

God's Word of Hope

Related Resources:

- The Blessed Hope: Definition
- The Blessed Hope: Source of
- The Blessed Hope: Part 2
- The Blessed Hope: Stabilizing Effect
- The Blessed Hope: Sanctifying Effect
- Other Resources on the Blessed Hope
- Dynamic Relationship Between Biblical Hope and Joy

THE BELIEVER'S BLESSED HOPE PART 1

DEFINITION OF OUR BLESSED HOPE

WHAT BIBLICAL HOPE IS NOT

Chuck Swindoll writes in one of the few books in the last 100 years to specifically address the subject of **Biblical "Hope"**:

"(**Hope**) is something as important to us as water is to a fish, as vital as electricity is to a light bulb, as essential as air is to a jumbo jet. **Hope** is basic to life... Without that needed spark of **hope**, we are doomed to a dark, grim existence. How often the word "**hopeless**" appears in suicide notes. And even if it isn't actually written, we can read it between the lines. Take away our **hope**, and our world is reduced to something between depression and despair... **hope** is more than wishful thinking.

Hope is a vital necessity of life--a gift that God wants to give to you. And in a world that regularly writes dreams off as foolish and drains the **hope** from the heart with dark pessimism" (**Biblical hope**) "is a voice crying in the wilderness... a word of enthusiasm for life in the midst of any difficult situation you are in... If you want to smile through your tears, if you want to rejoice through times of suffering, just keep reminding yourself that what you're going through isn't the end of the story... it's simply the rough journey that leads to the right destination... Solid, stable, sure **hope**. **Hope** to press on. **Hope** to endure. **Hope** to stay focused. **Hope** to see new dreams fulfilled" [Charles R. Swindoll in his book "Hope Again: When Life Hurts and Dreams Fade."](#)

The world says...

I **hope**... this or that will happen... this type of "**hope**" is why the lottery system is thriving in many states!

Hope identified as cultural hope is merely an optimistic desire

SOURCE OF OUR BLESSED HOPE

Jeremiah 14:8

THE BLESSED HOPE: THE MESSIANIC HOPE OF ISRAEL

Jeremiah calls God the "**HOPE OF ISRAEL**" its [Savior](#) in time of [distress](#)" (References to **hope** in Jeremiah Jer 14:8; Jer. 14:22; Jer. 17:13; Jer. 29:11; Jer. 31:17; Jer. 50:7;)

This God Who is the **HOPE OF ISRAEL** is in fact the Messiah (the OT equivalent of the NT "Christos" = Christ), the **Deliverer** Whom Israel was expecting ("**hoping for**") at the time of His first coming (unfortunately most of the Jews wanted only deliverance from Roman rule not from bondage to sin and Satan).

As Jesus walked beside two followers on the Emmaus Road (unrecognized by them - as Tozer said "The gospel is light but only the Spirit can give sight") one of them lamented

we were **hoping** that it was He who was going to **redeem** Israel (Lk 24:21)

This is a surely an allusion to the "**HOPE OF ISRAEL**", the **MESSIANIC HOPE**, a **hope** that will ultimately be brought to consummation at the **Second Coming** of Christ (see below)

Zechariah 14:9 sums up the Old Testament Messianic **hope** recording the truth that...

[Jehovah \(Jesus\)](#) will be King over all the earth; in that day (when Jesus returns to establish His Millennial Kingdom). Jehovah will be the only One and His Name the only One.

The concept of **HOPE** is clearly taught in the OT but is more fully revealed in the NT, predominantly in the epistles of Paul, Peter

that something will be fulfilled. This hope is not a guaranteed hope because it is subject to changeable people and circumstances.

And so often when we use the word **"hope"** in casual conversation, it has a wavering, uncertain sound. (cf Lk 23:8, Acts 24:26 - neither Herod's nor Felix's **hope** materialized). Most people live in **hope** that things will improve for them and that they will finally be satisfied. One of the frightening observations of our day is that there are so many, particularly the young, who have no hope. Suicides are on the increase annually, and a recent poll said the majority of teens in our day have no hope for the future. And so we see so many of our young living recklessly hoping to find satisfaction in the present moment. Our society is characterized by a pervading sense of hopelessness. Unfortunately the Church is not immune to this hopeless feeling. Many who claim to be born again believers in Jesus Christ are searching for fulfillment in life. The truth of Scripture is that we were not made for the present, and the present was never intended to satisfy us. "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied" (1Co 15:19)

June Hunt has an interesting note on the use the anchor to symbolize hope...

For centuries, anchors have been a symbol of hope. This emblem was especially significant to the early persecuted church. Many etchings of anchors were discovered in the catacombs of Rome, where Christians held their meetings in hiding. Threatened with death because of their faith, these committed Christians used the anchor as a disguised cross and as a marker to guide the way to their secret meetings. Located beneath the ancient city, 600 miles of these tomb-like burial chambers served as a place of refuge during perilous times of persecution. Thus, the **anchor**—found even on some tombstones today—has become the symbol of guaranteed hope for the eternal security of true Christians. (Biblical Counseling Keys on Hope: The Anchor of Your Soul)

The atheist **Jean-Paul Sartre** declared shortly before death that he so strongly resisted feelings of despair that he would tried to convince himself by saying...

"I know I shall die in **hope**."

Then in profound sadness, he would add...

"But **hope** needs a foundation." ([devotional](#))

The atheist Sartre was hopeless for he had refused to believe in Jesus Christ, the only source of genuine, eternal **hope**. **Friedrich Nietzsche** (surely in the spirit of antichrist 1Jn 2:18) made the foolish declaration that "Hope is the worst of evils, for it prolongs the torment of man." (**Wrong!** Hope has just the opposite effect of stabilizing and encouraging the life of the Christ follower! "The foolishness of God is wiser than men!" 1Cor 1:25)

All too often, hope is pessimistically defined as the little boy did

and John. The Greek words for **hope** are not used in the Revelation probably at least in part because in that book our **hope** becomes sight (cp Rev 1:7-[note](#) where Messiah will be hope for only some!)

There are also few references to **hope** in the Gospels, possibly because the literal embodiment of **hope**, the **Lord Jesus Christ**, was present in the flesh.

Some Jews who were undoubtedly genuine believers (and were part of the **remnant** [see note] of believing Israel) did recognize Jesus' as their Messiah as illustrated in Luke 2:25-36 where we find **Simeon**,

a man in Jerusalem whose name was **Simeon** and this man was **righteous** and [devout](#), **looking for** (present tense) for the "[Consolation of Israel](#)" (= a Messianic title - see Isaiah 12:1-note, Isa 25:9, 40:1, Acts 28:20) and the Holy Spirit was upon him and it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Messiah) and he came in the Spirit into the temple and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to carry out for Him the custom of the Law then he took Him into his arms and blessed God and said:

"Now Lord, You are releasing Thy bondservant to depart in peace, according to Thy word for my eyes have seen Thy **salvation** (~Jesus) which Thou have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES (cp Isa 9:1-2-note) and the glory of Thy people Israel"

Simeon recognized the Messianic "**Hope of Israel**" Who was also the **Hope** for the entire world ("all peoples... Gentiles... Israel").

Luke goes on to describe another Jewish believer, **Anna a prophetess**, who served God night and day, never leaving the Temple, and who recognized Jesus as the **Hope of Israel**

and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were **looking for** the **redemption** of Jerusalem. (Lk 2:36, 37, 38)

Fanny Crosby (who was blind) caught the idea of expectant living in her famous hymn [Blessed Assurance](#):

Perfect submission, all is at rest.
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

Jeremiah 29:11 **THE blessed HOPE** **PROMISED TO ISRAEL**

In Jeremiah 29:11 Jehovah declares to the Jews...

I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a [future](#) and a [hope](#).

when he said: "Hope is wishing for something you know ain't gonna happen."

It has been said that man can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, and about eight minutes without air—but only one second without hope! (Anon)

It is reported that in the Tamul language there is no word for hope. Alas! poor men, if we were all as destitute of the blessed comfort itself as these Tamul speakers are of the word! What must be the misery of souls in hell where they remember the word, but can never know hope itself! (Spurgeon)

The greatest enemy of man is not disease—it's despair (absence of hope)

G. Campbell Morgan tells the story of a man whose shop had been burned in the great Chicago fire. He arrived at the ruins the next morning carrying a table which he set up in the charred remains of his store and upon which he placed the sign,

Everything lost except wife, children, and **hope**.

Business will be resumed as usual tomorrow morning.

A W Tozer wrote that...

Hope is a word which has taken on a new and deeper meaning for us because the Savior took it into His mouth. Loving Him and obeying Him, we suddenly discover that **hope** is really the direction taken by the whole Bible. **Hope** is the music of the whole Bible, the heartbeat, the pulse and the atmosphere of the whole Bible... **Hope** means a desirable expectation, a pleasurable anticipation. As men know this word, it often blows up in our faces and often cruelly disappoints us as human beings. **Hope** that is only human will throw us down and wound us just as pleasurable anticipation often turns to discouragement or sorrow.

Only a small percentage of the Biblical uses of '**hope**' refer to '**hope**' as the world defines it... for example we read of a the fading hope of survival of those on a storm tossed ship in the Mediterranean Sea...

Acts 27:20+

Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing us, from then on all **HOPE** of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

Webster's says that:

Hope implies **little certainty** but suggests confidence or assurance in the **possibility** that what one desires or longs for will happen.

In sum **hope**, as the world typically thinks defines it, is a desire for some future thing which we are **uncertain** of attaining.

This promise by Jehovah is given through His prophet Jeremiah to Israel during their Babylonian captivity, a time when all their **earthly hope** of a future deliverance had vanished because of the destruction of the Holy Temple and their beloved Jerusalem. This temporary discipline by God however did not mark the end of Israel's hope, for this hope was (and is) ultimately contingent upon God's eternal **covenant** promises to Abraham (See Abrahamic Covenant and New Covenant Jer 31:31-40) to give Abraham's descendants the land of Israel (Ge 15:18). This future hope will come to full bloom when

the fullness of the Gentiles has come in (Ro 11:25-note)

and then

all Israel will be **saved**; just as it is written, "THE **DELIVERER** WILL COME FROM ZION (Messiah's Second Coming), HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. THIS IS MY **COVENANT** WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS (Ro 11:26, 27-note).

In summary, the MESSIANIC HOPE of Israel is an absolute assurance that God will do good to Israel in the future because...

The gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Ro 11:29-note).

Since every Gentile believer was previously a "wild olive" branch who has been "grafted in among" Israel and become a "partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree", this sure word of prophecy of Israel's "Messianic" **hope** should give all Gentile believers utmost confidence that their **hope** will also be fulfilled in the fullness of time (cf Mt 12:21, Ro 15:12 [note])

Jehovah Elohim: My blessed HOPE

In Psalm 71:5-note describes His God = Thou are my **HOPE**; O Lord GOD, Thou are my **confidence** from my youth.

Again and again the OT exhorts Israel to **hope** and the source of that **hope** is **Jehovah**. "**O Israel**," becomes the invitation, to "put your **hope** in Jehovah, for with Jehovah is unfailing love and with Him is full redemption" (Ps 130:7-note).

In a most basic way, then, **hope** is a relational term. It is a great affirmation of trust in God, because God is wholly trustworthy.

Dear Jewish friend, do you not see that Yeshua is your Messiah Who desires to also be your Redeemer and Lord? Will you not enter into the New Covenant (an extension of the Abrahamic Covenant click here) by faith in Jesus the Christ?

Amazing Grace! how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.
The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my **HOPE** secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

The majority of secular thinkers in the ancient world did not regard **HOPE** as a virtue, but merely as a temporary illusion. Historians tell us that a great cloud of **hopelessness** covered the ancient world. Philosophies were empty; traditions were disappearing; religions were powerless to help men face either life or death. People longed to pierce the veil and get some message of **hope** from the other side, but there was none...

Seneca Rome's leading intellectual figure, tutor of the nefarious emperor Nero and contemporary of Paul defined **hope** as "an uncertain good" the exact antithesis of a believer's hope! What a difference the new birth makes in one's perspective.

Hopelessness is characterized by absolute despair with no expectation of good. The Bible refers to those who have only a hope that perishes... Bildad the Shuhite, one of Job's "friends" declaring...

So are the paths of all who forget God and the **hope** of the godless will perish Job 8:13 (cf Job 27:8, Pr 10:28)

Bildad gives an accurate description of the hope of those without God and without Christ... in the end they will "perish". The Hebrew word for "**perish**" is "abad" which means be lost and in a state of ruin and destruction. It refers not so much to annihilation as to that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose. Men and women created in the image of God, with their purpose to glorify Him, lose all hope of ever achieving that purpose. No wonder cynics like **H. L. Mencken** quipped that

hope is a pathological belief in the occurrence of the impossible.

