

Hope – An Essential Quality for a Fruitful Life

1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV)

¹³And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

- *One of the three abiding qualities that establishes us and makes us eternally fruitful is hope.*

Romans 8:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

- *The meaning of the word “hope” in the Greek speaks about “a looking forward to in confident expectation.” We can see in Romans 8:24-25 that biblical hope is closely linked with the idea of waiting patiently and with perseverance until what one is hoping for is fulfilled.*
- *The biblical concept of hope signifies something we are totally confident in with no shadow of uncertainty.*
- *The non-biblical use of the word hope signifies wishful thinking with a certain degree or element of uncertainty.*
- *“we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance” – Hope is not simply waiting patiently and with perseverance for something. It denotes an eagerness that will help motivate us and keep us refreshed and alert.*
- *“For we were saved in this hope” – The ultimate goal of hope is the fulfillment of God’s plan for His glory. That is why in the Bible hope is linked with the idea of salvation and redemption—not only for ourselves, but for all creation. (Romans 8:19-22).*
- *“But hope that is seen is not hope” – Hope relates to our physical sense of sight and allows us to see things from the eternal perspective that are not visible from our temporal and earthly perspective.*
- *“For a man who already has something doesn’t need to hope and trust that he will get it.” (Taylor)*

- *“For why would a man hope for what he already sees?” (Wey) - Hope works in the dark, not in the light. It is during the dark times of our lives that we need hope not when things are visible or fulfilled.*

Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV)

¹Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

- *“Faith is the substance of things hoped for” - Although faith and hope are integrally linked together and in some ways even overlap, they serve different functions and produce different results in our hearts.*
- *Faith is the substance – The Greek word for substance is ὑπόστασις hypostasis and it means, “a support, foundation, steadiness, assurance, confidence.”*
- *Faith is like a foundation that provides stability, confidence, and assurance for our lives.*
- *Hope provides us with vision and purpose, which gives our lives meaning.*
- *Faith is like a foundation upon which hope can be built and rest.*
- *Faith is our confidence. Hope is our motivation.*

Psalm 1:3 (NKJV)

³He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

- *One of the analogies that the Bible gives for a man or woman of faith is a tree planted by the rivers of water that produces fruit.*
- *Faith is like the roots of a tree that go deep in the ground and draw forth the water and nutrients from the soil so the tree can grow.*
- *Faith is the means by which we access the grace of God. (Ephesians 2:8).*
- *Grace is God working in and through us to accomplish His purposes. Grace is the power of God in our lives.*
- *Hope is like the trunk of the tree that delivers the sap (water and nutrients) to the branches and ultimately the leaves.*

- *Just as the trunk of the tree links the roots to the branches, without hope our faith will never be able to produce fruit in our lives.*
- *Since the trunk carrying the sap up the tree is long, it takes time before the sap arrives at its intended destination. So hope requires patience and endurance before we see results.*
- *Love is like the fruit the tree produces and it is the ultimate purpose of the tree—to be fruitful.*
- *No matter how much faith we have, if we never eventually produce the fruit of love, then the purpose of the tree has not been realized.*
- *Faith working with hope develops the fruit of love.*
- *There are a number of Hebrew words that can be translated as “hope,” but there is one family of Hebrew words which can be translated as hope that will help us understand one of the ways in which hope functions.*

Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)

³¹But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31 (TNIV)

³¹but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

- *The Hebrew word translated as “wait” or “hope” in Isaiah 40:31 is “qavah” and it can be translated as “to wait for, expect, hope,” but the root idea of the word is “to bind together, gather together, to collect together, weave together.”*
- *“Qavah” incorporates with it the idea “to strengthen,” such as taking individual strands of string, bringing them together, and weaving them into a rope.*
- *“but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength” – When those who gather together the promises of God found in His Word, and gather into*

remembrance all the faithful things He has done for them, hope takes hold of their souls and their strength is renewed.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV)

¹¹For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

- *The Hebrew word for “hope” in Jeremiah 29:11 is “tiqvah” and it comes from the root word “qavah.”*
- *Tiqvah besides meaning “hope” also is used to mean “rope” and it is a beautiful picture of what hope does for us.*
- *Hope gives us something to hold on to that pulls us out of those pits of despair and something to hang on to in the storms of life.*
- *Israel was facing fearful and difficult circumstances and God was saying, “Hold onto My promises knowing that you do have a future and My plan is ultimately to give you peace and certainty.”*
- *Tiqvah is being able to take the individual strands that God has given us through the promises in His Word and through those times we have experienced His faithfulness and weave them together to form such a strong rope that nothing can sweep us away from God’s purposes.*
- *Individual strands of thread would not be capable of bearing our weight, but when woven together are strong enough to not only carry our weight, but the weight of the situations and problems that we face.*

Joshua 2:18–21 (NKJV)

¹⁸unless, when we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father’s household to your own home.

