

[Finding Hope in Crisis: Bible Prophecy](#)



By [Dr. David R. Reagan](#)

Hope is essential to life. Without it, people descend into deep depression or commit suicide or simply lie down and die.

During the Holocaust, Viktor Frankl, who later became a world renowned psychiatrist, was a prisoner in one of the Nazi death camps. He observed that every year as Christmas approached, hope would sweep the camp that the prisoners would be released on Christmas day. It was an irrational hope, but it was hope. Then, when Christmas would come and go without a release, hundreds of prisoners would just lie down and die. Without hope, they could not live.¹ Frankl concluded, "It is a peculiarity of man that he can only live by looking to the future."²

A Desperate Need

The world desperately needs hope in these end times. We live in a world of increasing fears — fear of nuclear holocaust, fear of economic collapse, fear of plagues like AIDS, fear of terrorism, fear of war, and — of course — fear of life and of death.

Our nation needs hope. Our economy has collapsed. People are losing their jobs. Houses are being foreclosed. Corporations that have been American icons for over a hundred years are declaring bankruptcy. Retirement funds have been wiped out. Many people are feeling a sense of desperation for the first time in their lives.

Everywhere people are looking for hope, and that includes Christians. Some might respond by saying, "Christians are the only ones who have any hope!" That is true, but the problem is that most professing Christians cannot articulate their hope beyond a vague statement like, "My hope is heaven."

An Ignored Virtue

I came to this realization one day when I was reading Paul's great love poem in 1 Corinthians 13. It ends with the famous phrase: *"There are three things that remain [or abide] — faith, hope, and love — and the greatest of these is love"* ([1 Corinthians 13:13](#)).

As I thought about those words, it suddenly occurred to me that I had heard hundreds of sermons on faith and hundreds on love, but I could not think of a single one about hope.

At that moment the Lord impressed upon my heart that hope is the most ignored of the Christian virtues. I knew instantly why that is true. It's because hope is directly related to one's knowledge of Bible prophecy, and there is no topic in the modern Church that is more ignored than prophecy.

Stop and think about it for a moment. What is your hope? How would you explain it to an unbeliever? Could you get beyond the words, "My hope is heaven"?

My Heritage

During the first 30 years of my life I received almost no teaching about Bible prophecy, and I lived with little hope. If you would have asked me to define my hope, I would have given you a pathetic answer, based more on Greek philosophy than Hebrew theology.

I was taught that if I died before the Lord returned, I would experience "soul sleep." In other words, I would lapse into total unconsciousness and lie in my tomb until the Lord returned. At His return, I was taught that a "big bang" would occur that would vaporize the universe. My soul would be resurrected, and I would go off to an ethereal world called Heaven where I would float around on a cloud and play a harp eternally.

For me, it was a grim picture. I didn't like the idea of lying comatose in a grave for eons of time. The "big bang" scared me to death. I was repulsed by the idea of becoming some sort of disembodied spirit without any individuality or personality. I certainly could not get excited about playing a harp forever. In fact, I found that idea downright hilarious.

You see, I grew up in a church that believed it is a terrible sin to play a musical instrument in a worship service. Yet, we were going to play harps in Heaven eternally! It made no sense to me, so I wrote it off as a bunch of silly nonsense.

I had no one to blame but myself because I did not study God's Word as I should have. When I finally started doing that, and the Holy Spirit began to lead me into a study of Bible prophecy, I started making discoveries about the future that ministered great hope to my spirit. In fact, I got so excited about my discoveries that I started jumping the pews and hanging from the chandeliers, shouting "Hallelujah!" and "Praise the Lord!" People thought I had gone Pentecostal overnight! No, I had just discovered God's marvelous promises for the future that are designed to give us hope in the present.

Notes

This article is an edited excerpt from Dr. Reagan's book, *[Living for Christ in the End Times](#)*.

1) Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (New York, NY: Washington Square Press, a division of Simon & Schuster, 1963, revised and updated edition in 1998).

2) Ibid., page 115.