Ray Stedman - "One of the great reasons the church is so confused in this day, one of the reasons the church says so little of true significance to the world, is that it has neglected and abandoned, by and large, the **hope** of the coming of the Lord. There are very few sermons preached on it. There is very little said about it. There is no time given to a consideration of what this hope means and why it is set forth so frequently and so clearly in the Scriptures. Great sections of the Scriptures that deal with the hope of our Lord's return are simply ignored by Christians." ([Spiritual Warfare](#))

GENTILES PREVIOUSLY HAD NO blessed HOPE

Ephesians 2:12, 13 (note)

Paul exhorts the Ephesian Gentile believers to...

remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no **hope** and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

The unsaved sinner is "without hope" and if he dies without Christ, he will be hopeless forever. Likewise those who trust in works to save them are like the Jews who had "**set** (their) **hope**"

THE MESSIANIC HOPE OF ISRAEL Studies in Messianic Prophecy by Max Reich (Links open Pdf)

- [The Messianic Hope of Israel](#)
- [The Hope Raised](#)
- [The Hope Revived](#)
- [The Hope Re-Affirmed](#)
- [The Hope Interpreted](#)
- [The Hope Scheduled](#)
- [The Hope Misunderstood](#)
- [The Messiah in the Psalms](#)
- [The Atonement in the Religion of OT](#)
- [The Future Salvation of Israel](#)

Christ Jesus: Our BLESSED HOPE

1 Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus, Who is our **HOPE**

Will our hope shift and change?

Is our hope dependent on feelings or upon truth?

Hail, eternal Hope on high!
Hail, Thou King of victory!
Hail, Thou Prince of life adored!
Help and save us, gracious Lord.
[Christ the Lord is Risen Today](#)

The writer of Hebrews (Heb 13:8-note) answers that...

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever.

How is Christ our HOPE?

His finished work (Ro 5:1-2-note), His future return to take us home (1Th 4:13-note, 1Jn 3:2-note, 1Jn 3:3-note), the certainty that we will reign with Christ forever and ever (Re 5:10, 20:4, 5, 6,, 22:5-see notes [Re 5:10](#), [20:4-6](#), [22:5](#)), etc

AT Robertson writes that Jesus is...

More than the Author and Object of hope... (but is) its very Substance and Foundation

W here should we seek HOPE?

Where should we run when we feel hopeless? Where did you run for refuge this week? (cf **click study** of Pr 18:10)

We have **hope** for the future because of what Christ has done in the past and is doing in the present.

Don Basham wrote that

Our **hope** lies, not in the man we put on the moon, but in the Man we put on the cross.

on Moses (keeping the "The Law" ~ good works) (Jn 5:45)
([Devotional: Future prospects bring present joys](#))

The Italian poet, Dante, in Divine Comedy, penned this inscription over the world of the dead...

"Abandon all hope,
you who enter here!"

One might paraphrase Dante's dismal declaration "Life without Christ is a hopeless end but life in Christ is an endless **hope**."

'Hope' is biblical shorthand for unconditional certainty. (Blanchard)

Viewing hope from an unsaved person's perspective, a Greek philosopher wrote "One must not tie a ship to a single anchor nor life to a single hope."

The world hopes for the best, but Jesus Christ offers the best hope. (J W White)

Hope is faith in the future tense. (Peter Anderson)

We never hope for something that has taken place in the past. - Lehman Strauss

Hope is grief's best music. (Anon)

In the New Testament it (hope) always means a certainty. It is not, 'I have not got it, but I hope I may,' but 'I have not yet got it, but I know I shall.' - Guy King

In **Pr 13:12** ([note](#)) Solomon writes that...

Hope deferred (long drawn out ~ delayed) makes the heart sick (depresses) but desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

In other words, hoping for something that does not come to pass grieves the heart while fulfilled desire vitalizes one like a **tree of life** that bears fruit (cp Rev 2:7-[note](#), Rev 22:2-[note](#), Rev 22:14-[note](#)).

Someone has quipped that

In the present, there are various forms of "false hope" being peddled, most of which should be spelled **HYPE**, not **HOPE**.

What is the believer's "BLESSED HOPE"?

In a word the answer is a Person...**JESUS**! His return and the expectation associated with that certain future event constitutes the foundation of every believer's blessed hope. You do believe He is returning don't you? Scripture does not "stutter" but repeatedly alludes to His Second Coming (scholars have estimated that 1 in 20 NT passages allude directly or indirectly to the Second Coming.) Clearly God desires for His children to live with an assurance of His "coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (Mt 24:30), a coming that will bring blessing to His own!

A W Tozer phrased it this way...

Your Christian **hope** is just as good as Jesus Christ. Your anticipation for the future lives or dies with Jesus. If He is who He said He was, you can spread your wings and soar.

[All My Hope on God is Founded](#)

All my hope on God is founded;

He doth still my trust renew,

Me through change and chance He guideth

Only good and only true.

God unknown, He alone

Calls my heart to be His own.

Christ in (believers) our blessed HOPE of glory

Colossians 1:27 (note) God willed (to His saints) to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the **hope** of glory.

This truth was not revealed in the OT and is the greatest **mystery** in the Bible, Christ living in believers. Those who are without Christ are "without hope and without God." (Eph 2:12-note). Believers have no other title to heaven than Christ Himself and the truth that He indwells us, makes heaven as sure as if we were already there. ([YouTube - My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less - Beautiful vocal](#))

Christ is our hope of glory and the glory of our hope.
(Anonymous)

Dear tried and toiling saint, meditate on this truth and allow this **blessed hope** enable you to fight the good fight and endure the sufferings and groanings of this life with confidence and genuine optimism. (see "[My Heart Christ's Home](#)") The believer is not only alive in salvation by virtue of the fact that Christ is his life, but he lives his Christian life in dependence upon Him or by means of Him.

Jesus, my Strength, my Hope,

On Thee I cast my care,

With humble confidence look up,

And know Thou hear'st my prayer.

[Jesus My Strength, My Hope](#)

Acts 23:6, 24:15

THE RESURRECTION

THE BELIEVER'S blessed HOPE

Acts 2:26+ 'THEREFORE * MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER * MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN [HOPE](#) (from Peter's sermon to the Jews at Pentecost)

This "**hope**" spoken prophetically by David is ascribed by Peter to our Lord Jesus' "**hope**" (certainty) of resurrection after crucifixion and establishes a firm foundation for every believer's "**hope**" of future resurrection into a glorified body. (see 1Co

The **blessed hope** is the absolute certainty that God will do good to us in the future and includes the idea that we are looking forward with **expectancy** and **eager anticipation** to the visualization and culmination of this great hope.

(The believer's blessed) **Hope** means expectancy when things are otherwise hopeless. (G K Chesterton)

The believer's **blessed hope** is the desire of some good with expectation of obtaining it.

The blessed thing about hope is that it reaches beyond this present life.

The believer's **blessed hope** is the totality of blessing that awaits the Christ follower in the life to come

The believer's **blessed hope** in the NT is an expectation of something good to come but it is something we must wait patiently for.

The believer's **blessed hope** gives us confident expectancy

The nature of **hope** is to expect that which faith believes. (Richard Sibbes)

The creation is the foundation of the gospel, the second coming is the blessed hope of the gospel, the cross and the empty tomb constitute the power of the gospel. - Henry Morris

Hope is a "confident reaching out for the eschatological future."

Our hope lies not in the man we put on the moon, but in the man we put on the cross. (Don Basham)

Hope according to the [Baker Evangelical Dictionary](#) means

To trust in, wait for, look for, or desire something or someone; or to expect something beneficial in the future

Hope is indispensable for survival and this is especially true when people are confronted by misfortunes, uncertainties, and bitter disparities in life.

Hope is faith holding out its hands in the dark.

Joseph Addison wrote that the blessed hope...

"not only bears up the mind under sufferings but makes her rejoice in them."

Isaac Watts wrote that ...

Hope thinks nothing difficult; despair tells us that difficulty is insurmountable.

G K Chesterton said

Hope means expectancy when things are otherwise hopeless.

Jeremy Collier said that our blessed hope...

is a vigorous principle; it sets the head and heart to work and animates a man to do his utmost.

15:12-20, 21-23)

In Acts Luke goes to great lengths to emphasize the certainty of the believer's **resurrection hope** as demonstrated by the following passages...

Acts 23:6+ ... "I am on trial for the **HOPE** and resurrection of the dead!"

Acts 24:15+ [having](#) a **HOPE** in God which these men cherish themselves that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked

Acts 26:6+ And now I am standing trial (before Agrippa) for the **HOPE** of the promise made by God to our fathers 7 the promise to which our twelve tribes **HOPE** to attain, as they earnestly * serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews. (Note: "**Hope**" here and the reference directly below undoubtedly also includes the Jewish **hope** in the coming Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom clearly prophesied in the OT. E.g. see Ge 3:15;12:3, 22:18. 2Sa 7:12,13 Jer 23:5,6, 33:14,15,16 Isa 7:14;9:6;7 Da 2:44,45, 7:13,14, 9:24;25, Mic 5:2, Lk 1:32,33, Ro15:8, Gal3:17,18, 1Pe 1:11,12 >> Be encouraged as you meditate on 65 blessed OT promises of Messiah, the Hope of Israel and the NT fulfillment - [CLICK HERE](#))

Acts 28:20+ "For this reason, therefore, I requested to see you and to speak with you, for I am wearing this chain for the sake of the **HOPE** of Israel." (cf "**HOPE OF ISRAEL**" Jer 14:8)

1Cor 15:19 If we have **HOPED** in Christ in this life only we are of all men most to be pitied

See also Torrey's Topic "[Resurrection](#)" with >70 Scriptures

Our **Blessed Hope** is firmly grounded upon the truth of our certain future resurrection.

Blessed HOPE: A GIFT OF GRACE

2Thess 2:16-17 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father Who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good **hope** by grace 17 comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word

Note Who gives hope, why He gives it (on what basis) and what kind (quality) of hope He gives. Be sure and examine the context of why Paul might be emphasizing the believer's hope (2Th 2:1-12). **Meditating** on such grand truth will renew our minds, set us

The Puritan **Thomas Manton** wrote...

What an excellent ground of hope and confidence we have when we reflect upon these three things in prayer — the Father's love, the Son's merit and the Spirit's power!

Gabriel Marcel said,

Hope is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism.

[The Holman Bible Dictionary](#) defines our **blessed hope** as...

"Trustful expectation, particularly with reference to the fulfillment of God's promises. Biblical **hope** is the anticipation of a favorable outcome under God's guidance. More specifically, **hope** is the confidence that what God has done for us in the past guarantees our participation in what God will do in the future. This contrasts to the world's definition of **hope** as "a feeling that what is wanted will happen." Understood in this way, **hope** can denote either a baseless optimism or a vague yearning after an unattainable good. If **hope** is to be genuine **hope**, however, it must be founded on something (or someone) which affords reasonable grounds for confidence in its fulfillment. The Bible bases its **hope** in God and His saving acts."

John Piper writes about the **blessed hope** declaring that...

"This confident **hope** gives us the encouragement and enablement we need for daily living. It does not put us in a rocking chair where we complacently await the return of Jesus Christ. Instead, it puts us in the marketplace, on the battlefield, where we keep on going when the burdens are heavy and the battles are hard. Hope is not a sedative; it is a shot of adrenaline, a spiritual blood transfusion."

A study of concentration camp survivors found that those prisoners who were able to hold onto their sense of **hope** ('things are going to get better' or 'we're going to get out of here one day') were much more likely to survive. **Hope** then is not optional but for these prisoners proved to be a matter of life and death.

Dr. Victor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist, observed that a prisoner did not continue to live very long after hope was lost. But even the slightest ray of hope—the rumor of better food; a whisper about an escape—helped some of the camp inmates to continue living even under systematic horror (Man's Search for Meaning) (George Sweeting)

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

Hope is one component of this great triad. In (1Cor 13:13) we read...

But now abide faith, **hope**, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

See discussion of **faith, hope and love** in next column (This triad also in 1Th 1:3-note; 1Th 5:8-note; Gal 5:5, 6+; Eph 1:15, 16, 17-note, Ep 1:18-note, Eph 4:2, 3-note, Ep 4:4, 5-note; Col

free from the "finger crossing" hope of the world and transform our "outlook into an uplook".

Christianity is not a faith of questions and worries—not a faith in which believers must wait until the end to see if they will make it. Instead, believers are given hope and encouragement through the certainty of God's promises as a gift of grace ("*by grace*")

W H Griffith-Thomas in his online book [The Christian Life and How to Live It](#) writes...

