse the pun) is that this article will spur you on to encourage others who are struggling with hope or lovingly confront those confident in worldly hope. It may also serve as a catalyst to sharpen your own thinking on the matter and crystallize your approach to helping others identify and weigh the object(s) of their hope.

Let's take a moment to define our terms. The word *hope* may be used as a noun or a verb. In the form of a noun, hope is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen: "My hope is that this or that happens." Used as a verb, hope expresses a longing for something to happen: "I am hoping that this or that takes place." Basically, you may "hope *in* someone" or "hope *for* something." A person may place their hope in another person or hope for something in the temporal. There is nothing wrong with temporal hope unless that is their only hope, and they have not given any thought to hope beyond this life (i.e., eternal hope).

Consider this example to clarify what it means to "hope in" versus to "hope for." I have a broken relationship with a close family member. I *hope for* forgiveness and reconciliation, and I *hope in* God praying that He will restore the relationship. God may or may not grant my temporal hope for restoration. In either case God continues to be the object of my eternal hope. If I cease *hoping in* Him because He did not answer the prayer to my satisfaction, I could conclude that my hope was misplaced in God because what I was *hoping for* did not take place. This would be a grave mistake. (Remember, people hope in the direction of their fear, and fear in the direction of their hope. I hope for an eternity in Heaven with Jesus and fear that it may not happen; therefore, I place my hope in God alone as my Deliverer).

The title of this blog is *Hope Revealed*. Like a litmus test, people in your sphere likely revealed the object of their hope in their reaction to the outcome of the Presidential

Election. You most likely encountered one or more of the following (admittedly simple) reactions in the days since:

- A) “Thank goodness, there is renewed hope in America! Safety, goodness, and prosperity will once again be ours.”
- B) “America is crumbling! I cannot believe the American people picked him. All hope is lost.”
- C) “For His own purposes God chose this man to be President of the United States. He is sovereign and I trust Him with all that is taking place. My hope is in Christ alone, and I am confident He knows best.”

If you’ve faced one of the above reactions, or a variation, what happens next in the encounter is what matters. You may have just been given an incredible opportunity to share the Gospel or to encourage a fellow believer through conversation. In either case, consider it a Divine appointment and engage in the discussion.

“But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, *always* being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;”

1Peter 3:14-15 (NASB95)

Perhaps all you can do is plant a seed, but do not fret for it is God that draws a person to Himself (John 6:44). You are not trying to win an argument or participate in a debate. Your mission is to share truth and an eternal hope out of love for the person. Above all, pray for the Holy Spirit to give you the words and the countenance to be Christ’s effective ambassador before a watching world.

Please take a moment right now to read chapter 1 of Colossians.

Meditate on Paul’s words and consider what a hope we have in Jesus, an eternal hope, a hope that will not disappoint, a hope we may claim. Praise God! All glory is His.

In your conversations with others, remember these words from the Book of Daniel: “*He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the*

wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;” God is either sovereign or He is not. The Bible tells us He is, therefore I believe.

A final reminder, and a possible point to interject in conversations with those lamenting or celebrating the outcome of the Presidential Election (this was a statement made by one of the speakers at the R12.2 Men’s Leadership Conference at Callaway Gardens last month):

“A political solution cannot solve a spiritual problem.”