

If this was the hope of which Paul speaks, then do all men enjoy it; or, if it is a desire to be saved from certain evils, or judgments impending, then none would be "without hope," though they might be "without God in the world." But hope is produced by desire accompanied with expectation of some future good; expectation growing out of confidence in some real or supposed evidence, that the thing desired may be attained, consequently there are true and false hopes. All true or good hope, springs from confidence in good testimony, that the thing desired will be obtained. While all false hopes spring from confidence in false testimony, unjust conclusions of fallible judgments, or from what is called a presumptuous faith—faith without evidence. This last is spoken of by Solomon (Prov. vi. 7.) "The hope of the unjust man perisheth;" and in Job 8, 11, 14, it is compared to the rush growing up in the mire saying, "the hope of the hypocrite shall perish." But of the first, Jeremiah tells us (17, 7) "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her root by the river". The reasons are obvious; the man who has heard the word of the Lord, and received it into his heart, obeys it, and places implicit confidence in the word of Him who cannot lie. He desires to obtain the blessing promised, and while he becomes united to God by faith and obedience, he can well hope to obtain them. But the unjust are not so; they hear the promises of God and desire the blessings, but being disobedient to the requirements, they have no right to expect them, yet many will reason in unbelief, from false premises that they shall obtain, and thus comfort themselves and others in false hopes, for the substantial evidence is wanting, and when the day of accounts arrives such hopes will vanish. For the Lord says (Jer. 17, 10.) "I the Lord search the heart I try the reins, even to give every man according to the fruit of his doings." We have every reason to believe that a large portion of those who now profess the christian religion, are destitute of good hope. They have seen the need of conversion, felt the force of truth, and *felt* the sinfulness of their hearts, and the justice of the law of the Lord; they plead for mercy, and for the evidence of pardon, for the fruits of the spirit, the love of God, &c; and because they still *feel* that they are poor sinners, they are often taught that this is good evidence of acceptance with God. Others are taught that because the excitement of the mind is subsided and a calmness ensues, that this feeling is good evidence of pardon. When such are asked the reasons of their hope, they can only answer that they *feel* or have *felt* themselves poor unworthy sinners, and they are trying to trust in the Lord, and be saved by his righteousness; they *hope* he will save them, they *hope* they have a hope; they fear it is a poor one, but would not give it up for the world, &c., &c. Now many of these *feelings* are right, but unless obedience to the Lord accompanies them they are useless, and then they are not the ground of hope. I often wish such might lose their hope, provided they could miss it so they would seek a good one. The gospel hope is produced in the heart by the reception of, and obedience to, the revealed will of God "What-