Hope, in the New Testament, is always associated with the great future connected with the Lord's Coming. Again and again, indeed no less than three hundred times, is the "blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour," brought before us as the expectation of the Christian, and the crown of all his aspirations and endeavors. This, and this only is the prospect set out by the Christian religion. We look forward with joy and satisfaction to the time when we shall see Him as He is, and be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom... Joy looks upward, peace looks inward, hope looks forward. The Christian hope is fixed on the coming of the Lord.

We may call this a "fact" (prophecy of Jesus' Second Coming) because of its certainty. **Prophecy is history written beforehand**. With God promise is reality, truth is fact. His Second Coming is a revelation of Eternal Kingship. In the coming of the Lord is the hope of the world. It is not the "larger hope" but the "blessed hope" that is the true and substantial hope of God's people and all humanity; and this revelation of eternal Kingship makes its claim upon us, and is intended to elicit a response of Joyful Confidence. We are to live and work in the light of this glorious day. It will give tone and power to our service, it will save us from despair, it will give fibre and force to all our endeavors, it will make us radiantly optimistic and never gloomily pessimistic. Not for an instant must we ever be discouraged, even by the gravest problems in the present condition of the world. "He must reign, He will reign, He shall reign." There must be no looking backward, even to what are called the "good old days." Doubtless they were good old days ; but as God is true. as Christ is real, as the Spirit is powerful, the present days are better, and the best are yet to come. Never must we tremble for the ark of God, though we may well tremble for everything else. "Cease ye from man," and live and work only in the light of that "glorious day that is coming by-and-by."

Hiebert (on 2Th 2:16)

The gift of "good hope" is likewise a present possession, but it looks forward to the blessings connected with Christ's return. The hope is well founded because it is based on the sure promises of God. This hope, an essential feature of a well rounded Christian life (1Th 1:10-note), is in its very nature and effect **good**, beneficial in its impact. **It cheers and sustains the believer who cherishes it.**

Basis of blessed HOPE

1:4, 5-note; Heb 10:22, 23-note, Heb 10:24-note; 1Pe 1:21-note, 1Pe 1:22-note).

Faith and **hope** are inseparably linked.

We believe and so we **hope**

Hope is a confidence born of **faith**. When we have faith in God, we claim His promises, and His promises in turn give us **hope** for the future. This **hope** is certain because God promised it and He never fails to keep His promises (see Josh 21:45, 23:14, 1Ki 8:56, 1Co 1:9, 1Th 5:24-note, Heb 6:18-note). And so our **blessed hope** is an exciting expectancy because our **sovereign** God, **El Elyon**, controls the future. When Jesus Christ is your Savior and your Lord, the future is your friend. You don't have to worry!

W H Griffith-Thomas says "Hope in the NT is a Christian grace wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit." (And I would add it is fertilized and fostered with the Word of Truth)

[Easton's Bible Dictionary](#) defines **hope** as...

"an essential and fundamental element of Christian life, so essential indeed, that, like faith and love, it can itself designate the essence of Christianity (1Pe 3:15-note; He 10:23-note -- [click](#) sermon on Hebrews 10:23 by Piper)." (See **hope** in [International Std Bible Encyclopedia](#))

From 1Pe 3:15-note it follows all believers have a responsibility "to give an account for the **hope** that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence"

G. K. Chesterton surely described our **blessed hope** when he wrote that...

Hope means hoping when things are hopeless or it is no virtue at all... As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude. It is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength." ([Devotional](#))

OUR BLESSED HOPE: Christ's Appearing

[Titus 2:11-14](#)

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing (disciplining, child rearing) us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 **looking for** ([word study](#)) the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." (see **notes** Titus 2:10; 11; 12; 13; 14) ([Click](#) sermon by Piper)

Spurgeon sums up this passage in Titus 2 writing that...

The discipline of grace, according to the apostle, has three results - **denying**, **living**, **looking**. You see the three words

[faithfulness](#) of "He Who [promised](#)"

Heb 10:23-note Let us [hold fast](#) the [confession](#) of our **HOPE** without wavering, for He who promised is faithful 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds 25 not forsaking our own assembling together as is the habit of some but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near (see notes Hebrews 10:23; 24; 25)

God's faithfulness is the ground of our sure hope and thus firmly grounded we can "hold fast the confession of our **hope** (not of despair) without wavering"

A true believer's faith and hope are never in vain, because they are in a God Who is faithful to His promises.

Faithful is He Who calls you and He also will bring it to pass. (1Th 5:24-note)

God's answers may seem to be a long time in coming, and our waiting may be uncomfortable or even painful. But He will always do just as He has said He will do. This is the reason we can hold fast to our **hope** without wavering. God will do His part and the believer will also do his!

Blessed HOPE and THE ROLE OF THE WORD

SOURCE OF OUR blessed HOPE "the word of truth the gospel"

Colossians 1:4; 5 (notes) Paul writes to the Colossians that "we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints because of the **hope laid up** for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel" ([click](#) sermon by Piper)

My life, my Strength, my Hope is You Lord! ([An older praise song by Don Moen](#))

Note that the fruit of our **blessed hope** is Christian **love**. The Colossians have love because of the blessed hope laid up for us - because they have set their hearts earnestly and intensely on the future prospect of sharing the glory of God, of seeing the risen Lord, of being freed from sin and sickness, and of living in joy for all eternity -- when Christians set their hearts with deep longing and strong confidence on these things, yes, they become heavenly-minded but not so much that they are of no earthly use? Paul says that this heavenly minded hope produces a genuine **agape** love.

John Piper explains that our blessed hope which is a...

Strong confidence in the promises of God and a passionate preference for the joy of heaven over the joy of the world, frees a person from worldly self-centeredness, from paralyzing regret and self-pity, from fear and greed and bitterness and despair and laziness and impatience and envy. And in the place of all these sins hope bears the fruit of love.

before you.

Believers are to be actively, anxiously, eagerly, continually (present tense = our "lifestyle") **looking for (word study)** the **Blessed Hope** - the return of the Bridegroom to sweep His bride, the Church off of her feet (so to speak)!

Stated another way, believers are to be anticipating a **hope** which blesses, which is certain to occur, which is imminent and which is glorious (see John's reaction to the "appearing of the Blessed Hope" in Rev 1:13-18 [\[see notes\]](#)). In short, the believer's hope is not some ethereal concept but is an eternal Person, the Lord Jesus Christ (cf 1Timothy 1:1 "*Christ Jesus Who our hope*"). This is sound doctrinal truth which should stimulate transformation (toward the likeness of our Hope, Christ Jesus), not conformation (to the world which is passing away)!

Notice also that the description of the **Blessed Hope** and the **appearing of the glory** are not 2 separate events but describe one event, and ultimately one Person, our glorious Lord Jesus.

Most commentators feel the event described by the **blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus** is the **Rapture of the saints** (see word study of "rapture" and 1Th 4:13, 14, 15, 16, 17-notes 1Th 4:13; 14; 15; 16; 17)

Others include such respected expositors as John MacArthur feel this event describes the triumphant return of Jesus Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation (the last 3.5 years of Daniel's Seventieth Week described in (Da 9:24, 25, 26, 27 (see notes Da 9:24; 25; 26; 27 & Mt 24:30). (See Table comparing Rapture vs Second Coming).

Ray Stedman...

One of the great reasons the church is so confused in this day, one of the reasons the church says so little of true significance to the world, is that it has neglected and abandoned, by and large, the hope of the coming of the Lord. There are very few sermons preached on it. There is very little said about it. There is no time given to a consideration of what this hope means and why it is set forth so frequently and so clearly in the Scriptures (**Ed: As stated above roughly 1 in every 20 NT passages refers to the Second Coming either directly or indirectly! Now that is a source of great hope!**). Great sections of the Scriptures that deal with the hope of our Lord's return are simply ignored by Christians. As a result, our thinking is muddled and confused. The church does not know which side to take or where to stand. It has nothing to say. At best, the church today sounds an uncertain call that fails to summon anyone to battle, and does little to encourage the heart. God, in His

Piper adds that

The link between the objective **hope** laid up in heaven and the active love for the saints on the earth is the subjective experience of **hope** welling up in our hearts.

Romans 15:4 (note) For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have **hope**;

Comment: Notice that the studying the OT is a source of hope. **How much have you studied the OT?** Don't ignore God's veritable **storehouse of hope** hidden in the pages of the OT. As John Piper says "**The full assurance of hope comes from meditating on the promises of God's Word**" ([ref](#)) And again Piper asks "**How are we to hope in God if we don't know His promises?**" The answer is Ro15:4... We do know the promises of God—the whole Bible—the Scripture—was written to give us hope. **Take up and read!**" ([Our Hope: The Appearing of Christ](#))

John Piper's sermon on [Ro 15:4 "How Can I Keep on Hoping? The Scriptures!"](#)

Beloved, if you are battling against discouragement & hopelessness I strongly recommend you read this message where Piper illustrates the truth of Ro 15:4 from the life of missionary [Henry Martyn who died at age 31!](#)

As **Piper** says "Let's take the motto, "No pain, no gain," and turn it around and make our own little slogan:

**NO HOPE
NO COPE**

Ed: Indeed it is difficult to **cope in this world** when we lack the **hope of heaven!**

William MacDonald

While they were not written directly to us, they contain invaluable lessons for us. As we encounter problems, conflicts, tribulations, and troubles, the Scriptures teach us to be steadfast, and they impart comfort. Thus, instead of sinking under the waves, we are sustained by the hope that the Lord will see us through.

John Piper comments on Ro 15:4

The whole Bible has this **aim** and this **power**: to **create hope** in the hearts of God's people. And when hope abounds, the heart is filled with joy. (Desiring God).

The OT was written to strengthen our hope in God, which is another way of saying, it was written to build our faith in future grace. (Future grace)

Those who nurture their hope in the history of grace (in the OT) will live their lives to the glory of God. That is the aim of this book. (The legacy of sovereign joy: God's triumphant grace in the lives of Augustine, Luther, and Calvin)

Word, has called us to remind ourselves and each other of the coming of the Lord. How many times did Jesus say, "Watch and be ready for that hour." We must live daily in the hope and anticipation of that triumphant moment. The battle is not ours but the Lord's. We often think of this great struggle against the devil and his angels, . against the principalities and powers, against the schemes of the devil, as though it were primarily a private fight between us and the devil. No! This battle is the Lord's! ([Defense against Defeat, Part 3](#)) (Or see [Spiritual Warfare Chapter 7 Hope for Clear Heads by Ray C. Stedman](#))

In Christ Alone my hope is found
([play song](#))

OUR BLESSED HOPE: A LIVING HOPE

1 Peter 1:3;1:4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a **living hope** (and why is it a "living" hope and not a "dead" hope? Read on...) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (our living hope has the firm foundation of a living Redeemer) **1:4** to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable (word study) and undefiled (word study) and will not fade away (word study), reserved (word study - perfect tense = speaks of permanence of this reservation) in heaven for you (1Pe 1:3, 4-note;1:4) ([See](#) sermon by John Piper) (Devotional [A Living Hope](#) - *Christians can cope with their past because of their hope in the future.*)

How can one "hope" or b e confident that God will work for them and make their future bright?

Clearly the answer is the **new birth** in which God gives us a new, "circumcised" heart (Col 2:11-note). Now, because of it's **qualitatively new** (see discussion) nature our heart has the desire and the power (Php 2:13-note) to **hope** in God.

Peter emphasizes that this is a **living** hope not a **dead** hope. Compare Peter's teaching to James who describes a dead faith (Jas 2:17-note, Jas 2:26-note) which he says is [useless](#) (barren, fruitless, unproductive) (Jas 2:20-note). It follows that a "living faith" and a "living hope" is fertile, fruitful, productive.

Living hope is hope that like a living faith that is "fertile, fruitful, productive" which "has power and produces changes in... how we live" ([Piper](#)) In other words, a living hope gives a motivation and power to produce changes in one's life. A **living hope** is dynamic, energizing and capable of stimulating a strong confidence in God, which in turn has the power to affect one's daily outlook and conduct. **Right** (righteous) **doctrine** should always lead to **right** (righteous) **thinking** which in turn should

The most hopeful thing in all the world is that the God with whom we have to do is the God of the Bible. If we come to know this God in his great historical acts, the growing tree of our faith and hope will have deep root and strong fiber and will not be easily blown over by moral or doctrinal temptation. ([Sermon](#))

Matthew Poole

One principal use of the (OT) Scriptures is that by the examples we find there of the patience of holy men and of God's relieving and comforting them in their distresses, we might be confident (have a sure hope) that God will relieve and comfort us also in due time.

