



WHERE IS YOUR HOPE?

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The fresh blossoms of spring always bring hope to my heart. I love to see new life all around me and I am very relieved that the short, dreary days of winter are over. Changes in the seasons or getting out of town for a change of pace are refreshing and hopeful events for most of us. Yet, all too often, we tend to focus too much on the next hoped for change in our lives as our source of hope for a satisfying life.



Our culture reinforces this focus with suggestions that a new car, a great vacation or just more money will bring greater happiness. Perhaps the longing is for less superficial things like: marriage, a baby, or new friends. Yet when we move into the belief that we cannot have a satisfying life without the change that we desire, then we put ourselves in bondage to these hopes and dreams. We begin to believe that we will not know contentment and joy until we have this next thing. These unfulfilled desires set us up for a cycle of never feeling satisfied even when we do achieve the next change in life for which we have longed.

I find in my work with clients that many people have unintentionally bought into this misbelief that they are being cheated out of the one thing that would make their lives satisfying. Inevitably, this leads them to question the goodness of God's plan for their lives. At this point, they are in a position of resenting God for not giving them something that may never have been His best plan for them. This insistence on the fulfillment of specific hopes and dreams can result in a state of hopelessness.

In John 10:10b, Christ states, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (NIV). The abundant life to which Christ refers is not about having certain things,

John 10:10b
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relationships, good health or financial security. The abundant life in this verse refers to the life we can live when we put our faith and hope in Christ. As followers of Christ, we have the hope of eternal life. We have the hope that our lives can count for eternal purposes, no matter how sick or poor we are or how profound our losses. We have the hope that as Christians, God has prepared good works for all of us (Eph.2:10) and thus, our lives can have meaning, no matter what our circumstances. In

this spring season, let us remind one another that the things of this life will never fully satisfy us. Yet, when we place our hope in a life lived for Christ, then we are in position for a truly satisfying and meaningful life.



Nancy Waring is a Psychologist with Carmel Counseling Center.

She has worked in the field of counseling for over 25 years with adults of all ages. She is a member of the American Association of Christian Counselors and the Christian Association for Psychological Studies. Nancy offers Christ-centered counseling to adults on a wide range of issues, including: chronic illness, marital and relationship issues, singleness, depression, eating issues and career development.

At Carmel Counseling Center, we believe that God has promised to meet every need (Philippians 4:19, II Peter 1:3). We also believe that God often uses other people to meet these needs through direct intervention in the lives of those who are facing life's struggles.

To schedule an appointment, contact Gina Meinders, our Intake Assessment Coordinator at 704.849.0686.



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