¹⁹So it shall be that whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood shall be on his own head, and we will be guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head if a hand is laid on him.

²⁰And if you tell this business of ours, then we will be free from your oath which you made us swear.”

²¹Then she said, “According to your words, so be it.” And she sent them away, and they departed. And she bound the scarlet cord in the window.

- *Rahab the harlot put her faith in the God of Israel, believed His Word, and hid the Israelite spies from being detected.*
- *Soon the walls of Jericho would come falling down and the city would be taken by Israel and everyone in the city would perish. But because of her faith she and her family would be spared.*
- *There were two conditions for Rahab and her family to be saved:*
- *All of them would have to remain in Rahab's house and not to enter into the streets.*
- *The scarlet cord had to remain in the window so the Israelite soldiers would see it.*
- *The Hebrew word "cord" in the context of the scarlet cord is "tiqvah," the Hebrew word for hope!*
- *The same scarlet cord with which she lowered the spies from her window was the same one that symbolized the hope of deliverance for Rahab and her family.*
- *The scarlet cord was more than a random symbol. It was a tangible representation that the spies have given her their word.*
- *The scarlet cord—our hope is firm and our future secure, because it has been dipped in the blood of Jesus.*
- *The scarlet rope had been strong enough to carry the weight of the spies out the window and down the exterior wall of the city to safety, and its presence would guarantee the word given to Rahab for deliverance would also hold.*
- *The importance of the scarlet rope was not only so that the Israelite soldiers would know which residence contained Rahab and her family, but it was a visual reminder to Rahab and her family that they needed to remain in her*
- *Rahab's home was built into the outer wall of the city and at the shout of the Israelite army the walls of the city collapsed.*
- *Imagine the fear that could have gripped them as chaos erupted in the city and the very exterior walls of the city that contained her residence began to collapse.*
- *They could have easily reacted from fear and fled Rahab's home. Instead, they kept their eyes on the scarlet rope and not on the mayhem taking place all around them.*
- *A British archaeologist named Kathleen Kenyon excavated the site of Jericho in the 1950s and discovered that indeed the walls of the city had collapsed except one portion of the city wall on the north side.*
- *The faith of the nation of Israel caused the walls of a fortified city to collapse, and the faith of one Gentile woman kept one portion of the wall standing.*

- *The scarlet cord kept their hope in the God of Israel strong even in the midst of very chaotic and fearful circumstances.*
- *However, for that cord to be effective in keeping them calm they had to keep their eyes on it and not the screams, shaking, and turmoil around them.*

Genesis 1:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

- *The word “gather together” in the Hebrew is “miqveh” and it means to collect together, such as collecting water together to form a pool or reservoir, but it also can mean, “hope.”*

Jeremiah 17:13 (NKJV)

¹³O LORD, the hope of Israel, All who forsake You shall be ashamed. “Those who depart from Me Shall be written in the earth, Because they have forsaken the LORD, The fountain of living waters.”

- *The word, “hope” in Jeremiah 17:13 is “miqveh” and it is almost like a play on words that God is their “miqveh,” the fountain of living waters.*
- *Just as a “miqveh” collects droplets of water to form a reservoir that can refresh and cleanse, so when we take the small droplets that God gives us daily, we can gather them together daily and be refreshed.*
- *Through our hope in God we will be well-watered even in the midst of the wilderness of this life.*
- *Looking at the Hebrew words, qavah, tiqvah and miqveh we see the importance of developing the discipline of gathering what God gives us through His Word, through prayer, through personal experiences, and through the testimonies of others.*
- *Often our problem is not that God does not provide us with what we need to have hope, but we neglect to collect them together.*

Proverbs 13:12 (NKJV)

¹²Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

- *The Hebrew word “sick” means, “to be made ill, be wounded, be made weak” with the idea of producing a heart that is both grieved and worn out.*
- *“Hope deferred makes the heart sick” seems like a conundrum, because one of the very characteristics of hope is waiting and perseverance.*
- *God’s plan never includes us falling into despair and hopelessness.*
- *Why do we sometimes find ourselves in a place of despair and feeling our hopes have been deferred? Why do we many times feel brokenhearted and crushed?*
- *Many times we experience great disappointments, because we have wrong expectations.*
- *1. Sometimes we have wrong expectations because we misunderstand God’s Word.*