Robert Haldane

We ought to read the Scriptures with a view not to gratify our curiosity, but to increase and nourish our hope of future glory. This passage teaches that we should encourage ourselves by the example of those who, amidst similar temptations, have overcome. For this purpose, the conduct of those who obtained a good report through faith is set before us, that we may not be slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

Kenneth Boa

In both Ro 15:4 and in 1Cor 10:11, Paul gives an eschatological reason for our need to understand the OT Scriptures. Here it is so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope for the future. In the Corinthians passage, Paul says the OT contains warnings for us "on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come." In both passages, his point is this: there are bigger things happening in God's plan for the ages than our relatively small concerns of the moment. Eating and drinking (Ro 15) and yielding to temptation to sin (1Cor 10) are flashing billboards designed to take our eyes off the road to heaven. When we get distracted by insignificant matters, and stop serving the larger purposes of God by maintaining the unity of the body of Christ, we have left the will of God. (**Ed:** And I would add we have lost sight of our "blessed hope.")

Chrysostom...

These things were written so that we might not fall away, for we have many battles to fight, both inward and outward. But being comforted by the Scriptures we can exhibit patience, so that by living in patience we might dwell in hope. For these things produce one another—hope brings forth patience, and patience, hope.

C H Spurgeon

Three graces should be always conspicuous in Christians **faith, love, and hope**... These lovely graces should be so conspicuous in every believer as to be spoken of and consequently heard of even by those who have never seen us. These flowers should yield so sweet a perfume that their

work itself out in **right** (righteous) **conduct**. Correct creed begets correct conduct.

Has this Biblical "living hope" had a supernatural effect in your life? Or are you living as if you had a "dead hope"? If the latter, then beseech God that "the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling" (Ep 1:18)

The best that the world can say is,

Where there's life, there's hope.

Peter teaches that the truth is exactly the opposite for where there is genuine Biblical **hope**, there is real life and the potential for abundant, victorious life!

Peter shows us how it is possible to obtain this Godward **hope** - we must be born again. Without the new birth one cannot experience this new quality of living hope. The Spirit quickens the heart, giving spiritual life so that faith is born and a living hope springs forth from what was once dead, dry soil.

Living hope is an
integral component of saving faith.

Living hope as a fundamental religious attitude was unknown in Greek culture. For example, the Greek writer Theognis gave the following advice...

As long as you live by honoring the gods,
hold on to hope!

But the Grecian "gods" were dead gods while Jehovah is the **Living God** (be encouraged by meditating on "Living God" in Dt 5:26; Josh 3:10; 1Sa 17:26, 36; 2Kgs 19:4, 16; Ps 42:2; 84:2; Is 37:4, 17; Je 10:10; 23:36; Da 6:20, 26; Hos 1:10; Mt 16:16; 26:63; Ac 14:15; Rom 9:26; 2Co 3:3; 6:16; 1Ti 3:15; 4:10; He 3:12; 9:14; 10:31; 12:22; Re 7:2). He is **faithful** and **immutable**. (see note on this attribute) And so our **hope** is not dead but alive and life giving because Jesus is alive and life giving. Hallelujah! Amen!

Because of this life giving **hope** no believer need remained trapped in their past (no matter how awful) but can be confident of their future. In other words, if you have a living hope you can cope with a painful past because you have the certainty of a glorious future:

**We can cope with our past
By hoping in our future**

Warren Wiersbe writes that...

No Christian life, then, is complete which does not include in it this forward look of joyous certitude toward a bright future, for **hope** as a grace is not a mere spirit of what we call **hopefulness**, or a natural buoyancy of temperament. It is a distinctly Christian virtue, the result of union with God in Christ; and it has for its immediate object the Lord Jesus at His

fragrance may be perceived by those who have never gazed upon them. So was it with the saints at Colossae... May our characters be such as can be reported of without causing us to blush, but that can never be the case if these essential virtues are absent. If these things are in us and abound, we shall not be barren or unfruitful, but if they are lacking, we are as withered branches. We should therefore be rich in **faith** which is the root of every grace; to this end we should daily pray, "Lord, increase our faith." We should strive to be full even to overflowing with **love** which is of God and makes us like to God; we should also abound in **hope**, even that heavenly hope which causes a man to purify himself in readiness for the inheritance above. See to it that neither of these three divine sisters are strangers to your souls, but let faith, hope, and love take up their abode in your hearts... Our **hope** too upon which we are to speak this morning is special, because it is a **hope** which is laid up for us in heaven, a **hope** therefore which the worldling cares not one whit about. He "hopes" that tomorrow may be as this day and yet more abundant, but he cares nothing for the land where time has ceased to flow. He hopes for riches or he hopes for fame; he hopes for long life and prosperity; he hopes for pleasure and domestic peace; the whole range of his hope is within the compass of his eye. But our hope has passed beyond the sphere of sight, according to the word of the apostle, "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Ours is a hope which demands nothing of time or earth but seeks its all in the world to come. It is of this hope that we are about to speak. May the Holy Spirit lead us into a profitable meditation upon it... Is not this surpassing bliss? Said I not well when I declared that ours is a marvelous hope? Had I eloquence and could pile on goodly words and could a poet assist me with his sweetest song to tell of the bliss and joy of the eternal world, yet must preacher and poet both confess their inability to describe the glory to be revealed in us. The noblest intellect and the sweetest speech could not convey to you so much as a thousandth part of the bliss of heaven. There I leave the first head. It is a very **marvelous hope**. ([Click](#) to read entire sermon on Colossians 1:5 - **highly recommended!**)

The Scripture teaches about the perseverance and encouragement of OT saints and this give us hope to carry on. (ultimately the source of hope is God's Word). See also (Ps 119:49,50-[note](#))

Blessed HOPE and THE ROLE of PRAYER

Romans 15:13 (note) Now may the **God of hope** fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will **abound in hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit. ([Devotional](#)) (**Resources** by F B Meyer) ([Prepare To Live](#))

Source: God of Hope

Power: Holy Spirit

glorious appearing, and for its ultimate, eternal and exhaustless substance the glories of heaven and God as our all in all. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Hope is biblical shorthand for unconditional certainty. (John Blanchard)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is our hope today. It is our assurance that we have a living Savior to help us live as we should now, and that when, in the end, we set forth on that last great journey, we shall not travel an uncharted course, but rather we shall go on a planned voyage—life to death to eternal living. (Raymond MacKendree)

Hope, by its nature, deals with the future, but with a happy future. Christian hope looks forward with eager anticipation to what is stored up for us in heaven (1Pe 1:4-note).

The truth of Jesus' coming is like a magnet; it draws us closer to Him. "It lifts the heart of the believer out of the world, and out of his low self, and enables him to stand with Moses on the mount, and transfigures him with the rays of blessed hope and promise which stream upon him in those sublime heights." (Seiss)

The believer's hope is a guaranteed hope not subject to change, but rather anchored in our unchangeable Savior and Lord.

NATURAL VS SUPERNATURAL HOPE

Romans 4:18 (note)

In **hope** against **hope** he **believed**, so that (introduces purpose clause) he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE. (Devotional: [Seeing With Hope](#)) ([click sermon by Piper](#))

What does Paul mean by **hope against hope**? I like Kenneth Wuest's explanation that...

Abraham's faith is described. It was both contrary to hope (as far as nature could give hope) and rested on hope (that God could do what nature could not)." (Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament)

OUR BLESSED HOPE FULL ASSURANCE

Hebrews 6:11 (note)

We desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the **full assurance** ([plerophoria](#)) of **hope** until the end (See Piper's sermons [Heb 6:1-12](#), [Heb 6:9-11](#) [Heb 6:9-12](#))

In **context** Hebrews 6:11 refers to the fact that God will remember the service which saints have rendered to other saints

Prayer: For filling

Result: Overflowing hope

And what is the key to realization of the beneficial truths in Romans 15:13? In Believing.

John Piper has several comments on Ro 15:13...

Trusting the God of hope (**Ed:** He is the source of hope but it could also mean He Himself is hope, hope being characteristic of His nature) gives joy and peace. And the reason it does is because our confident hope is that God is at work right now and tomorrow in the everyday affairs of our lives so that only what is best for us happens to us...

Notice that it is in or by believing that we are filled with joy and peace. And it is by the Spirit that we abound in hope. When we put those two halves of the verse together, what we see is that through our faith (our believing) the Spirit fills us with his hope and thus with his joy and peace. And, of course since hope is such an essential part of being filled with joy by the Spirit, what we have to believe is that God is, as Paul says, the God of hope. We have to rivet our faith on all that he has done and said to give us hope...

We could paraphrase it like this: Put your confidence and your trust in God's Word so fully that joy and peace abound and the Holy Spirit is released in your life with extraordinary power and hope.

So how does hope work in the Christian life? We start with the God of hope. He fills us with joy and peace. How? "In believing." In believing what? In believing all that Christ has done and all he promises to do for us. In other words, our joy and peace rise with what we believe the God of hope is for us in Christ. Joy and peace are sustained by hope. But then the verse says that God fills us with joy and peace "so that you will abound in hope." So here we have more hope coming from the fruit of hope. Hope brings about our joy and peace. And our joy and peace bring about more and more hope...

"Abound in hope." That means overflow in hope. Brim with hope. Be full of hope. Hope pushing out all contrary emotions—discouragement, depression, fear, anxiety, grumbling, bitterness. Hope does not coexist well with these things. And when it is abounding, and overflowing, they push these contrary emotions out.

As someone has well said "Believe your beliefs, and doubt your doubts; most people believe their doubts, and doubt their beliefs. God is a God of hope. Believe this beloved!"

Bible Knowledge Commentary explains that

Joy relates to the delight of anticipation in seeing one's hopes fulfilled. **Peace** results from the assurance that God will fulfill those hopes (cf. Ro 5:1-note; Php 4:7-note). (and that) These are experienced as believers trust in Him (cf. He 11:1-note). As a result believers overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. Ro 15:19-note). The achievement of all God's

(see note Hebrews 6:10). Remember that as saints we serve not to "earn heaven" but because we already "have heaven" (see related discussion Eph 2:10-note). Note that full assurance is God's will for us.

Notice also that in Heb 6:11-note the **full assurance** of Christian hope is integrally related to **diligence**. If we are diligent in living for Christ (eg, ministering to fellow saints), our hearts are **filled with assurance**. If we are not diligent, then we will not be assured that all things will be well. If we "waffle" in our Christian life, sometimes living for Christ but more often living for self (see flesh) and sin (see Sin = the Sin principle or propensity inherited from Adam) we will not experience **full assurance of hope** (absolute certainty that God will do good to us in the future) but will experience doubts, including doubts like "Am I genuinely saved?"

Based on this verse **John Piper** defines **hope** as " full assurance, or strong confidence that God is going to do good to us in the future" ([The Power of Hope](#))

Genuine salvation is a Holy Person living within us and should supernaturally result in a general change of direction of one's lifestyle, including a desire to serve other saints. (See Paul's admonition to the saints at Corinth to "Examine" themselves - 2Cor 13:5, See his description of those who profess but do not possess genuine salvation - Titus 1:16 [note])

Have you heard the true story of millionaire Eugene Lange speaking to 6th Grade class in Harlem. What could he say to these children most of whom would drop out of school before graduation. He said "Stay in school and I'll help pay the college tuitions for every one of you." What do you think happened? TURNING POINT in their lives. For the first time they had HOPE. One said

I had something to look forward to, something waiting for me. It was a golden feeling.

Ninety percent of these students went on to graduate from high school. People without **hope** are people without a future. But when **hope** is restored, so is life. Nowhere is this more true than with those who come to know Christ. He gives a sure basis for **hope**. He has promised to return to earth to receive His own (1Th 1:10-note). Until then, we have His supernatural help through the indwelling Holy Spirit (1Th 1:5-note) Who gives us the desire and the power to be diligent in our Christian walk, working out our salvation in fear and trembling (Php 2:12, 13-see notes Php 2:12; 13, Ezek 36:27+)

People without hope
Are people without a future.
We have a future and a hope

Compare God's promise to Israel that He would give them a future and a hope even though at the time they were in captivity in Babylon. (Jer 29:11)

The believer participates in a new quality of life now and which will be consummated when our "Blessed Hope" the Lord Jesus

purposes for the spiritual welfare of His children comes from the power given by the Spirit of God. What a fitting closing reminder to the apostle's discussion of Christian living.

