

Hope

“Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer”, Romans 12:12.

Last Sunday I spoke on ‘Patience’ . To day I am going to look at the word ‘Hope’ , but first, let us consider one of the Peanuts cartoons created Charles Schulz’ s in the 1950’ s.

In the cartoon strip we have Lucy and Linus watching TV. Lucy demands that Linus will get her a glass of water. Linus makes the point that Lucy never does anything for him. The cartoon closes with Lucy promising Linus a cake on his 75th birthday!

I believe Linus is possibly still awaiting the delivery of his cake!

In the lead Scripture, the Greek word Paul has used for HOPE also conveys the meaning, ‘your expectation will be fulfilled, you expect the person to fulfill their offer, and you have a complete confidence that your desires will be accomplished’ .

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Colossian Church declared, “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory”, Colossians 1:27.

Paul, writing of a time that will never cease, declares to the Christian that their expectation WILL BE FULFILLED.

The opposition party offers to the non-Christian just three separate paths to walk,

Pride, the possessions you have gathered into your life,

Lust, what the eye perceives to be the pinnacle of the way you live

Fleshly, where the body attempts to satisfy the flesh at the expense of the Spirit.

Basically, three worldly aspects that leave people feeling empty and/or helpless, plus an enormous question mark with the question “What’ s next?”

For the Christian with Christ, Jesus has already supplied the answer, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man

cometh unto the Father, but by me” , John 14:6.

As I commence to close, let us consider where our HOPE is centred. Is it in the Lord Jesus, or ourselves?

The Apostle Paul has given us the answer, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” , Romans 6:23.

The actor, Steve McQueen, an actor whose life was as tough as the characters he portrayed on the silver screen, lived an alcoholic life that finally crumbled with a failed marriage,

At that point he attended a crusade led by one of Billy Graham’ s associates.

He passed into eternity with his fingers resting on a passage of the Bible where his HOPE became ‘fulfilled and his desires were accomplished’ , In HOPE of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” , Titus 1:2.