John 16:33 (NKJV)

³³These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

- *If we believe because we have put our faith in Christ we will not suffer tribulations and difficulties we will be greatly disappointed.*
- *For those who do not know Christ, this life is all they have, so they want to make the best of it. For those who know Christ, our real focus should be on eternity.*
- *2. Sometimes we have wrong expectations because we misunderstand God’s timing.*
- *Abraham was promised a son through Sarah, his wife, but he had to wait 25 years before that promise was fulfilled.*
- *Joseph was given two dreams about God’s purposes for his life, but he had to wait 13 years before he and the circumstances around him allowed for the fulfillment of that promise.*
- *Moses had in his heart to see Israel redeemed from the bondage of Egypt, but he had the wrong timing. He needed to spend 40 years in the wilderness tending sheep before he was prepared.*

- *Timing is a very important element for us to develop both faith and character.*
- *In the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, and in fact of all of the great men and women of faith, there was always a considerable amount of time between receiving the promise of God and its fulfillment.*
- *Seeing God answering our prayers ignites our faith, but our faith develops and matures through times of waiting on God when it appears that His promises will not come to pass.*
- *The ultimate fulfillment of all of God's promises will happen at the resurrection.*
- *3. Sometimes we have wrong expectations because we misunderstand God's goals.*

Mark 9:31–32 (NKJV)

³¹For He taught His disciples and said to them, “The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day.”

³²But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him.

- *Jesus tried to explain to His disciples God's plan, but they misunderstood the ultimate goal.*
- *As Jesus Christ hung on the cross, to the world and His disciples it appeared as if His life ended in total failure, but in reality it produced the greatest victory.*
- *Many times our goal is focused on success, while God's goal for our lives is for us to be faithful.*
- *The problem with our hope being focused on success, is whose criteria do we use to determine if we have been successful?*
- *Some of the greatest Christians we will meet in Heaven were never known by name on this earth.*
- *Their great accomplishment—they were faithful where God placed them, even if in an apparently insignificant role in the eyes of men.*
- *Paul spent a number of years in Roman prisons and from the natural point of view it would have seemed like a total waste of time, but it was in those prisons*

where many of the New Testament epistles were written.

- *Joseph spent many years either in slavery or in prison, but when he got to Heaven I believe his great rejoicing would not have been that ultimately he became the second ruler over Egypt, but that he had been found faithful before God.*

John 3:30 (NKJV)

³⁰**He must increase, but I must decrease.**

- *This is our goal in life.*
- *Our goal in life is not the quantity of our ministry for Christ, but the quality of our relationship with Christ.*
- *4. Sometimes we have wrong expectations, because we misunderstand God's process.*

John 16:20–22 (NKJV)

²⁰**Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.**

²¹**A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.**

²²**Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.**

- *The process that we go through to become like Christ is less like baking a pie and more like birthing a child.*
- *It is not simply a step-by-step process that can be done in a methodical way, but it deals with the most intimate depths of our being and requires both perseverance and times of suffering.*
- *The process transforms us from being narcissistic to a person who knows how to give and serve others.*
- *We start off as a nursing child who is totally narcissistic and gradually moves through the stages from being a child, to a young man, and finally a mature man.*

- *Disappointments are meant to drive us closer to God, because every time we experience a disappointment He is trying to teach us something.*
- *Sometimes when we experience disappointments God is trying to correct a misconception we have about Him or about ourselves.*
- *Sometimes disappointments drive us to God, because we realize we need to be totally dependent upon Him.*

1 Timothy 1:1 (NKJV)

¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

1 Peter 1:21 (NKJV)

²¹who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

- *“The Lord Jesus Christ, our hope” “Your hope is in God” – The hope that sustains us is not a hope in certain events, people, ministry, or financial successes, but our hope in God.*

2 Timothy 4:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

⁸Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

- *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” - Paul experienced many disappointments, hardships, and betrayals, but none of those caused him to falter in his faith. He continued to hope in God, because his ultimate goal was to be found faithful.*
- *Our calling is not for our benefit but God’s. Our reward for being faithful is faithfulness itself.*
- *We will never be disappointed when our hope is that by the grace of God when we stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ we will be found faithful and hear the words, “Well done good and faithful servant.”*