THE blessed HOPE OF HIS CALLING

Ephesians 1:18 (note) I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the **hope** of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

There is no **hope** for someone whose spiritual perceptions ("eyes") are distorted. It is no wonder that Paul prays for the Ephesian believers. Spiritual perception will open our whole life to the light of God's presence. It is possible to know sound doctrine regarding **Hope** and yet not live experientially in the reality of that doctrine. Paul wanted the Ephesian saints and us to genuinely know the hope to which we have been called and so he prays for them. Should we not do the same for one another especially in our present evil age where it seems so many even in the church have lost touch with the soul "buoying" effect of Biblical hope. It is so easy for a believer to lose his or her eternal perspective by focusing on the present rather than their future. Paul says that the former is temporal and visible, while the latter is eternal and invisible (2Co 4:18-note). And so may God grant us the grace to pray Ephesians 1:18 for one another! (I have just prayed for all who read these words!)

THE BLESSING OF HOPE

Psalm 146:5-note How **BLESSED** is he whose **HELP** is the God of Jacob, Whose **HOPE** is in the LORD his God

C. H. Spurgeon ([note](#)) has a very personal note on this verse:

We have here a statement which we have personally tried and proved: resting in the Lord, we know a happiness which is beyond description, beyond comparison, beyond conception. O how blessed a thing it is to know that God is **our present help** and **our eternal hope**. Full assurance (cf Heb 6:11-note) is more than heaven in the bud, the flower has begun to open. We would not exchange with Caesar; his scepter is a bauble, but our bliss is true treasure.

O God, our help in ages past,

Our **HOPE** for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home!

**Boldness of
the blessed HOPE
2Cor 3:12**

Therefore having such a **HOPE** (of unfading glory of the New Covenant) we use great boldness in our speech ([click](#) sermon by Piper)

Recalling to mind the blessed hope of the Gospel (see Col 1:5

Christ returns. Dearly beloved, **meditate** on your **blessed hope**, for it is Christ Alone Who gives us the **hope** that makes this life worth living. This sure **hope** is set before us that it might be an anchor for our souls, and a motivation for us to exhibit the "same diligence" the saints of the first century exhibited even in stressful times.

*And for the hope of His return,
Dear Lord, Your name we praise;
With longing hearts we watch and wait
For that great day of days!
- Sherwood*

Summary of Biblical Images of Hope...

Hope is a door (Hos 2:15), "an anchor for the soul, firm and secure" (Heb 6:19NIV) and a helmet (1Th 5:8). **Hope** is "stored up for you in heaven" (Col 1:5RSV). It is something inside a believer (1Pet 3:15RSV) and something into which one is born (1 Pet 1:3). Those who **hope** for the Messianic Age are "prisoners of **hope**" (Zech 9:12RSV). There is a sense too in which many of the Bible's apocalyptic visions of the future are images of hope for the believer-something tangible toward which believers look as an eventual reality and around which they orient their present lives. (Dictionary of Biblical Imagery)

The Blessed Hope is A Healthy Hope

In 1997 the journal of the American Heart Association reported on some remarkable research. According to the Chicago Tribune, Susan Everson of the Human Population Laboratory of the Public Health Institute in Berkeley, California, found that people who experienced high levels of despair had a 20 percent greater occurrence of atherosclerosis—the narrowing of their arteries—than did optimistic people. "This is the same magnitude of increased risk that one sees in comparing a pack-a-day smoker to a non-smoker," said Everson. In other words, despair can be as bad for you as smoking a pack a day! That is just one more reason why God calls us to choose hope and faith. The Christian life contributes to good health, for God gives us a legitimate basis for hope. (Larson, C B - 750 Engaging Illustrations)

Hope is not something tacked onto a Christian; hope defines us as it separates us from the despairing (the unregenerate of this world). Hope is a Gospel ("good news") word. (Sherman, C E).

Greek and Hebrew Words for Hope

Of the 84 occurrences (see **Greek word studies of the verb elpizo** and the noun **elpis**) of **hope** in the NT, 5 are found in the Gospels, 10 in Acts, 70 in the Epistles and none in Revelation.

Notice that **hope** is seldom used in the Gospels, for Jesus, Who is the personification of **hope**, was present! It is Paul who most fully develops the New Testament theology of **hope**.

Hope in the OT is Our English word hope translates 5 different Hebrew words (see below). Take a moment and meditate on

note; Col 1:23-note) should give all believer's the ability to confidently communicate what we know to be true even when present circumstances would point in another direction. We do not need to be "ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power** of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Ro 1:16-note)

Blessed HOPE A BETTER HOPE

Hebrews 7:19 (note) (for the Law made nothing perfect) and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a **BETTER HOPE** through which we draw near to God

Note: What is our present hope better than? Why from the verse is our hope better? (what can NT believers do that OT believers could never do? (He 4:16, 10:19, 20, 21, 22, 23-See notes Heb 4:16, 10:19; 20; 21; 22; 23)

The joy of blessed HOPE

rejoicing in **hope**, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer
Romans 12:12 (note) ([The Fruit of Hope](#) by Piper)

What is the fruit of our blessed hope?

Blessed Hope of future salvation (glory cp Ro 5:1-5) stimulates present joy and enables us to live our daily Christian lives with "*the eagerness of a pilgrim going home*".

Paul warned us against remaining content with earthly joys and counseled us to "*raise our minds to heaven, that we may enjoy full and solid joy.*" (Calvin) The reality and certainty of that blessed hope brings present joy.

Matthew Henry reminds of the relationship between our **blessed hope** and our ability to rejoice writing that...

The **joy** and peace of believers arise chiefly from their **hopes**. What is **laid out upon them** is but little, compared with what is **laid up for them**; therefore the more **hope** they have the more joy and peace they have... Christians should desire and labor after an abundance of **hope**.

Let hope keep you joyful.

This **hope** of salvation is the most effective way of producing patient endurance under sufferings.

If we "consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us" (Ro 8:18-note), it will be less difficult to bear up under them patiently.

THE BEST IS YET TO COME:

The greatest joy on earth
is the hope of heaven.

Robert Haldane explains how **hope** in the future brings joy in the present:

The objects, then, of the believer's hope are the spiritual and

these passages (interrogate with the 5W'S & H) (Be sure and make your own observations before you see the attached "note", most from C H Spurgeon). Note **"hope"** is even used as a "Name" for God in Jer 14:8!

(1) **Qavah** ([word study](#)) (Note: a number of the uses of qavah are translated "wait" or "waited" but still convey the Biblical idea of "hope") - Ge 49:18, Ps 25:3-[note](#), Ps 25:5-[note](#), Ps 25:21-[note](#), Ps 27:14-[note](#), Ps 37:9-[note](#), Ps 37:34-[note](#), Ps 39:7-[note](#), Ps 40:1-[note](#), Ps 52:9-[note](#), Ps 69:6-[note](#), Ps 130:5-[note](#) (used twice), Isa 8:17, Isa 25:9 (twice as "waited"), Isa 26:8, 33:2, Isa 40:31, Isa 49:3, Jer 14:22, Lam 3:25, Hos 12:6

(2) **Yachal** ([word study](#)) - Job 13:15, Ps 31:24-note, Ps 33:18-[note](#), Ps 33:22-[note](#), Ps 38:15-[note](#), Ps 42:5-[note](#), Ps 42:11-[note](#), Ps 43:5-[note](#), Ps 71:14-[note](#), Ps 119:43KJV-[note](#), Ps 119:49-[note](#), Ps 119:74KJV-[note](#), Ps 119:81KJV-[note](#), Ps 119:114KJV-[note](#), Ps 119:147KJV-[note](#), Ps 130:5-[note](#), Ps 130:7-[note](#), Ps 131:3-[note](#), Ps 147:11KJV-[note](#), Lam 3:21, 24, Micah 7:7 ("wait" = hope),

(3) **Tiqvah** - Ru 1:12, Job 4:6KJV, Job 5:16, 8:13, 11:20, 27:8, Ps 9:18-[note](#), Ps 62:5-[note](#), Ps 71:5-[note](#), Pr 10:18, 11:7, 23:18, 24:14, 26:12, 29:20, Jer 29:11, Jer 31:17, Hos 2:15,

(4) **Miqveh** - Jer 14:8, 17:3, 50:7

(5) **Towcheleth** - Ps 39:7-[note](#), Pr 10:28, Pr 13:12

If you studied the previous passages, you noted that **qavah** is used in Isaiah 40:31, a verse often quoted in times of affliction, stress, difficulty, etc...

But those who **wait** ([Qavah](#)) for the Lord [who expect, look for, and **hope** in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power (idea of Hebrew word "gain new" = substitute or exchange their strength for His strength). They shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint or become tired. (Isaiah 40:31-note, Amplified Version).

If you took time to study the preceding Hebrew words, you discovered that even in the OT the idea of hope is often the idea of look to the future with eager, confident expectation, which calls for one to exhibit patience (explaining why hope is often translated as wait or waiting upon the Lord). The upshot is that even the Old Testament teaches that the fulfillment of the blessed **hope** is yet future. In the Old Testament, the **object** of **hope** was not as fully developed as in the progressive revelation in the New Testament (see next column) (The old is the new concealed and the new is the old revealed).

New Zealanders have an interesting description of hope as "the swimming thought" for when all other thoughts are "drowned", hope still remains! Amen

[Songs of Hope](#)

celestial blessings which are yet future, to which his eyes should constantly be directed and which are calculated to fill him with the greatest joy. It is not the prospect of terrestrial possessions in which he is to rejoice, but of a house eternal in the heavens.

Adoniram Judson once said that...

The future is as bright as the promises of God.

It is that glorious communion with Jesus Christ of which the Apostle speaks, when he says,

Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. (Php 1:22-note)

It is that state in which believers shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is (1Jn 3:2-note).

As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness.' (Ps 17:15- [note](#))

It is the

hope of righteousness for which, through the Spirit, believers wait, Gal. 5:5. ([click](#) sermon by Piper)

J. Vernon McGee adds that **HOPE**

should be the portion of the believer. The **circumstances** of the believer may not warrant rejoicing. The contrary may be true. **But he sees the future** (2Cor 4:16-note, 2Co 4:17-note, 2Co 4:18-note; 1Pe 1:6, 7-note) and in **hope** projects himself into other (future) circumstances which are more favorable. I think of a brother down in my Southland years ago. In a church service they were giving favorite Scripture verses. He stood and said that his favorite verse was **"It came to pass."** Everyone looked puzzled. The preacher stood up and said, "Brother, how in the world can 'It came to pass' be your favorite?" His answer was, "When I have trouble, and when I have problems, I like to read that verse, 'It came to pass,' and I know that my trouble... has come to pass; it hasn't come to stay." He was looking for a new day (**HOPE**) out there, and that is what Paul has in mind when he says, "rejoicing in **hope**."

Robert Haldane wrote that...

Were this **hope** kept in lively exercise, it would raise believers above the fear of man and a concern for the honors of this world. It would also enable them to despise the shame of the cross."

Remember that

In Thy presence is fullness of joy. In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever. (Ps 16:11-[note](#))

Hope-inspired joy gives us the courage to hold up under the afflictions of this age and inner strength to press on toward the goal.

Hiebert...

37 Well done free Mp3 Vocals that will be like water to your thirsty soul if you are in the need of hope. (Right click and download to computer or Ipod) ([Click for list of songs on hope](#))

Behind the cloud the starlight lurks,
Through showers the sunbeams fall;
For God, who loveth all his works
Has left his hope with all!
--John Greenleaf Whittier

John Piper's SUMMARY OF HOPE

(Piper's recommended series on Hope)

1.What is the definition of Christian hope?

Answer: a confident expectation of good things to come (Hebrews 6:11).

2.What is the ground of Christian hope?

Answer: the sovereign grace of God (2 Thessalonians 2:16), and the good news that Christ died for sinners (Colossians 1:23).

3.What is the cause of Christian hope in the human heart? What brings it about and sustains it?

Answer: the work of God in regeneration (1 Peter 1:3), and the promises of God in his Word (Romans 15:4).

4.What is the content of Christian hope? What are we hoping for?

Answer:

1. the appearing of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13),
2. the redemption of our bodies (Ro 8:23),
3. the consummation of our righteousness (Gal 5:5),
4. sharing the glory of God (Ro 5:2)
5. inheriting eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7).

Vanhoozer writes that...

Hope is waiting in confident expectation for God's promises in Christ, summed up in the gospel. Hope is fundamental because the gospel concerns God's culmination of his redemptive work, "the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed" (1 Pet. 1:13 NRSV), the "hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Most of that for which we trust in Christ remains yet future (Rom. 8:24b), for the Spirit's present blessings are "firstfruits." God alone controls fulfillment, so hope is waiting for God to act, graciously and powerfully, on our behalf as in the past. Christians hope "by faith" (Gal. 5:5). Faith trusts in God's promises, while hope expects what is to come. God's reliability and his promise should foster lively, growing assurance, despite delays and doubts. {Dictionary for theological interpretation of the Bible},

As Demarest observed, "The possession of present good is enjoyment, the anticipation of future good, hope." Our hope is centered on "the blessed hope" of Christ's return (Titus 2:13). The real hope of the believer is not death, but the second advent, and includes the redemption of our bodies (Ro 8:23; Phil 3:20, 21).

