



Church of Perth Intercessory Team

"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." 2 CHRONICLES 7:14

VOLUME 4/3

HEART TO HEART MARCH 1999

YOU HAVE GOT TO HAVE HOPE

While there is life, there is hope! Where there is Christ, there is hope. Today suicides exceed natural deaths. Why are more young people taking their lives when we have more comforts and leisure than ever before? Is it unemployment, poverty, insecurity, fear of Aids or nuclear catastrophe or family breakdown? These of course do play a part. However, undergirding all these factors is a deeper malaise at the very heart of society. It is meaninglessness, with its bedmate, hopelessness as they wander from the Spirit of Truth.

Why, in fact, should life be without meaning to so many? Why, with all our technical know-how should the lives of so many be so empty? Why do they have no purpose for living? Why have they no hope of a better future?

The answer is pure and simple. Without spiritual guidance the human soul is lost. Western society has ignored the spiritual side of life to concentrate on the physical and material. Moreover, the indoctrination of secular humanist values by schools has run counter to spiritual growth and moral development. Thus students are denied the essential element of hope that lies at the heart of the spiritual.

Australia is fast descending into an abyss of hopelessness, confused standards and moral decay. A gradual de-Christianisation over the past three decades is leaving a trail of uncertainty, decadence and spiritual nihilism. The old hope of eternal life that is an integral part of the Christian faith is no longer widely accepted. Yet therein lies the solution to both meaninglessness and hopelessness. How sad. How terribly sad! Bereft of wholesome spiritual teaching many young people are empty inside. No wonder many attempt suicide; no wonder drug-taking is rampant. No wonder they seek fleeting pleasure in sex, alcohol and riotous living.

Yet it need not be. The same hope that inspired past generations, making life purposeful, is still available. It is hope that elevates, strengthens and inspires. Hope in Jesus Christ has power through the Holy Spirit of God; it is a refusal to be borne down, cowed and depressed. Hope fights with power on the side of God.

Biblical hope cannot be separated from faith in Christ Jesus. Because of what He has done in the past as recorded in the Scriptures. What He has done in countless lives down through the centuries; and what He is now doing in the world as millions are turning from darkness to light, we in Australia too can hope with certainty that all who belong to Christ Jesus shall enjoy many future blessings that at present are invisible.

The Christian hope is a "living hope" because we trust in a Living God, (1 Peter 1:3) This hope enables us to keep our minds under control and hope to the end when Jesus shall return. We must not be ashamed of our hope but be ready to live and defend it. (1 Peter 3:15) This hope will save us from despair about our circumstances and the state of the world. A Christian believer has confident assurance of future glory and blessings because Jesus Christ is his or her hope. (1 Timothy 1:1) The unsaved sinner is "without hope" (Ephesians 2:12) and if he dies without Christ, he will be hopeless forever. The Italian poet, Dante puts this inscription over the world of the dead: "Abandon all hope, you who enter here!"

The God of our fathers is still alive. He is still in control despite the present madness in the world. He still cares for us all, young and old. No matter what the future may hold, even another world war with its inevitable catastrophic devastation, there is an unwavering assurance of an eternal future in glory for those with faith in Christ Jesus. The Bible speaks much of hope: "We are saved by hope; Christ in you the hope of glory;" Though the road ahead may look threatening and though the world could erupt in flames, those whose hope is in the Saviour are secure.

For both young and old there is hope. The systems of this world can never satisfy the deepest longings of the human heart. But God in Christ can. He offers everyone of us eternal hope. Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33) You have got to have hope. Everything must begin with salvation, through Jesus Christ. If I know Christ as Saviour, then we have hope! If we have hope, then we can walk in holiness and in harmony. There should be no problem submitting to those around us in society and at home for our Lord reigns.

OUR PRAYER

Heavenly Father, in Jesus' righteousness, we humbly come in one accord to love and enjoy You with all our hearts and all our beings. We thank You for Your love so pure and free and Your limitless mercy toward all mankind by sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for the forgiveness of all our sins on the Cross of Calvary reconciling us to You by giving us life and hope when we receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Sovereign Lord, we thank You for this blessed assurance and hope that You are our spiritual habitation through our praise and worship as we choose to dwell in the secret place of our Most High God this day by Your Spirit. Your Name is our refuge, Lord Jesus, and today we can boldly declare that You are our fortress and banner of security, and You are victorious in delivering us from the evil one as we claim Your hedge of protection around our loved ones.

Holy Father, have mercy on our nation of Australia. We pray You will give our government and civic leaders repentant hearts to obey Your Word faithfully and to live for Jesus' endtime plan and purpose for this "Great Southland of His Holy Spirit." We ask this in the Majestic Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

C.O.P.I.T. Led by our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit to glorify the Fatherhood of God with the Brotherhood of Man, in love and faithfulness to bring glory to our Eternal Father in Jesus' Name. Amen and Glory.