

Others Which Have No Hope

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Q. In I Thessalonians 4:13, Paul refers to “*others which have no hope*.” If Paul was teaching the Salvation of all, who would he be referring to as having no hope? In this passage of Scripture it is obvious he is referring to the Resurrection hope, so these “*others*” would not have any hope of resurrection; but how could that be if “*all*” were to be eventually saved?

A. Let’s start by getting a definition of the word “*hope*.” It is the Greek word “*elpis*” (Strong’s Greek Lexicon #1680), and according to Strong it means “*expectation or confidence*.” Interestingly enough it is so identified with faith, that it is even translated as “*faith*” in the *King James Version* (Hebrews 10:23).

We all have neighbors who live around us who are lost. They have no *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result they have no *hope* beyond the grave. They believe that the grave is, or may be the end; but just believing it does not make it so. Just because they personally have no hope, does not mean that there is not any hope for them beyond the grave. It simply means that they personally have not the confident expectation (hope) that we do.

Even those who are already saved can be taught incorrectly and thus be without the hope of resurrection. This was the case with some at the city of Corinth. Paul had to write to them about resurrection truth in I Corinthians 15. Here we have believers who had no resurrection hope. Obviously this did not mean that they would not be raised, or that they were “*hopeless*” beyond the grave.

Hope, as with faith, is a very personal thing. Just because one does not believe in resurrection, does not mean that it does not exist, or that they will not experience it. It just means that they personally have no confident expectation (hope) of it, because of their lack of faith.

Since “*hope*” and “*faith*” are both *King James Version* translations of “*elpis*,” our verse at hand could just as easily have been translated “*others which have **no faith***.” The reason that they have no hope is that they have no faith.

Believers who have faith and hope in God’s promise of resurrection are saved from the hopelessness of the grave, therefore we don’t sorrow in the same way as those that do who are without hope.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope” (I Thessalonians 4:13).

Just because someone has no hope or faith now, it does not mean that they will not have any in the future. Neither does it mean that the thing to be believed or hoped for does not exist, and that it will not come to pass – even for them.

Hope is a divine quality that is produced in stages. I have more hope now than when I first believed.

“... Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:3-5).

Hope is a process. Starting with tribulation, and then through experience, finally hope is produced in our lives. This divine process has not yet been fully developed in the lost. God is not now working with the full harvest; He is working with the firstfruit. The full harvest has no personal hope within the heart at this time; but not to worry, for the end result is not about man at all, but about God Himself, *“Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will”* (Ephesians 1:11).

The simple fact is that God has subjected the entire creation to hope, and it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, whether or not they apprehend it by faith (hope) now.

*“For **the creature** was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath **subjected the same in hope**, because **the creature** itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that **the whole creation** groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the **firstfruits** of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:20-23).*

The same *“the creature”* that *“was made subject to vanity”* is the exact same *“the creature”* that *“shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”* This is why Paul refers to *“the whole creation,”* of which we are but *“the firstfruits of the Spirit.”*

This is the *“subjection”* of divine hope upon *“the whole creation.”*

The same *“all men”* who were condemned in Adam are the exact same *“all men”* who will be justified in Christ.

*“Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon **all men** to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon **all men** unto justification of life” (Romans 5:18).*

The same “many” who were made sinners in Adam are the exact same “many” who will be made righteous in Christ.

“For as by one man’s disobedience **many** were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall **many** be made righteous” (Romans 5:19).

The same “all” who die in Adam are the exact same “all” who will be made alive in Christ.

“For as in Adam **all** die, even so in Christ shall **all** be made alive” (I Corinthians 15:22).¹

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1. The verse does not read, “For as all those who are in Adam die, even so also all those who are in Christ shall be made alive.”

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