I like that story about the boy and his father who were planning a fishing trip for the next day. That evening as the father was putting his son to bed, the boy hugged his father's neck and said, "Daddy, thank you for tomorrow." As believers we too can go to bed each night confidently telling our Father "Abba, Daddy, thank You for tomorrow!"

Lift up your heads, pilgrims aweary,

See day's approach now crimson the sky;

Night shadows flee, and your Beloved,

Awaited with longing, at last draweth nigh.

—Camp

Here is a prayer...

"Guide me in your truth and teach me, for You are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."

(Psalm 25:5)

Play Matt Redman's song...

[My Hope - YouTube](#)

Related Resources on Hope:

- Nave Topical Bible [Hope](#)
- Scofield Reference Index [Hope](#)
- Thompson Chain Reference [Hope](#) [Believers' Eternal Hope](#) [Messianic Hope](#)
- The Topic Concordance [Hope](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Hope](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Hope](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Hope](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Hope](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Hope](#)
- Spurgeon's Illustration Collection [Christ: Our Only Hope](#) [Hope](#) [Hope \(2\)](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Hope](#) [Future Hope](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Hope](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Hope](#) [Hope](#)
- Morrish Bible Dictionary [Hope](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Hope](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Hope](#), [Hope](#)
- Webster Dictionary [Hope](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Hope](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Messianic Hope](#) [Hope](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Hope](#)
- [The Hope of Glory \(Ephesians 1:11-14\)](#)
- [A Better Hope: Drawing Near to God \(Hebrews 7:11-19\)](#)
- [Hope Bible.org](#) - article
- [The Hope of Heaven: Heaven According to Paul](#)
- [Two Unbearable Words" -- The Nature of Christian Hope](#)
- [The Believer's Hope: The Solid Rock](#)
- [Christ Our Hope \(Luke 2:21-35\)](#)
- [The Comforting Hope of 1 Thessalonians 4](#)
- [Hope from the Old Testament \(Romans 15:1-13\)](#)
- [Abounding in Hope \(Romans 15:13\)](#)
- [Faith, Hope, And Love](#)
- [Abounding in Hope \(Romans 15:13\)](#)
- [Hope and the Resurrection \(Luke 24\)](#)
- [The Hope of Heaven \(Daniel 12:1-13\)](#)
- [Hope and the Resurrection \(Luke 24\)](#)
- [Disappointment and Hope \(Luke 24:13-35\)](#)
- [A Message of Hope \(Hebrews 2:14-15\)](#)
- [Fixing Our Hope 1 Peter 1:13](#)
- [Conceptions of Davidic Hope in Ezekiel, Zechariah, Haggai, and Chronicles](#)
- [What is the living hope in 1 Peter 1:3?](#)
- [What is the Christian's hope?](#)
- [What is the difference between faith and hope?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about despair?](#)
- [What is hope theology / theology of hope?](#)
- [What does the Bible say about hope?](#)
- [What does it mean that faith, hope, and love remain \(1 Corinthians 13:13\)?](#)
- [What does it mean that hope deferred makes the heart sick \(Proverbs 13:12\)?](#)
- [What is the blessed hope?](#)
- [What does it mean that Christ in us is the hope of glory?](#)
- **Every mention of "hope" in the bible (NASB) (132 times)**

Ruth 1:12; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ezr. 10:2; Job 4:6; Job 5:16; Job 7:6; Job 8:13; Job 11:18; Job 11:20; Job 13:15; Job 14:7; Job 14:19; Job 17:15; Job 19:10; Job 27:8; Ps. 9:18; Ps. 31:24; Ps. 33:17; Ps. 33:18; Ps. 38:15; Ps. 39:7; Ps. 42:5; Ps. 42:11; Ps. 43:5; Ps. 62:5; Ps. 62:10; Ps. 71:5; Ps. 71:14; Ps. 119:49; Ps. 119:116; Ps. 119:166; Ps. 130:5; Ps. 130:7; Ps. 131:3; Ps. 146:5; Prov. 10:28; Prov. 11:7; Prov. 13:12; Prov. 19:18; Prov. 23:18; Prov. 24:14; Prov. 26:12; Prov. 29:20; Eccl. 9:4; Isa. 20:5; Isa. 20:6; Isa. 38:18; Isa. 59:9; Isa. 59:11; Jer. 14:8; Jer. 14:22; Jer. 17:13; Jer. 29:11; Jer. 31:17; Jer. 50:7; Lam. 3:18; Lam. 3:21; Lam. 3:24; Lam.

3:29; Ezek. 13:6; Ezek. 19:5; Ezek. 37:11; Hos. 2:15; Zech. 9:12;

Matt. 12:21; Jn. 5:45; Acts 2:26; Acts 16:19; Acts 23:6; Acts 24:15; Acts 26:6; Acts 26:7; Acts 27:20; Acts 28:20; Rom. 4:18; Rom. 5:2; Rom. 5:4; Rom. 5:5; Rom. 8:20; Rom. 8:24; Rom. 8:25; Rom. 12:12; Rom. 15:4; Rom. 15:12; Rom. 15:13; Rom. 15:24; 1 Co. 9:10; 1 Co. 13:13; 1 Co. 16:7; 2 Co. 1:7; 2 Co. 1:10; 2 Co. 1:13; 2 Co. 3:12; 2 Co. 5:11; 2 Co. 10:15; Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:12; Eph. 1:18; Eph. 2:12; Eph. 4:4; Phil. 1:20; Phil. 2:19; Phil. 2:23; Col. 1:5; Col. 1:23; Col. 1:27; 1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Thess. 2:19; 1 Thess. 4:13; 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Thess. 2:16; 1 Tim. 1:1; 1 Tim. 4:10; 1 Tim. 5:5; 1 Tim. 6:17; Tit. 1:2; Tit. 2:13; Tit. 3:7; Phlm. 1:22; Heb. 3:6; Heb. 6:11; Heb. 6:18; Heb. 6:19; Heb. 7:19; Heb. 10:23; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:21; 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 Jn. 3:3; 2 Jn. 1:12; 3 Jn. 1:14

Torrey's Topic - Hope

- In God Psalm 39:7 ; 1 Peter 1:21
- In Christ 1 Corinthians 15:19 ; 1 Timothy 1:1
- In God's promises Acts 26:6,7 ; Titus 1:2
- In the mercy of God Psalm 33:18
- Is the work of the Holy Spirit Romans 15:13 ; Galatians 5:5

OBTAINED THROUGH

- Grace 2 Thessalonians 2:16
- The word Psalm 119:81
- Patience and comfort of the Scriptures Romans 15:4
- The gospel Colossians 1:5,23
- Faith Romans 5:1,2 ; Galatians 5:5
- The result of experience Romans 5:4
- A better hope brought in by Christ Hebrews 7:19

DESCRIBED AS

- Good 2 Thessalonians 2:16
- Lively 1 Peter 1:3
- Sure and steadfast Hebrews 6:19
- Gladdening Proverbs 10:28
- Blessed Titus 2:13
- Makes not ashamed Romans 5:5
- Triumphs over difficulties Romans 4:18
- Is an encouragement to boldness in preaching 2 Corinthians 3:12

SAINTS

- Are called to Ephesians 4:4
- Rejoice in Romans 5:2 ; 12:12
- Have all, the same Ephesians 4:4
- Have, in death Proverbs 14:32
- Should abound in Romans 15:13
- Should look for the object of Titus 2:13
- Should not be ashamed of Psalm 119:116
- Should hold fast Hebrews 3:6
- Should not be moved from Colossians 1:23
- Should continue in Psalm 71:14 ; 1 Peter 1:13
- Connected with faith and love 1 Corinthians 13:13

OBJECTS OF

- Salvation 1 Thessalonians 5:8
- Righteousness Galatians 5:5
- Christ's glorious appearing Titus 2:13
- A resurrection Acts 23:6 ; 24:15
- Eternal life Titus 1:2 ; 3:7
- Glory Romans 5:2 ; Colossians 1:27
- Leads to purity 1 John 3:3
- Leads to patience Romans 8:25 ; 1 Thessalonians 1:3
- Seek for full assurance of Hebrews 6:11
- Be ready to give an answer concerning 1 Peter 3:15
- Encouragement to Hosea 2:15 ; Zechariah 9:12
- Encourage others to Psalm 130:7
- Happiness of Psalm 146:5
- Life is the season of Ecclesiastes 9:4 ; Isaiah 38:18
- The wicked have no ground for Ephesians 2:12

OF THE WICKED

- Is in their worldly possessions
Job 31:24
- Shall make them ashamed
Isaiah 20:5,6 ; Zechariah 9:5
- Shall perish Job 8:13 ; 11:20 ; Proverbs 10:28
- Shall be extinguished in death Job 27:8

Illustrated by

- An Anchor Hebrews 6:19
- A helmet 1 Thessalonians 5:8

Exemplified

- David Psalm 39:7
- Paul Acts 24:15
- Abraham Romans 4:18
- Thessalonians 1 Thessalonians 1:3

Girdlestone's Synonyms of the Old Testament - Hope

The words ordinarily rendered hope in the A. V. are kavah (קָוָה - Ass. qû) and yachal (יָחַל). The first, which is frequently used in the Psalms, signifies the straining of the mind in a certain direction in an expectant attitude; the second, which occurs several times in the Book of Job, signifies a long patient waiting. The former is generally rendered πομένω; the latter usually λπιζω, but often also πομένω.

Teaching of the NT

We now approach the N.T. with a clear distinction between faith on the one hand, and trust and hope on the other. Faith is the taking God at his word, while trust and patience and also hope are the proper fruits of faith, manifesting in various forms the confidence which the believer feels. A message comes to me from the Author of my existence; it may be a threat, a promise, or a command. If I take it as 'yea and amen,' that is Faith; and the act which results is an act of amunah or faithfulness towards God. Faith, according to Scripture, seems to imply a word, message, or revelation. So the learned Romaine says in his Life of Faith.: - 'Faith signifies the believing the truth of the Word of God; it relates to some word spoken or to some promise made by Him, and it expresses the belief which a person who hears it has of its being true; he assents to it, relies up on it, and acts accordingly: this is faith.' Its fruit will vary according to the nature of the message received, and according to the circumstances of the receiver. It led Noah to build an ark, Abraham to offer up his son, Moses to refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, the Israelites to march round the walls of Jericho. 'I believe God that it shall be even as it has been told me' [Acts 27:25.] - This is a picture of the

process which the Bible calls faith. It is the expectation (πόσις) of things hoped for; because it accepts God's promises concerning the future as true; and it is the conviction (λεγχο) of what is (trusted, but) not seen, because those who have it do not depend up on the use of their senses, but are able to endure, ' as seeing Him who is invisible.' See Hebrews 11:1-40.

In the Gospels the Lord Jesus demands to be believed. He asks all men to take Him to be what He claimed to be. If they would only take Him as true, they would be in the way of receiving and entering into a new life. He said, 'I am the Truth.' All that Israel had to believe under the old dispensation was summed up in Him. If they believed Moses, they would believe Him. If they rejected Him, they were doing dishonour to God. Sin sprang from a disbelief of God's word. Christ came to manifest, in a life of love and purity, and in a death of self-sacrifice, what God had really said, and what his feelings towards man actually were. Those that accepted the Truth, as it was revealed in Jesus Christ, entered into life.

The Book of Acts carries this teaching a stage further by exhibiting the special facts which were prominently put forward as things to be believed. These facts were the mission, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, as the ground of pardon, the way of life, and the pledge of an inheritance beyond the grave.

The Epistles enter more fully into details, answer different questions, expound doctrines, apply sacred truths to the exigencies of daily life. But all is summed up in Christ; 'Whosoever takes him to be true shall not be ashamed' (Romans 9:33, quoted from Isaiah 28:16).

The word hope barely exists in the Gospels, but is frequently to be found in the later books of the N.T in Romans 15:12, the Apostle quotes from the LXX version of Isaiah 11:10 the words, ' in him shall the Gentiles hope,' [Here the Hebrew word is darash, to seek.] and then proceeds, 'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.' in the A. V. the point of the connection is missed by the substitution of the word trust for hope in the first part of the passage. But there is no objection to this rendering in itself; for though λπιζω represents trust with reference to the future, while πειθομαι represents confidence with regard to the present, yet they are both renderings of one Hebrew word, as we have just seen, and cannot be separated by a very strong line.

