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“...A HOPE BOTH SURE AND STEADFAST”

It was a yearly tradition for the somewhat high-end furniture store, that in the fall of the year an invitation was sent to all the young women who were in their senior year at the local high schools. If they came on a certain evening that had been set aside with their parents they would receive a miniature Lane cedar chest. There was really no way to conceal the motivation behind the “free” beautifully crafted miniature cedar chest give-away; there was the hope that the parents would purchase their daughter a what was then commonly referred to as a “hope chest”. A chest where the young woman would begin to accumulate things upon which to build her future family, as well as cherished “hand-me-downs” from her mother and grandmother among others. “Hope springs eternal...”



The Lane company went out of business shortly after the turn of the new millennium, but in its wake are priceless memories of mother and daughter sitting side-by-side going through the contents found therein. The cedar of which the chest was made, protected the valued contents by the pungent odor to discourage moths from destroying what was inside. We all know that most earthly treasures can be ruined by all number of things as pointed out by Jesus in Matthew six, verses nineteen through twenty-one. *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroys and thieves do not break or steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”* Jesus is setting forth a contrast, showing wherein one should place a premium on that which has eternal value.

A child of God has been handed something extremely precious; a treasure of infinite value. The author of Hebrews noted, in the sixth

chapter and verses nineteen and twenty the following after he had explained the unchangeableness and faithfulness of God to His promise. *“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil., where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”*

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1)

In chapter seven and verse nineteen, the author of Hebrews notes that christians have *“a better hope”*. In fact, six times hope is seen in the book of Hebrews, of which another is found in chapter ten verse twenty-three. *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful”*

Peter on his part recognized the need to be reminded of our hope. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”* (1Peter 1:3-4) Drink in fully what is being set forth in the noted passage. Savor the blessedness and tuck away within your heart hope as expressed in the Scriptures (see Ephesians 4:4; Colossians 1:27)

Thinking back to the young women who had “high hopes”, when they received their “hope chest”, then stored away what they thought of value. How many of them had their hope fulfilled and how many were disappointed? The beauty part of the hope for a child of God is *“and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”* (Romans 5:5) (see also Romans 8:24-25) (wbe)