Glad Tidings

"And we bring you good of the promise made unto the fathers…" (Acts 13:32)

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Giving Reason For Your Hope

(Jerry Fite)

Peter exhorts us to set apart or sanctify Jesus as Lord in our hearts. Accompanying the will and emotions with obedience to our Lord, the world should find us *"being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that lies within you..." (I Peter 3:15).*

Are you ready? Are you prepared to give your defense (apologia) regarding the hope that should be alive in the heart of every Christian? Hope is the confident desire for heaven that we have when we hear the truth of the Gospel and submit to its conditions for salvation *(Colossians 1:5, I Peter 1:22).* Peter implies that hope is of interest to others, that upon observing your conduct in the Lord they ask "why" such hope thrives in your heart. Can the question come at any moment, what is your answer?

Peter offers us at least four reasons in the opening chapter of this letter: I Peter 1:3-5. They pertain to God's mercy, Christ's resurrection, God's holiness, and God's power.

We start at the beginning of our hope when we were begotten through the Gospel. Our thanks goes up to God for His clemency. *"...who according to His great mercy, begat us again unto a living hope" (I Peter 1:3a).* We do not have hope in the Lord because of our own righteousness, but *"according to His mercy He saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).* God's abundant mercy, expressed in terms of being "great" and "rich" implies how unrighteous we all were before God in our sins. God's abundant extended mercy lies at the beginning of our hope.

Without Christ we have no hope *(Ephesians 2:12).* If Jesus has not been raised from the dead, we are still our sins *(I Corinthians 15:17).* Peter declares that our being born again unto a living hope was *"by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1:3b).*

Because the resurrection of Jesus is factual, confirmed by credible eyewitnesses, *(I Corinthians 15:5-8),* our faith is not vain. So, we can wait in hope, anticipating our own resurrection from the grave (*Roman 8:24).* Beng first justified from our sins by God's mercy, we look forward to being glorified by our resurrected Lord *(cf. Romans 8:30, Philippians 3:20-21).* We wait in hope for the glory that will never fade away *(I Peter 1:4*).

The third defense for our hope is that our place in heaven is being watched over or kept by our holy God. *(I Peter 1:4).* God reserves heaven for the righteous, and because of His pure and holy character, no unrighteousness will enter heaven and spoil our *"undefiled"* hope. *"There shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean , or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the lamb's book of life" (Revelations 21:27).* Our new abode in heaven is reserved as a place where righteousness dwells *(cf. 2 Peter 3:13).*

The fourth defense of the Christian's hope is God's power. He is not only watching over heaven in His holiness, He is guarding us by his omnipotent power. Peter writes, *"...who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Peter 1:5).* God's power manifested through the saving message of the Gospel, coupled by His eternal veracity, "God cannot lie" (Titus 1:2), gives Christians the reason to remain faithful. They continue to have their name written in the Lamb's book of life.