



Hope, Despair and Resignation, Romans 5:1-5
Mike Halpin ~ August 20, 2017

Intro: Of hopes fulfilled, and dashed.

Book: Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions: A Psychology of Christian Virtues*

Hope: a desire; a positive expectation; something I want but don't yet have

Despair: utterly at a loss; without hope; despondent

Resignation: acceptance of things as they are instead of as we desired; acquiescence to reality

I. Hope—

Hope, almost 200X in the Scripture

- Job hoped for good, Job 30:26
- Israel hoped for God's mercy, Ezra 10:2
- Parents were to discipline their children in hope, Proverbs 19:18
- Isaiah hoped for justice, Isaiah 59:11
- Herod hoped Jesus would perform a miracle, Luke 23:8
- Paul said he was on trial for the hope of the resurrection, Acts 26

Small hopes dashed = small disappointment

High hopes dashed = _____

We must guard our hearts as to what we set our hopes on. Even good things can become temptations to despair. Is my faith intact and can I continue to trust God and live for Him if a hope isn't realized?

- My hopes for the next year:

- My hopes for the next 5-10 years:

II. Despair—

One of the key dangers of making temporary hopes and desires our primary focus is that they end in despair.

1 Samuel 25, Nabal and David

Ecclesiastes 2:17-20, Solomon

- I'm tempted to despair about this hope:

III. Resignation—

Resignation can feel like defeat, but in fact, it's part of living life well and successfully because it allows us to uncouple from a hope God wasn't in, or wasn't in our timing. Surrendering a cherished hope that we realize isn't going to be fulfilled is necessary if we're to experience life as God intends, and honor Christ.

- God is calling me to resign myself to life without this hope fulfilled, or at least for now:

IV. A Better Hope—

NT *hope* = a longed-for consummation of the promises of God; Christ's return, Christ's Kingdom, and our resurrection and presence with Him as glorified members of His glorious Church.

- Titus 2:13
- 1Peter 1:13
- Romans 5:1–5

Losing temporary hopes helps make the eternal hope even more desirable. God Himself is always our ultimate hope.

- On a day-to-day basis, my most constant hope is: _____
- On a scale of 1-10 my daily hope of God's revealed glory in Christ's coming and my being w/ Him is: _____
- Go back to your hopes listed on Page 1 and rate each on a 1-10 scale; how do those hopes compare w/ our hope for our union w/ Christ in glory?

Imagine at the point of your conversion the heavens opened on an otherwise dark, cloudy day, and Jesus appeared in that sunny breach and told you your future life on earth, and that in 50 years (or 10, or 30...) heaven would open again and you would join Him forever.

In all your dark days, there would be both the memory of the heavens opened and the Son of Man speaking to you, as well as the knowledge that heaven would open again to receive you. In times when the darkness of life overwhelmed you might wonder if the past breach was a dream or illusion and if the future promise was a sham. But in your hardheaded moments, darkness aside, you know the past word was hard reality just as the future reception is.

Past reception and future promise would become one hope, one certainty informing your present situations as well as your future expectation. That memory and promise would give hope in the present. In times when the grasp of memory or promise lapsed, the certainty of both would not in any way be changed.