In Acts 2:26, St. Peter quotes from the Sixteenth Psalm the words 'My flesh also shall rest (or dwell) in hope (κατασκηνώσει π' λπιδι);' and this expression, ' in hope,' is repeated several times, being applied to Abraham (Romans 4:18), to Christians (Acts 26:6; Romans 5:2; Titus 1:2), to the ministry (1 Corinthians 9:10), and to creation itself (Romans 8:20). All hope is concentrated in Christ (1 Timothy 1:1; Colossians 1:27), and looks for the unseen realities of another world (Romans 8:24), even the resurrection (Acts 24:15), eternal life (Titus 3:7), and glory (Romans 5:2). The word 'hope' as used in ordinary conversation has an element of uncertainty in it, but the Christian's hope is absolute confidence. The two Greek renderings of the Hebrew word yachal named above (§ 6), λπις and πομένη, are found together in 1 Thessalonians 1:3.

ILLUSTRATIONS from Bible.org

The Dying Boy - The school system in a large city had a program to help children keep up with their school work during stays in the city's hospitals. One day a teacher who was assigned to the program received a routine call asking her to visit a particular child. She took the child's name and room number and talked briefly with the child's regular class teacher. "We're studying nouns and adverbs in his class now," the regular teacher said, "and I'd be grateful if you could help him understand them so he doesn't fall too far behind."

The hospital program teacher went to see the boy that afternoon. No one had mentioned to her that the boy had been badly burned and was in great pain. Upset at the sight of the boy, she stammered as she told him, "I've been sent by your school to help you with nouns and adverbs." When she left she felt she hadn't accomplished much. But the next day, a nurse asked her, "What did you do to that boy?" The teacher felt she must have done something wrong and began to apologize. "No, no," said the nurse. "You don't know what I mean. We've been worried about that little boy, but ever since yesterday, his whole attitude has changed. He's fighting back, responding to treatment. It's as though he's decided to live."

Two weeks later the boy explained that he had completely given up hope until the teacher arrived. Everything changed when he came to a simple realization. He expressed it this way: "They wouldn't send a teacher to work on nouns and adverbs with a dying boy, would they?" Bits and Pieces, July, 1991

Little League - A man approached a little league baseball game one afternoon. He asked a boy in the dugout what the score was. The boy responded, "Eighteen to nothing—we're behind." "Boy," said the spectator, "I'll bet you're discouraged." "Why should I be discouraged?" replied the little boy. "We haven't even gotten up to bat yet!"

A man sentenced to death obtained a reprieve by assuring the king he would teach his majesty's horse to fly within the year—on the condition that if he didn't succeed, he would be put to death at the end of the year. "Within a year," the man explained later, "the king may die, or I may die, or the horse may die. Furthermore, in a year, who knows? Maybe the horse will learn to fly." - Bernard M. Baruch

There are no hopeless situations; there are only people who have grown hopeless about them.- Clare Boothe Luce

Laboratory Experiment A number of years ago researchers performed an experiment to see the effect hope has on those undergoing hardship. Two sets of laboratory rats were placed in separate tubs of water. The researchers left one set in the water and found that within an hour they had all drowned. The other rats were periodically lifted out of the water and then returned. When that happened, the second set of rats swam for over 24 hours. Why? Not because they were given a rest, but because they suddenly had hope!

Those animals somehow hoped that if they could stay afloat just a little longer, someone would reach down and rescue them. If hope holds such power for unthinking rodents, how much greater should its effect be on our lives. Today in the Word, May, 1990, MBI, p. 34

God Ain't Dead! I am not a connoisseur of great art, but from time to time a painting or picture will really speak a clear, strong message to me. Some time ago I saw a picture of an old burned-out mountain shack. All that remained was the chimney...the charred debris of what had been that family's sole possession. In front of this destroyed home stood an old grandfather-looking man dressed only in his underclothes with a small boy clutching a pair of patched overalls. It was evident that the child was crying. Beneath the picture were the words which the artist felt the old man was speaking to the boy. They were simple words, yet they presented a profound theology and philosophy of life. Those words were, "Hush child, God ain't dead!"

That vivid picture of that burned-out mountain shack, that old man, the weeping child, and those words "God ain't dead? keep returning to my mind. Instead of it being a reminder of the despair of life, it has come to be a reminder of hope! I need reminders that there is hope in this world.

In the midst of all of life's troubles and failures, I need mental pictures to remind me that all is not lost as long as God is alive and in control of His world.

James DeLoach, associate pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Houston, quoted in When God Was Taken Captive, W. Aldrich, Multnomah, 1989, p. 24.

Nothing In the novel, "Cat's Cradle" by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., an important book comes to light. It is titled "What Can a Thoughtful Man Hope for Mankind on Earth, Given the Experience of the Past Million Years?" The chief character is anxious to read it. But when he does, he finds that it doesn't take long. The whole book consists of one word: "Nothing." Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Cat's Cradle.

Flagstaff Flooding One night at dinner a man, who had spent many summers in Maine, fascinated his companions by telling of his experiences in a little town named Flagstaff. The town was to be flooded, as part of a large lake for which a dam was being built. In the months before it was to be flooded, all improvements and repairs in the whole town were stopped. What was the use of painting a house if it were to be covered with water in six months? Why repair anything when the whole village was to be wiped out? So, week by week, the whole town became more and more bedraggled, more gone to seed, more woebegone. Then he added by way of explanation: "Where there is no faith in the future, there is no power in the present." Halford E. Luccock, Unfinished Business.

College Tuition From Parade magazine comes the story of self-made millionaire Eugene Land, who greatly changed the lives of a sixth-grade class in East Harlem. Mr. Lang had been asked to speak to a class of 59 sixth-graders. What could he say to inspire these students, most of whom would drop out of school? He wondered how he could get these predominantly black and Puerto Rican children even to look at him. Scrapping his notes, he decided to speak to them from his heart.

"Stay in school," he admonished, "and I'll help pay the college tuition for every one of you." At that moment the lives of these students changed. For the first time they had hope. Said one student, "I had something to look forward to, something waiting for me. It was a golden feeling." Nearly 90 percent of that class went on to graduate from high school.

Thirty Years' War During the Thirty Years' War in the 17th century, German pastor Paul Gerhardt and his family were forced to flee from their home. One night as they stayed in a small village inn, homeless and afraid, his wife broke down and cried openly in

despair. To comfort her, Gerhardt reminded her of Scripture promises about God's provision and keeping. Then, going out to the garden to be alone, he too broke down and wept. He felt he had come to his darkest hour.

Soon afterward, Gerhardt felt the burden lifted and sensed anew the Lord's presence. Taking his pen, he wrote a hymn that has brought comfort to many.

“Give to the winds thy fears; hope, and be undismayed;
God hears thy sighs and counts thy tears;
God shall lift up thy head.
Through waves and clouds and storms
He gently clears the way.
Wait thou His time,
so shall the night soon end in joyous day.”

It is often in our darkest times that God makes His presence known most clearly. He uses our sufferings and troubles to show us that He is our only source of strength. And when we see this truth, like Pastor Gerhardt, we receive new hope.

Are you facing a great trial? Take heart. Put yourself in God's hands. Wait for His timing. He will give you a “song in the night.” Our Daily Bread, May 7, 1992

Alexander the Great As Alexander the Great was setting out on his conquest of Asia, he inquired into the finances of his followers. To ensure that they would not be troubled over the welfare of their dependents during their absence, he distributed crown estates and revenues among them. When he had thus disposed of nearly all the royal resources, his friend General Perdiccas asked Alexander what he had reserved for himself. “Hope,” answered the king. “In that case,” said Perdiccas, “we who share in your labors will also take part in your hopes.” He then refused the estate allotted to him, and several other of the king's friends did the same. Daily Walk, May 25, 1992.

Famous Atheist - A little over a month before he died, the famous atheist Jean-Paul Sartre declared that he so strongly resisted feelings of despair that he would say to himself, “I know I shall die in hope.” Then in profound sadness, he would add, “But hope needs a foundation.” Our Daily Bread, April 17, 1995

Hope Means... Hope means hoping when things are hopeless, or it is no virtue at all...As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude; it is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength. G. K. Chesterton

Hope Springs Eternal The English poet Alexander Pope wrote, “Hope springs eternal in the human breast: Man never is, but always to be blest.” But where does man turn when hope dries up?

The director of a medical clinic told of a terminally ill young man who came in for his usual treatment. A new doctor who was on duty said to him casually and cruelly, “You know, don't you, that you won't live out the year?”

As the young man left, he stopped by the director's desk and wept. “That man took away my hope,” he blurted out.

“I guess he did,” replied the director. “Maybe it's time to find a new one.”

Commenting on this incident, Lewis Smedes wrote, “Is there a hope when hope is taken away? Is there hope when the situation is hopeless? That question leads us to Christian hope, for in the Bible, hope is no longer a passion for the possible. It becomes a passion for the promise.”

Our Daily Bread, December 19, 1996

Paul and Barnabas “Here it appears either Paul or Barnabas went too far. It must have been a violent disagreement to separate two associates who were so closely united. Indeed, the text indicates as much.

“Such examples are written for our consolation: for it is a great comfort to us to hear that great saints, who have the Spirit of God, also struggle. Those who say that saints do not sin would deprive us of this comfort.

“Samson, David, and many other celebrated men full of the Holy Spirit fell into grievous sins. Job and Jeremiah cursed the day of their birth; Elijah and Jonah were weary of life and desired death.

“No one has ever fallen so grievously that he may not rise again. Conversely, no one stands so firmly that he may not fall. If Peter

(and Paul and Barnabas) fell, I too may fall. If they rose again, I too may rise again." - Martin Luther

George Bernard Shaw George Bernard Shaw is perhaps most renowned as a free thinker and liberal philosopher. In his last writings we read, "The science to which I pinned my faith is bankrupt. Its counsels, which should have established the millennium, led, instead, directly to the suicide of Europe. I believed them once. In their name I helped to destroy the faith of millions of worshippers in the temples of a thousand creeds. And now they look at me and witness the great tragedy of an atheist who has lost his faith."

Grave Inscription

Typical inscription on a grave in Paul's day:

**I was not
I became
I am not
I care not**

Warren Wiersbe, Be Ready, p. 83

SPURGEON'S DEVOTIONALS

Hope - Once on a time, certain strong laborers were sent forth by the great King to level a primeval forest, to plough it, to sow it, and to bring to him the harvest. They were stout-hearted and strong, and willing enough for labor, and much they needed all their strength and more. One stalwart laborer was named Industry: consecrated work was his. His brother Patience, with thews of steel, went with him, and tired not in the longest days under the heaviest labors. To help them they had Zeal, clothed with ardent and indomitable energy. Side by side there stood his kinsman Self-denial, and his friend Importunity. These went forth to their labor, and they took with them, to cheer their toils, their well-beloved sister Hope; and well it was they did, for they needed the music of her consolation ere the work was done, for the forest trees were huge and demanded many sturdy blows of the axe ere they would fall prone upon the ground. One by one the giant forest kings were overthrown, but the labor was immense and incessant. At night when they went to their rest, the day's work always seemed so light, for as they crossed the threshold, Patience, wiping the sweat from his brow, would be encouraged, and Self-denial would be strengthened by hearing the sweet voice of Hope within singing, 'God will bless us, God, even our own God, will bless us.' They felled the lofty trees to the music of that strain; they cleared the acres one by one, they tore from their sockets the hug' roots, they delved the soil, they sowed the corn, and waited for the harvest, often much discouraged, but still held to their work as by silver chains and golden fetters by the sweet sound of the voice which chanted so constantly, 'God, ever our own God, will bless us.' They never could refrain from service, for Hope never could refrain from song. They were ashamed to be discouraged, they were shocked to be despairing, for still the voice rang clearly out at noon and eventide, 'God will bless us, God, even our own God, will bless us.' You know the parable, you recognise the voice: may you hear it in your souls to-day!

HOPE - It is reported that in the Tamul language there is no word for hope. Alas! poor men, if we were all as destitute of the blessed comfort itself as these Tamul speakers are of the word! What must be the misery of souls in hell where they remember the word, but can never know hope itself!

Christ: Our Only Hope - On a huge cross by the side of an Italian highway hung a hideous caricature of the Beloved of our souls, who poured out his life for our redemption. Out of reverence to the living Christ we turned aside, disgusted from the revolting image, but not until we had espied the words Spes Unica, in capitals over its head. Here was truth emblazoned on an idol. Yes, indeed, Jesus, our now exalted, but once crucified Lord is the sole and only hope of man. Assuredly, O Lord Jesus, thou art spes unica to our soul.

['Other refuge have we none, Hangs our helpless soul on thee.'](#)

We found this diamond in the mire of superstition: does it sparkle any the less?

