

## Embracing Our True Hope in a Hopeless World

Hope is one of the greatest motivators in life. Think of all that is done with the expectation of future good, such as building a house, working on a degree, or raising up children. In contrast, hopelessness is one of the greatest deterrents to living in a joyful and productive fashion. Right now, I see a big challenge in my life and the lives of many Christians. **Are we going to live each day motivated by the hope of the gospel or depressed by the hopelessness of our culture?** We all know well that Christ is our hope in life and death, as we sing about it regularly and its even proclaimed in the New City catechism. But **how successful are we at setting our minds and attitudes on that gospel hope daily?**

Psalms 33 talks about the contrast of living in gospel hope versus worldly hope:

Psalms 33:13-22

13 The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; 14 from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, 15 **he who fashions the hearts of them all** and observes all their deeds. 16 The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. 17 **The war horse is a false hope for salvation**, and by its great might it cannot rescue. 18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on **those who hope in his steadfast love**, 19 **that he may deliver their soul from death** and keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. 21 For **our heart is glad in him**, because we trust in his holy name. 22 Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, **even as we hope in you**.

Consider with me three ways this passage portrays hope and how corresponding gospel truth transcends the problems we see on earth:

- God is the creator and in control of all (vs13-15). The gospel tells us we were not a cosmic accident, but personally created and known by a loving God.
- Worldly strength and hope cannot save from troubles on earth, but God can deliver the soul from death. (vs16-19) The gospel tells us that our pain on earth is because we are broken by sin, but that our loving creator died to redeem us into heavenly perfection with Him after death.
- On earth, we are to live in joyful hope of God's sovereign working (vs20-22). The gospel tells us that we have a joyful and hopeful purpose on earth: to represent our creator by creatively managing His earth and by sharing His good news with those in darkness around us.

When confronted by the great problems of this fallen world, we can easily succumb to a life of practical hopelessness. Let us instead remind ourselves of gospel truth as Peter says in 1 Peter 1:13: *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, **set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So, my encouragement for us all is to live each day reminded and focused on the hope of the gospel.*** Through the Spirit's working, this truth will **lead to a personal peace and joy and help give us an understanding and active compassion for the lost and dying world around us.**

Jacob