

May You Abound in Hope

May 3, 2020

The God of hope

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 (Rom 15:13)

Faith is built on hope (Hope proceeds faith)

Heb 11:1-2 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the men of old gained approval.

The example of Abraham

Rom 4:18-21 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE." 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; 20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

Hope and faith were in combat.

Faith won and made hope a reality.

Faith reaches up and grasps hope and brings it into the realm of the present.

Hope is always in the future; it is a dream, it is never real. (from EW Kenyon)

Hope – Faith – Love work together in unison

1Thes 1:3 constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

1Cor 13:13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Definition of hope

"Confident expectation" or "anticipation" – not "wishful thinking."

(from Holman treasury of key Bible words)

"An expectation or belief in the fulfillment of something desired."

(from Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible)

My definition = "Looking to the future with a confident expectation of good."

Jer 29:11 'For 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.'

The danger of hopelessness – A lack of hope can result in:

Feelings of despair

Prov 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

(see also 1Ch 29:15; Job 6:11; 7:6; Ps 88:12-18; Eccl 2:17; 2Co 1:8)

Feelings of being abandoned by God

Ps 22:2 ... O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.

(Lam 3:18; Ezk 37:11)

Suicidal thoughts – longing for life to end

Elijah – 1Ki 19:4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers."

(see also Job 7:13-15; Jer 8:3; Jonah 4:3,8; Rev 9:6).

Suicide

2Sa 17:23 Now when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his donkey and arose and went to his home, to his city, and set his house in order, and strangled himself ... (See also 1Sa 31:4; 1Ki 16:18; Mt 27:5)

Surviving on Hope (from Nelson's complete book of stories, illustrations, and quotes)

In his book, **Man's Search for Meaning**, **Viktor Frankl** tells of his years trapped in the indescribable horrors of Auschwitz and Dachau. He was transported there like a despised animal, given two minutes to strip naked or be whipped, every hair was shaved from his body, and he was condemned to a living death. His father, mother, brother, and wife died in the camps or were sent to the gas ovens. His existence was full of cold, fear, starvation, pain, lice and vermin, dehumanization, exhaustion, and terror.

Frankl wrote that he was able to survive because he never lost the quality of hope. Those prisoners who lost faith in the future were doomed. When a prisoner lost hope, Frankl said, he let himself decline, becoming subject to mental and physical decay. He would die from the inside out. Frankl said that this usually happened quite suddenly. One morning a prisoner would just refuse to get up. He wouldn't get dressed or wash or go outside to the parade grounds. No amount of pleading by his fellow prisoners would help. No threatening by the captors would have any effect. Losing all hope, he had simply given up. He would lay there in his own excrement till he died. American soldiers later told Frankl that this behavior pattern existed also among prisoners of war, and was called "give-up-it is." When a prisoner lost hope, said Frankl, "he lost his spiritual hold."

In his book **Winning Life's Toughest Battles**, psychologist **Julius Segal** wrote about the 25,000 American soldiers who were held by the Japanese in POW camps during World War II. "Forced to exist under inhumane conditions, many of them died. Others, however, survived and eventually returned home. There was no reason to believe there was a difference in the stamina of these two groups of soldiers. The survivors, however, were different in one major respect: They confidently expected to be released someday. As described by Robins Readers in Holding On to Hope, 'They talked about the kinds of homes they would have, the jobs they would choose, and even described the kind of person they would marry. They drew pictures on the walls to illustrate their dreams. Some even found ways to study subjects related to the kind of career they wanted to pursue.'"

Segal goes on to point out that researchers have found that a hopeful attitude can lead to physiological changes that improve the immune system—the body's defense against toxins and disease.

The fruit of hope

Hope produces joy

Prov 10:28 The hope of the righteous is gladness, But the expectation of the wicked perishes.

The joy of hope remains even when facing trials

Rom 5:1-3 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance (Rom 12:12).

Hope gives you perseverance

Rom 8:24-25 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it (1Thes 1:3).

Hope makes you have confidence

2Cor 3:12 Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech (Phil 1:20)

How to increase your hope**Growth in personal relationship with God**

Father – the God of hope (Rom 15:13; 1Pt 1:21)

Jesus the Son of God – Christ Jesus, who is our hope (1Cor 15:19; 1Tim 1:1)

Holy Spirit - (we) abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:13; Gal 5:5)

Grace

2Thes 2:16 ... who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace,

God's Word of promise

Rom 15:4 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.

(Col 1:5, 23; Tit 1:2; Ps 119:81)

Praise and worship

Rom 5:1-2 ... and we exult in hope of the glory of God. (Rom 12:12)