



# Christmas, A Promise Fulfilled

## The Power of Hope

### I. Hope Has an Object

1 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV®)

<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us **new birth into a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you,

2 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV®)

**On him we have set our hope** that he will continue to deliver us,

1 Timothy 6:17 (NIV®)

<sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to **put their hope in wealth**, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

### II. Christmas ---God's eternal purposes become visible

#### A. God's purposes are not an interruption!

- ❖ Sometimes they are personal events ---*Mary*
- ❖ Sometimes they are events which you are invited to observe ---*Shepherds*
- ❖ Sometimes they are events in which you can play a role ---*Joseph*

#### B. Christmas Lessons

1. Often, you will be frightened
2. Schedules will be interrupted
3. Others will wonder
4. Your very best will be required
5. God will be glorified
6. More that you don't understand, than you do
7. In the end, you will be wonderfully transformed

### III. Prophecy, Hope & the Holy Spirit

Acts 1:6-8 (NASB®)

<sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "**Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?**" <sup>7</sup> He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; <sup>8</sup> but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

1 Corinthians 1:23 (NIV®)

<sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,

John 8:32-35 (NIV®)

<sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." <sup>33</sup> They answered him, "**We are Abraham's descendants** and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

## IV. Lessons in Hope

### A. Hope relates to the future, faith is now

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV®)

<sup>1</sup> **Now faith is** being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

### B. Wrestling with Despair (hopeless)

Psalms 25:1-5 (NIV®)

<sup>1</sup> To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;

<sup>2</sup> in you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.

<sup>3</sup> **No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame**, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse.

<sup>4</sup> Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths;

<sup>5</sup> guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and **my hope is in you all day long**.

### C. Hope has a partner ---perseverance

Romans 8:24-25 (NASB®)

<sup>24</sup> For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he *already* sees? <sup>25</sup> But **if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it**.

Hebrews 10:35-36 (NIV®)

<sup>35</sup> So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. <sup>36</sup> **You need to persevere** so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

### D. Hope is about your mind, will & emotions

Hebrews 6:19-20 (NIV®)

<sup>19</sup> **We have this hope as an anchor for the soul**, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain,

<sup>20</sup> where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 (NIV®)

<sup>8</sup> But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and **the hope of salvation as a helmet**.

### E. Hope strengthened through expression

Hebrews 10:23 (NASB®)

<sup>23</sup> Let us hold fast **the confession of our hope** without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

Hebrews 3:1 (NASB®)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and **High Priest of our confession**;

## PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, I rejoice today in the great gift of Your son Jesus. In Him I have life and hope. In this season may Your provision for me be more real than any need I face. Direct my steps that I may share Your gifts of Christmas with those I meet. Give me discernment to see beyond myself and see the opportunities around me. May the hope of Jesus flow through my life this week. Almighty God in You I put my hope and trust. Amen.

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