

The Graces of a Christian #2 — HOPE

A Study on 2 Corinthians

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2 Cor. 4:7-5:10

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. [8] We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; [9] persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. [10] We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. [11] For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. [12] So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

[13] It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, [14] because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. [15] All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

[16] **Therefore we do not lose heart.** Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. [17] For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. [18] **So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.** For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

[5:1] Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. [2] Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, [3] because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. [4] For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. [5] Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

[6] **Therefore we are always confident** and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. [7] We live by faith, not by sight. [8] We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. [9] **So we make it our goal to please him,** whether we are at home in the body or away from it. [10] For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

1. A hopeful Christian does not _____

2. A hopeful Christian focuses on the _____

3. A hopeful Christian is always _____

4. A hopeful Christian lives to _____

WHAT DOES A GRACE-FILLED CHRISTIAN LOOK LIKE?

CHRISTIAN GRACES #2 – Discussion Guide

- What is “hope”? What happens when someone loses hope?
- Have you ever been discouraged? What caused your discouragement? How did you feel at the time? If you’ve never experienced discouragement yourself, have you ever tried to help someone else through a discouraging time? What did you do to help? How did they respond?
- Is it possible to have hope even in the midst of hardship and trials? How can we keep ourselves from growing weary and losing heart? What truths do we need to keep in the forefront of our minds? How can we force ourselves to stay focused on positive things?
- Make two lists. First, make a list of all the struggles we have here in this life. Then make a list of all the eternal things that await us when we get to heaven. Which list do you tend to dwell on more? Which is more important? In light of eternity and our heavenly reward, how much time should we spend dwelling on earthy things?
- How can we be sure that these things await us? What are some things that cause doubt? Is doubting normal? How can we become more confident about what awaits us?
- How does having hope affect the way we live day by day? Can you tell the difference between someone who is filled with hope and someone who is not? How?
- “A hopeful Christian lives to please God.” Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not? What does it mean to please God? What causes us to live to please self instead of God? How can we tell if we’re pleasing God in the way we live? What one thing might you need to change in your life to please God more?
- If you’ve been struggling with a lack of hope, share with the group about your struggle. Take time to pray for each other and to ask God to fill you with hope and make you a more grace-full Christian.