

Inspiring Hope And Resisting Despair

Pastor George M. Stahnke, 11.18.2001

As we experience life with all its up's, down's and plateaus we are often torn between hope and despair. Circumstances test our faith in God, our emotions burn hot within us as our lives seem to hang in the balance. Questions fill our minds . . . What if? What's next? Why me? As the war begins to rage between our spirit and our flesh we find ourselves in need of a fresh dose of inspiring hope. Only then can we expect to resist the incoming tide of despair.

1.) *Hope defined*

yachal, yaw-chal', Hebrew Stg 3176; a primitive root; to wait; by implication to be patient, hope :- (cause to, have, make to) hope, be pained, stay, tarry, trust, wait.

elpis, el-pece', Greek Stg 1680; from a primary elpo (to anticipate, usually with pleasure); expectation (abstract or concrete) or confidence :- faith, hope.

From these two definitions we can conclude that hope is waiting patiently with confident expectation.

2.) *Dealing with the loss of hope*

Demonic attack: Job 6:11 "What strength do I have, that I should still hope? What prospects, that I should be patient?"

Job 42:1-6 Then Job replied to the LORD: 2"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. 3You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. 4"You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' 5My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. 6Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Job 42:12-16 The LORD blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the first. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys. 13And he also had seven sons and three daughters. 14 The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch. 15 Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers. 16 After this, Job lived a hundred and forty years; he saw his children and their children to the fourth generation.

Natural forces beyond our control: Acts 27:13-25 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. 14 Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island. 15 The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along. 16 As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure. 17 When the

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men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along. 18 We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. 19 On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. 21 After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. 22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. 23 Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' 25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

Because of the message from the Lord, Paul's hope was strengthened and he was able to *wait patiently with confident expectation*.

3.) Ways to inspire hope and resist *despair*

☞ *Make a conscious decision to believe God's word*

Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Acts 27:25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.

Psalms 119:49 Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.

Psalms 130:5 I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope.

☞ *Be courageous, don't abandon ship*

Psalms 31:24 Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

Psalms 131:3 O Israel, put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore.

Psalms 147:11 the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

☞ *In hope wait patiently with confident expectation*

Psalms 33:20 We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

1 Thes. 1:3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. 13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

"Faith' is the foundation and content of God's message; hope' is the attitude and focus"

—Life App Notes - 1 Cor. 13:13

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Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

☞ **Rejoice in the Lord today**

Psalm 43:5 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Philip. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!