

The Struggle to Maintain Hope and Help Others in a Dark World

We all struggle with the dark realities of our fallen world and we crave for God's help and presence to help us overcome the painful uncertainties of our lives. Why do we have a hard time with hope? What are some of the biblical guidelines to overcome the obstacles blocking hope? Can we recognise what God has already given us to help us in this struggle? How can we face today and find hope for tomorrow? How can we surrender to the healing power of our faithful God regardless of our dark world?

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Introduction: The battle – my story of hope

What is hope?

Be strong, and let your heart take courage, All you who hope in the LORD. (Psalm 31:24)
How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in the LORD his God.
(Psalm 146:5.)
My soul, wait in silence for God only, For my hope is from Him. (Psalm 62:5.)

1. Why is it hard to hope?

2. Why hope? Why teach hope?

Fear/Pride:



Hope:

3. Prerequisites of hope:

a.) Attitude about our PAST – Thankfulness

i. Characteristics of thankfulness:

ii. Why thankfulness?

iii. Thankfulness is an attitude of the heart (The how of thankfulness)

b.) Attitude about our PRESENT – Satisfaction - Content

“I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?” 2 Cor.11: 23-29.

“for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” Phil.4:11-13.

c.) Attitude about our FUTURE – Hope

“King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”
Daniel 3:16-18.

“Hope is not a granted wish or a favor performed; no, it is far greater than that. It is an **unpredictable dependence on God.**” Max Lucado

“But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ... If God is for us who can be against us ...

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom.: 8: 22-25, 38-39.)

God’s promise:

Jesus’ promise:

Jesus’ promise:

„The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” Deut. 31:8

“Now 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.” Romans 15:13