

LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH 2, 2012

ONE HOT COMMODITY

...set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.
(1 Peter 1:13c, NIV)

I LOVE THE NOTION OF HOPE AS I READ OF IT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Among early disciples of Jesus, it was a rock solid commodity.

New Testament hope is a far removed from the wishfulness I take with me to the golf course. On those days when a tee time awaits, I “hope” that my good swing will show up. There’s a qualified degree of certainty to that wish. As Forrest Gump the golfer would have said, “Golf is like a box of chocolates...”

But the hope expressed by the apostles in their letters to their brothers and sisters in the faith rings with certainty. And while I often choose to use the past tense when referring to the writings of the apostles, here the present tense makes perfect sense, because in the context of Peter’s hope expressed in today’s verse—where we too wait for the coming fullness of grace—hope is still ringing for those who call on Jesus’ name.

Those who challenge the veracity of scripture miss this significant component: the confident hope of men whom they would argue fabricated this First Century religion. Yes, numerous leaders have established rules and regulations through the ages, and they have found followers for these sects. But here were apostles placing this confidence not in their own ideas, but in the past, present and future of someone else: Jesus. If he had not been “accredited to [them] by signs and wonders” and if he had not been raised from the dead and seen thereafter by these men and “more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time,” they may have concocted a tale of some ethereal existence to come. But this is not the tone of their writing. They preached as fact the hope of Jesus’ return and the establishment of his enduring kingdom. And those who believe in him will be swept up in the midst of all this.

I am afraid that I am all too good as waffling in my commitments, at hedging my risks, at speaking in couched terms. When it came to hope, the apostles did no such thing. They wrote as if their hope was knowledge—considering their inspiration, it’s no wonder! Great joy comes for us when we hop on board with their assurance. This hope will carry us to Jesus’ side.

Grace’s place

Consider the idea of grace in 1 Peter 1:13. What grace has been shown to you by Christ already in your life? What grace does this verse suggest is yet to come?

More on hope

Read Romans 5:5. Why does hope not disappoint us?

Read Romans 12:12. Why does it make sense that joy and hope are linked?

Read 2 Corinthians 1:8-11. When it comes to our hope in Christ, how does the past inform the future?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. What is the basis of the hope presented in this passage? How are we to use this hope in relating to one another?
