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As our country bids farewell to President Ronald Reagan and reflects upon his life, one word is frequently used by his friends, former foes, and fond admirers to describe his legacy as the Commander in Chief. That word is *hope*. At a pivotal time in our nation's history, President Reagan offered needed optimism for the future.

Our culture interprets hope as wishful thinking, but the Bible uses the word to communicate something quite different. Hope actually means confident assurance, an unwavering certainty about the future. Hope is based on absolute truth. Reagan often spoke as if like Marty, played by Michael J. Fox in the movie, *Back to the Future*, he had traveled forward in time discovering first hand how history had unfolded and returned to tell the world what he had seen. Millions followed him.

Interestingly, our 40th President's hope did not come from a trip to the future, political convictions, military superpower, or economic policy. It did not come from his earthly successes. The athletic lifeguard who had rescued several swimmers from drowning, the competent radio sportscaster, the famed star of 53 movies, the governor of our country's largest state, the leader of the free world found his hope in God.

According to his son Michael, the source of Ronald Reagan's hope flowed from his relationship with Jesus Christ. In Him, Reagan had discovered the strength to endure as the son of an alcoholic father, the divorced patriarch of two, the unemployed television host, the public target of political attacks, the lone ranger fighting the cold war, the nearly fatal victim of John Hinckley's bullet, the battler of cancer, the loser of a daughter, the gracious warrior against Alzheimer's. The Gipper trusted in Christ to walk with him through the perilous paths this side of heaven and to one day usher him into eternity.

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Where is your hope? In what do you place your security for the future? What will sustain you in your trials? Is it your education, your 401K, your business, your stock portfolio, your car collection, your next drink, or your religion?

The apostle Paul wrote to his disciple Timothy that Jesus Christ is our hope (I Tim. 1:1). Only in Him do we find our confident assurance, our unwavering certainty about the future. Paul went on to tell Timothy to encourage those had done well in the marketplace not to put their hope in money, but to place it in God. “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment” (I Tim. 6:17).

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