

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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HOPE -- ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL

I am a passionate student of U.S. History and could hardly contain my excitement when I stepped aboard the USS Lexington -- the gigantic aircraft carrier docked in Corpus Christi Bay. The Lexington (dubbed the "Gray Ghost" by Tokyo Rose due to premature broadcasts that the giant carrier had been sunk) served our nation well from WWII to Vietnam before being decommissioned.

The Lexington and other naval vessels of times past have given way to a more modern fleet of ships -- larger and more capable of meeting the needs of today's military. The USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, for example, is one of the largest ships in the world -- from keel to mast, it is the size of a 22 story building. Her flight deck comprises 4.5 acres; she weighs 95,000 tons, and carries a crew of 6,000 (that's 18,000 meals per day). She is a floating city!

The Eisenhower also has two anchors. Each anchor weighs 60,000 pounds, is attached to a chain weighing 665, 000 pounds, and each individual link in the chain weighs 365 pounds. Now that's an anchor!

But every vessel, large or small, has one. And why? It is the anchor that keeps the ship where it needs to be. Question: What keeps YOU where you need to be?

The Bible warns time and again about the danger of drifting. "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it" (Heb. 2:1). That is why it is essential that we set our anchor firm and deep. "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast..." (Heb. 6:19).

HOPE: -- Is there anything that anchors our hearts in days filled with so much despair and despondency? Life is hard and some days it just gets harder. All of which means, without hope you're not going to make it. "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living" (Psa. 27:13). That's hope! "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). That's hope! "Whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4) Hope again!

"How do people make it when they are not Christians?" The answer is: they don't. They deny it, fake it, use artificial means to escape it -- alcoholism, workaholism, recreational pursuits -- anything to keep them busy and fill the void in their lives. The one thing non-believers cannot do is face the tragedies of life with a calm, quiet, confident hope. Only God's child can do that. ("But I do not want you to be

ignorant brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope." 1 Thess. 4:13).

"This hope we have..." It is something possessed by Christians. We have been born again to a living hope (1 Pet. 1:3) because we have a living Savior. As William Gaither states, "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow, Because He lives, all fear is gone; Because I know -- I know -- He holds the future, And life is worth the living just because He lives."

Someone reading these words may be feeling that hope is lost. It isn't. Circumstances may be bleak, but if you will embrace the living Lord, you will find hope. Anchor deep in the hope of Jesus.

By Wilson Adams in Biblical Insights, Vol. 7, No. 8, Aug. 2007

Give thanks today:

- for someone who loves you.
 - for the little things in life.
 - for the times in which we live.
 - for the privilege of approaching your Father.
 - for the possibility of forgiveness.
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SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"The Stalker!"* (text: 1 Pet. 5:8-11);
Sunday evening: *"A Citizen of Zion!"* (Psalm 15).