

Hope – Part II

Ready:

“And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

-Romans 5:2b-4 (NIV)

Set

Yesterday, we talked about hope. And we used words that can actually serve as an acronym for the word itself: H – history, O – optimism, P – Promise, E - Eager Expectation.

Knowing what Christian hope is can be a great thing. But what should it produce in us? In the sports world, hope is necessary in spurring a team to do great things. Without hope, why would we as athletes endure what we do? If we cannot achieve our goals, why would we endure the hardship of preseason training? Why would we waste hours studying film, learning our skills, pushing our bodies beyond what we thought possible? Why would we choose to follow a game-plan if we knew it was going to fail? The truth for most of us is that we wouldn't.

One of the toughest situations to endure is a long losing season when there is no hope of turning things around. At some point, everyone checks out. That is why the team leaders must be hope-igniters! Southport High School (Ind.) football coach Bill Peebles developed that sense of hope as he rebuilt the school's program. He had to rebuild their battered confidence, and it took three years to do. His promises of future glory paid off this past fall as the Cardinals (9-2) finished with their first winning season since 1995 and advanced to their state semifinals. I do not know Coach Peebles, but I understand that he did a tremendous job helping the players believe.

When we have hope, it spurs us to do many things:

H – We are willing to HEED the words of wisdom from those who have gone before us.

O – It produces OBEDIENCE because we have the confidence that the outcome will be good.

P – It gives us PATIENCE as we persevere through the temporary hardship.

E – It gives us renewed ENERGY to keep working hard.

The hope of the future spurred Paul to keep pressing on when all odds were against him. He challenged the early church to keep pressing on by heeding and obeying God's Word, even in the worst of times. We must do the same. Read the additional passages listed below and be encouraged to keep pressing on. He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6).

Go

1. Where do you struggle the most in your daily life? Do you have the hope to overcome this struggle?
2. Read the Scriptures below and be encouraged by those words. Then, ask God to restore your hope in Him, that He will help you overcome your area of weakness.

Workout

Psalm 51:10-13
Romans 5:1-5
Romans 8:18-25
Romans 8:31-39
2 Corinthians 4:7-10

Bible Reference:

Philippians 1



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