



## A MATTER OF FAITH

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O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight. ~ O Little Town Of Bethlehem by Phillips Brooks.

her presence was more powerful than the other evils.

The Greeks thought of hope in the same light and as dangerous as evil. Without hope, humanity is left with nothing but



### Finding Hope

What is hope?

In Greek mythology hope was personified by Elpis. Elpis was a young woman. She is usually depicted carrying flowers or cornucopia in her hands. When Pandora opened Pandora's Box, she let out all the evils except one: Elpis. When Elpis left the box, she left weakly but

despair. The conflict of necessity of hope and the danger that accompanied hope created great tension in the myth regarding Pandora's Box.

In the last presidential election, Obama branded his campaign using the word hope. It was a great marketing scheme. The economy is in bad shape.

The terrorists are constantly planning to attack again. Jobs are hard to find. Families are breaking apart at escalating rates. Hope sounds pretty good. Hope is sorely needed. While the appeal of hope is undeniable, there is tremendous danger in placing hope in any man. It is especially dangerous to place hope in a man who has as his plan to bring about hope through the government.

Trading freedom and liberty for the chance of hope is foolish and has proved itself to be deadly every single time this path is taken throughout history. Hope cannot come from laws and regulations. Hope is not something that can be voted in. If a government has the power to give hope, it has the power to take it away. That is the nature of man and repetition of this cycle throughout history is undeniable.

Hope's anchor must transcend its possessor. Hope has to be found in something or someone larger than ourselves. We are fallible. Hope placed in another person will lead to disappointment. No matter the person, they will let you down. No one is perfect. The unrealistic expectation that comes with placing hope in another person places an unfair burden on them that they cannot carry.

On December 25th, we celebrate hope. We look back to when God shed his divinity and became a man. He was born in the most humble of circumstances, in a small town to a poor couple who could not even find a motel room. They spent the night in a barn and that is where Jesus, our hope was born.

Jesus did what only he could do. He lived a sinless life and took the penalty of our sin upon

himself so that we could restore our relationship with him.

This month, it will be far too easy to get caught up in all the distractions around us. The news is full of stories that will rob our hope. The political landscape is as rocky and brutal as it has ever been. The economic times we find ourselves in are tough. There is also the pressure the holidays

bring. There is travel and gatherings with other people which can be a source of stress.

It is my wish that we all take time to focus on the hope and joy that the first Christmas brought into the world. Jesus is our hope. He lovingly welcomes us to him.

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in the time of trouble.*  
~ Psalm 46:1.

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