

Rejoice in the Lord: Hope

Day 1

The Basics

Let's look at the basics of hope today with this article:

<https://corechristianity.com/resources/articles/what-is-christian-hope>

Verses: Isaiah 40, Romans 5:1–2, Romans 8:19–21

Prayer Topics: Certainty, Confidence, Trust

Day 2

Process

I tend to think of difficulty and hardship as an interruption to the joyful life God intends for me. I know that God loves me, and I know that he calls me to be joyful. God desires to bless my life, and I know that in heaven there will be no more suffering or disappointment, no more tears or pain. When my subconscious mind puts all these things together, it comes to see my current pain as an interruption that must be either complained about or endured, something foreign to the life God wants me to have. In reality, this is a false

interpretation of the situation. The bible speaks of hope in difficulty because it is getting us to look forward to the end of the process of which suffering is an integral part. Suffering is the seed, and glory is the fruit. When we think of it this way, we can do more than just endure suffering or complain in it, but instead we can have hope through it. Take a look at this article about hope in difficulty and see if there is anything that can help you in your times of trial and difficulty:

<https://stpaulcenter.com/posts/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hope-in-hard-times>

Verses: 1 Timothy 4:10, Psalm 62:5-7, Hebrews 10:23

Prayer Topics: Turmoil, Dedication, Grit

Day 3

Cultivating Hope

Perhaps the saddest thing we ever see in this world is someone living without hope. I recently watched a video of a dog with no legs playing with other dogs. Since he had no legs, he had to roll around to playfully nip at the other dogs as they did the same thing to each other. You could tell no difference between the "joy" of play in the dog without legs versus the dogs with legs. I don't think the dog without legs actually noticed the

difference between his condition and theirs. This is the great thing about the lack of self awareness. When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we became aware of ourselves and our inadequacy, and since then hope has been hard to come by. People say that ignorance is bliss, but we cannot put the toothpaste back in the tube, and we cannot become unaware of our sin and shortcomings. How then do we cultivate hope? If you are a person who deals with disappointment and depression, how do you experience the joy that others have? If you are the dog with no legs, how do you joyfully play with the dogs that have them? The key is to understand that we cannot go back to ignorance, we must look forward instead, and that is where hope comes in. As I said at the beginning of the devotional, the saddest thing is to see someone living without hope. Many people have nothing to look forward to. They cannot go back to ignorance, but they also cannot go forward because they have nothing to look forward to. Many people live just waiting to die, and that is truly tragic. As Christians, we do not live like this. We are not waiting to die, we are waiting to live. We are waiting to experience the true life to the full that is found after we are resurrected in Christ. No matter what is happening in our life on this earth, we wait for a new creation to be formed in us that will make our old life look like a shadow or a vapor. How do you cultivate this hope? Check out this article:

<https://finds.life.church/hope-in-god/>

Verses: Isaiah 40:31, Hebrews 11:1, Romans 15:4

Prayer Topics: Joy, Excitement, Peace

Day 4
Fight

How do we deal with a lack of hope? What should be our course of action when we are despondent? How do we fight through the times when all seems lost? Read this fantastic message to find out:

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/battling-the-unbelief-of-despondency>

Verses: Psalm 73:21-26, Psalm 19:7, John 12:27

Prayer Topics: Resilience, Armor, Endurance

Thanks to Sylvester Warsaw, Jr for our devotional today

Lamentations 3:20-21 tell us this, “My soul still remembers and sinks within me. This I recall to my mind therefore I have hope.” The prophet Jeremiah was lamenting over the destruction of Jerusalem because of the disobedience of his countrymen before being taken into captivity to Egypt.

Jeremiah was in a state of despair, a state of dread, however, he remembered in whom he trusted as he remembered. It's precisely because of his relationship with God the remembrance of knowing God he had hope. Hope is rooted in the knowledge of knowing God intimately being in relationship with Him. Proverbs 1:7 records these words, "The fear/reverence of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction." True hope is rooted in the knowledge of God and hope that's in anything other than God isn't hope. If your hope is rooted in self or man then that's a false sense of hope. As a matter of fact Jeremiah and the Haggai strongly tell us to consider our ways, Lamentations 3:39-40; Haggai 1:5, 7.

When hope is in man you're aligning yourself with the god of this world. The nature of this world order is predatory because the god of this world is Satan and his mission is to seek, kill and destroy, John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8. This world order doesn't validate you, it only deceives you with false hope because hope is in self, Isaiah 47:10; Jeremiah 9:3-6.

Hope is that tension we live in when we are His because hope is alive, it's living because it's in the living God who created the heavens and the earth. Hope is also rooted in our obedience to God because hope doesn't negate our free will but shows our courage to respond to His love freely, our dependence on Him which is a strength and not a weakness. Hope allows us to trust even when we don't understand the totality of what God is doing, Ecclesiastes 3:10-15. A person's hope is embedded in who they choose to serve and it's prayerfully my hope that your choice is the true and living God, Joshua 24:14-24. Know this because of God's extravagant love towards us His created being whom redemption is possible because of Jesus He's the only One that has the right to be jealous because we weren't created to be separated from Him but to be with Him eternally. Therefore, it only makes

sense for our hope to be in God who lives and life is only in and through Him everything else is fleeting, false. I invite you to read 1 Corinthians 13 in its entirety and meditate on it. Hope is mandatory in trusting God as we journey daily hand and hand with Christ Jesus. Hope is a part of intimacy with God.