Hope encourages obedience (continued)

Hopelessness is next to hell. Only hell itself could be worse than "having no hope and [being] without God in the world" (Eph 2:12). "If we have hope... only in this life... we are of all men most miserable" (1Co 15:19).

Hope turns despair into enthusiasm. "If we hope for what we do not yet see, then with perseverance we wait eagerly for it" (Rom 8:25).

Paul's hope is an example. Expectation of "the crown of life" motivated him to maintain his faith and obedience (2Tm 4:7-8).

Hope motivates work. The plowman, the sower, the thresher, and even the ox, are motivated to work by their hope of sharing in the crop. What would be the point of plowing, sowing, and threshing, if there was no hope of produce? (1Co 9:9-10).

Hope produces zeal. We live righteously in this present world because we are "looking for the blessed hope" beyond. This hope makes us "zealous for good deeds" (Tit 2:11-14).

Hope produces dedication. Paul invoked hope in "the mercies of God" to urge people on in dedicated service to God (Rom 12:1).

Hope Can fail

Hope can become idle. It must be put into practice (1Jn 3:1-10).

Hope can become selfish. Example: sons of Zebedee (Mrk 10:35-41).

Hope can become materialistic -- as in the popular but wayward "prosperity doctrine" (Php 3:18-20, Col 1:22-23)

Seeking the Full Assurance of Hope

Set your mind on things above. (Col 3:1-4).

Don’t let hope get lazy. "Give diligence to realize the full assurance of hope until the end" (Heb 6:11).

Lay hold of hope. God sets the hope before us, but we have to "lay hold" of it and make it the anchor for our soul (Heb 6:17-20).

Share your hope. "Be always ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you..." (1Pe 3:15).

With these things in mind, we surely must regard the Christian hope as an excellent influence upon life and spirit.

“My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness”

(Edward Mote)

The Seven Influences

1. The Influence of Society
2. The Influence of Conscience
3. The Influence of Intellect
4. The Influence of Faith
5. The Influence of Hope
6. The Influence of Fear
7. The Influence of Love