Christ's ability to Save

Able to save is Jesus still. "No hope" is not to be said by any of the mariners' life brigade while he sights the crew of the sinking

vessel. "No hope" is not to be said by any one of the fire brigade while he knows there are living men in the burning pile. "No hope" is not to be said by any one of the valiant brigade of the Christian church while the soul is still within reach of the sound of mercy. "No hope" is a cry which no human tongue should utter, which no human heart should heed. Oh, may God grant us grace whenever we get an opportunity to go and tell all we meet with that are bowed down, "There is lifting up." And tell them where it is likewise. Tell them it is only at the cross. Tell them it is through the precious blood. Tell them it is to be had for nothing, through simply trusting Christ. Tell them it is of free grace, that no merits of theirs are wanted, that no good things are they to bring, but that they may come just as they are, and find lifting up in Christ.

Who shall stand against the Almighty God? As well might the fly hope to quench the sun when he has already burned up his wings in a candle! As well might you seek to dry up the Atlantic, or bid Niagara leap up the rock instead of down! As well might you hope to stop the moon in its course, or to pluck the stars from their places, as think to stand against God!

Christ always preached doctrine that was hopeful. While he denounced self-righteousness, he would turn round and say, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:32). If he ever had a frown on his brow, it was for the hypocrite and the proud man. But he had tears for sinners and loving invitations for penitent ones.

Our hope is that we shall be approved of Him, and shall hear Him say: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." —1 Peter 5:7

It is a happy way of soothing sorrow when we can feel—"HE careth for me." Christian! do not dishonour religion by always wearing a brow of care; come, cast your burden upon your Lord. You are staggering beneath a weight which your Father would not feel. What seems to you a crushing burden, would be to him but as the small dust of the balance. Nothing is so sweet as to

"Lie passive in God's hands,
And know no will but his."

O child of suffering, be thou patient; God has not passed thee over in his providence. He who is the feeder of sparrows, will also furnish you with what you need. Sit not down in despair; hope on, hope ever. Take up the arms of faith against a sea of trouble, and your opposition shall yet end your distresses. There is One who careth for you. His eye is fixed on you, his heart beats with pity for your woe, and his hand omnipotent shall yet bring you the needed help. The darkest cloud shall scatter itself in showers of mercy. The blackest gloom shall give place to the morning. He, if thou art one of his family, will bind up thy wounds, and heal thy broken heart. Doubt not his grace because of thy tribulation, but believe that he loveth thee as much in seasons of trouble as in times of happiness. What a serene and quiet life might you lead if you would leave providing to the God of providence! With a little oil in the cruse, and a handful of meal in the barrel, Elijah outlived the famine, and you will do the same. If God cares for you, why need you care too? Can you trust him for your soul, and not for your body? He has never refused to bear your burdens, he has never fainted under their weight. Come, then, soul! have done with fretful care, and leave all thy concerns in the hand of a gracious God.

Some persons have no hope, or only one of which they might justly be ashamed. Ask many who deny the Scriptures what is their hope for the future. "I shall die like a dog," says one. "When I'm dead there's an end of me." If I had such a wretched hope as that, I certainly would not go about the world proclaiming it. I should not think of gathering a large congregation like this and saying to you: "Brethren, rejoice with me, for we are all to die like cats and dogs." It would never strike me as a matter to be gloried in.

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."—Acts 1:11

MANY are celebrating our Lord's first coming this day; let us turn our thoughts to the promise of His second coming. This is as sure as the first advent and derives a great measure of its certainty from it. He who came as a lowly man to serve will assuredly come to take the reward of His service. He who came to suffer will not be slow in coming to reign.

This is our glorious hope, for we shall share His joy. Today we are in our concealment and humiliation, even as He was while here below; but when He cometh it will be our manifestation, even as it will be His revelation. Dead saints shall live at His appearing. The slandered and despised shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Then shall the saints appear as kings and priests, and the days of their mourning shall be ended. The long rest and inconceivable splendor of the millennial reign will be an abundant recompense for the ages of witnessing and warring.

Oh, that the Lord would come! He is coming! He is on the road and traveling quickly. The sound of His approach should be as music to our hearts! Ring out, ye bells of hope!

Salvation is a diamond with many facets. If I begin to describe our hope, I must begin with what, I think, is always the topmost stone of it—the hope of the second advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; for we believe that when He shall appear we shall also appear with Him in glory.

Hope as much as ever a man can hope; for when your hope is in God you cannot hope too much.

There is always something to hoped for in the Christian's life.

DEVOTIONALS OUR DAILY BREAD

Hope Springs Eternal - Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. --Jeremiah 17:7

The English poet Alexander Pope wrote,

Hope springs eternal in the human breast: Man never is, but always to be blest.

But where does man turn when hope dries up?

The director of a medical clinic told of a terminally ill young man who came in for his usual treatment. A new doctor who was on duty said to him casually and cruelly,

"You know, don't you, that you won't live out the year?"

As the young man left, he stopped by the director's desk and wept.

"That man took away my hope," he blurted out.

"I guess he did," replied the director. "Maybe it's time to find a new one."

Commenting on this incident, Lewis Smedes wrote,

"Is there a hope when hope is taken away? Is there hope when the situation is hopeless? That question leads us to Christian hope, for in the Bible. Hope is no longer a passion for the possible. It becomes a passion for the promise." ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The secret of coping is hoping in God.

Already enjoying the pleasures of a future event - [We] rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:2).

The glories that await the Christian defy our comprehension. What little we understand about them, however, fills us with anticipation. We look longingly to that day when we shall enjoy heaven in all its fullness.

In Dare to Believe, Dan Baumann told a story that illustrates the unique experience of knowing something is ours yet longing to enjoy it more fully. Every year at Christmastime, he would do a lot of snooping, trying to find the gift-wrapped presents and figure out what was in them. One year he discovered a package with his name on it that was easy to identify. His mother couldn't disguise the golf clubs inside. Baumann wrote:

"When Mom wasn't around, I would go and feel the package, shake it, and pretend that I was on the golf course. The point is, I was already enjoying the pleasures of a future event; namely, the unveiling. It had my name on it. I knew what it was. But only Christmas would reveal it in its fullness."

That's the way it is for believers as we await what God has for us in heaven. Wrote Baumann, "We shall be glorified, but we are beginning to taste glorification now... This quality of life begins the moment an individual places faith in Christ and thereby shares His life. We have eternal life—here and now—but it is only a foretaste of its fullness. God has whetted our appetites for the main course, which has to come later!"

Christians have good reason to rejoice in hope! —R. W. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Future prospects bring present joys.

Seeing With Hope

Read: Romans 4:13-25

God . . . gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did. —Romans 4:17

Her eyes saw the leafless trees in winter, but because her mind was clouded by Alzheimer's disease she thought the trees were dead. "Someone should cut down those trees," she would repeat day after day. "They aren't coming back."

How often we see our "leafless" circumstances with a mind clouded by past experience and disappointment. We may look at a friendship, a marriage, a family feud, and say to ourselves, "Cut it down. Sever the tie. Make the break. It's hopeless!" But God wants us to see with hope because of His presence and power. We can't bring life to these seemingly impossible situations, but He can.

God's promise to Abraham that he would have a son seemed to have expired with age. Sarah his wife was barren, and his own body was "dead" at the age of a hundred (Rom. 4:19; Heb. 11:11-12). Yet Abraham believed God, "who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations" (Rom. 4:17-18).

What leafless, lifeless situation do you see today? Don't believe everything your mind tells you about it. Instead, ask God for eyes of faith that see with hope. By David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Our physical eyes do not always see
The work God is doing today,
But hope in God's Word will surely bear fruit,
Though often there is a delay.
—Hess

Hope, like an anchor, is fixed on the unseen.

A Living Hope

Blessed be [God] . . . who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope. —1 Peter 1:3

Today's Scripture: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Life is hard for everybody, but it's much harder for some than for others. Putting our trust in Christ as our Savior does little to change that. Nothing in the Bible promises us a free pass merely because we are Christ's followers. In fact, some of our wounds may not heal and some of our deficiencies may not be corrected during our lifetime. They may even get worse. Yet our deformities and weaknesses are only temporary.

Anticipating what God has in store for us can put a smile in our heart. Hope gives us poise and lets us live with inner strength, because we know that one day we will be dramatically different than we are now.

If you are in some way damaged by past abuse or feeling defeated by sin, or if you feel so inferior to others that you walk with your eyes to the ground, take heart in what God has in store for you. Live today with the courage God gives you. Make what you can of your afflictions. But rejoice, because all that degrades and limits you is only temporary. It will be gone—some of it sooner rather than later.

If you have a living hope in Christ, you can deal with your past because of your future. God's glorious best for you lies ahead. By: Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, give us grace to trust You when
Life's burdens seem too much to bear;
Dispel the darkness with new hope

And help us rise above despair.

—Sper

Christians can cope with their past because they have hope for the future.

Let in A Ray of Hope

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing (Romans 15:13).

The English poet Alexander Pope said,

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast, man never is but always to be blessed."

As Christians, we know there is only one sure and abiding source of hope, and that is God. If hope originated in ourselves, we would be cast into the depths of despair because life's complex problems have a way of squeezing every last ounce of it from our hearts. But when we trust God, hope abounds by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In his book *Live With Your Emotions*, Hazen G. Werner quotes part of a letter from a woman who had run out of hope. She wrote,

"A vile and ugly sin had dogged my way for years. My soul had been eclipsed in darkness. I began to feel I would never be emancipated from its grasp. Then one evening in the midst of my despair, I felt the impulse to say, 'Thank you, God, anyway,' and for a moment it was light. I said to myself, 'That must be the way.' I began to thank Him still more, and the light continued and grew, and for a whole evening I was relieved of my burden."

What that woman seemingly stumbled onto by accident, the psalmist knew from experience. The power of gratitude can lift the weight of the most pressing trial. Turning the gaze of his soul heavenward, he saw God as an inexhaustible source of hope.

When we get discouraged, we can talk to ourselves as David did:

"Why are you cast down, O my soul? Hope in God" (Psalm 42:5).

No matter how dark the path, thank God for Himself. It will open a window to heaven and let in a ray of hope.

—D. J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Hope, like an anchor, is fixed on the unseen.

Hopeless

God moves in a mysterious way - "Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, ... To deliver their soul from death ([Psalm 33:18-19](#)).

William Cowper, though a Christian, had sunk to the depths of despair. One foggy night he called for a horse drawn carriage and asked to be taken to the London Bridge on the Thames River. He was so overcome by depression that he intended to commit suicide. After two hours of driving through the mist, Cowper's coachman reluctantly confessed that he was lost. Disgusted by the delay, Cowper left the carriage and decided to find the London Bridge on foot. After walking a short distance, he discovered that he was at his own doorstep. The carriage had been going in circles. Recognizing the restraining hand of God and convicted by the Spirit, Cowper realized that the way out of his troubles was to look to God, not to jump into the river. With gratitude he sat down and wrote these reassuring words:

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.
O fearful saint, fresh courage take; the clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings on your head."
([Play hymn](#))

Cowper's hymn of gratitude has comforted many of God's people since the eighteenth century.

The psalmist said, "The eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him." Our need is always His concern. —H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

No life is hopeless unless Christ is ruled out

Prepare To Live

Read: Romans 15:13-19 | Bible in a Year: Joshua 13-15; Luke 1:57-80

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope. —Romans 15:13

In 1931, Jane Whyte felt she was nearing the end of her life. Her husband Alexander, the famous Scottish preacher, had died 10 years earlier. As she looked at the world around her, she was depressed by the moral and political chaos. There seemed to be no reason for her to go on, nothing for her to do.

At dinner one evening, she sat next to a man who sensed her dejection. “What is your greatest concern?” he asked. “I’m preparing to die,” said Mrs. Whyte. “Why not prepare to live?” he suggested.

That was the question Mrs. Whyte needed to hear to break the deadlock in her life. She began to see that God wanted her to live and to touch others for Him. Her attitude changed and within a year she led a Christian outreach team on a mission to Geneva, Switzerland. That trip profoundly affected the lives of many people.

Life can seem overwhelming at times, but God offers us hope. Paul wrote, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

Regardless of your age or circumstances, don’t despair and “prepare to die.” Believers in Christ can prepare to live—filled with hope, joy, and peace.By [David C. McCasland](#)

The hope we have in Jesus Christ
Replaces all despair;
He fills us with His joy and peace
And shows His love and care.
—Sper

No one is hopeless who hopes in God.
The Blessed Hope — **Stabilizing Effect** — Click Here
to go to this column #3

The Blessed Hope — **Sanctifying Effect** — Click
Here to go to this column #4