

# Faith Of Our Youth

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## FREEDOM OR BONDAGE

by Richard Garbi

Throughout history, people have fought and died over two words: freedom and bondage. Their effects on our society are vast. We Americans prize our freedom. "Give me liberty or give me death." is a physical example. Yet this is also true in the spiritual realm. Ever since Jesus came down and saved us from sin and death we have been fighting a spiritual battle. The outcome will decide our fate for eternity.

The Bible emphasizes when we commit sin we become slaves to it. If you lie and get caught, the easiest thing to do is to tell another lie to cover up. If you lie again to cover up these lies then the deception controls you. Galatians 4:3-5 says, "*Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*" Also John 8:34, "*Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.' 'Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin'*" (Rom. 6:6-7) "*But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*" (Gal. 4:9) Hebrews puts an interesting spin on this concept when, in chapter two verse fifteen Paul writes, "*And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*" It says that through the fear of death we are subject to bondage. Death puts a boundary on

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## Wisdom of our Elders First and Best by Lola Richardson

God gave His, can we do less? *John 3:16, Heb. 9:28 and 26, Eph. 5:2*

He died for us; He asks us to live for Him. *Rom. 12:1, I Cor. 3:16-17, I Cor. 6:19-20, II Cor. 6:16-18*

Jesus gave us an example of obedience. *Heb. 5:8, Phil. 2:8* God told Saul to obey is better than sacrifice. *I Sam. 15:22, Psalm 51:15-17, Prov. 21:3, Hosea 6:6, Mark 12:33, Heb. 2:1-3*

I am so thankful that I grew up in a home that honored Jesus and His church. I was taught that my best clothes were my "church" clothes and my first commitment to time was scheduled times of worship. We did not stay at home for company who might come Sunday; all our friends and family knew we would not be there if they came on the first day of the week. *Heb. 10:25, Deut. 16:8.* We never "went on vacation from God," but always sought a house of worship when we traveled. When my Grandmother died at age 93, her youngest daughter wrote in tribute to her that all of her children and grandchildren were following her example of Christianity.

God instituted a system of sacrifices for His people. All of them required the shedding of blood. The first acceptable sacrifice to God was the first of Abel's flock. *Gen. 4:4* The first act of Noah coming out of the ark was a sacrifice to God. *Gen. 8:18-20* Abraham trusted God to provide an offering in place of Isaac, the firstborn of promise. *Gen. 22:8, Heb. 11:17-19, Heb. 11:12*

God specified a yearling male without blemish for the Passover. *Exodus 12:5* Christ is our

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# "But We Were Hoping..."

by Eric Owens

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"And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. And they were conversing with each other about all these things which had taken place. And it came about that while they were conversing and discussing, Jesus Himself approached, and began traveling with them. But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.

"And He said to them, 'What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?' And they stood still, looking sad.

"And one of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?'

"And He said to them, 'What things?'

"And they said to Him, 'The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping...'

"But we were hoping..."(and now our hope is gone.)

**HOPE IS A LOADED QUESTION.**

It, many times, places your expectations in the hands of someone else to be fulfilled. Because of this, we choose very carefully in whose hands we place our hope... but, invariably, we are disappointed. Sometimes, the one with whom we've entrusted our hope doesn't

measure up to the task. Expectations go unfulfilled. Other times, things aren't taken care of-- at least, not the way we thought things should be.

When first married, one or both parties may conceive of a lifelong honeymoon: an existence and relationship above and be-

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*"When you consider Jesus Christ, He has answered the loaded question of hope..."*

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yond the problems of the everyday life. (But the older, wiser realize... a honeymoon must include such things.) Soon, reality begins encroaching on the unreasonable expectations; for there are still clothes to wash, lawns to mow, meals to cook, bread to be won. If asked, few married couples would admit to being so idealistic-- yet, the divorce numbers confess this to be true.

"But we were hoping..."(for something much different.)

**HOPE IS A FIRE.**

Nothing motivates like HOPE. Leaders have tried to spur men to action by other means throughout history-- only to find their efforts fall far short of what is needed. Money hires a mercenary that will turn tail and run at the first sign of a tough go. Coercion holds a hostage in service until a more powerful ally comes to depose the oppressor. Hatred of a common enemy, even in the face of victory,

finds itself a poor substitute for the love of an honorable cause.

Hope strikes a match to the wick of the soul. As with the fire of heat, one must treat and use hope with caution and respect. Hope placed in an inappropriate vessel may blow out in the winds of life's changes. If

uncontained, it may destroy the some-time fragile hold on true reality-- transposing fruitless day-dreams in the stead of healthy, concrete contemplation. If unrequited, hope can consume the soul's wick to the point of despair.

"But we were hoping..."(it wouldn't take this much effort or time.)

**HOPE IS A LIGHT.**

There is a saying: "Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey towards it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us." This being true, it must be noted that the burden(s) we bear are NOT cast behind us-- rather, the shadowy gloom surrounding them is forced from our sight. We will always have burdens to suffer... hope doesn't change that. Instead, it changes our focus from the crosses we all must bear to the pathway of righteousness that must be trod. Hope lights the Way to the Goal. Sufferings aside, the weather along life's journey isn't always temperate. At times, the day is long and hot. In our impatience with waiting on the Lord, the temptation is to stop and seek refuge in the shadow of our burdens. If we focus primary efforts on the satisfaction of daily, temporal needs(or self-

(See "HOPE" on page 4)











