

The Door of Hope

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

Many times when I go to the pulpit, I have just received news about someone who is going through serious difficulties. A young man recently found out that his father has throat cancer. A wife finds out that her husband has been unfaithful. Parents learn that their child is in trouble. People are going through so many trials and heartaches. For this reason, our desire is to bring messages that can help people understand that there is a door to hope.

First of all, our hope must be toward God (Acts 24:15). God is the author of hope (Titus 1:2). We have a lively hope, according to 1 Peter 1:3, and Hebrews 6:18 tells us that God will always set a hope before us—always.

Hope is not something we can see (Romans 8:24). If we could see it, it wouldn't be hope. We hope, and we wait patiently for something we do not see.

Abraham hoped against hope (Romans 4:18).

Hope is not wishful thinking. It is based upon the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, the integrity of His promise, and the love of His desire for us. "The LORD will be the hope of his people" (Joel 3:16).

I want to show something about hope in this booklet that will bless your hearts. My desire is to communicate and impart something that will cause you to see that in every single detail in your life, you must have hope.

Chapter One
AN ETERNAL EXPECTATION

“And I will give her her vineyards for thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt” (Hosea 2:15).

After Israel won a tremendous victory in Jericho, a man from the tribe of Judah sinned by taking things that God had called accursed from the ruins (Joshua 7:1). God told Joshua what had happened and instructed him to “destroy the accursed from among you” (verse 12). So the man, named Achan, and his family were taken to a valley where they were stoned to death and burned. God cursed the place, and it became known as the valley of Achor (verses 24-26). Thus, He set a precedent for Israel as they entered the Promised Land.

Yet in Hosea 2:15, it is written that God would bring forth fruit in that valley, making the

valley of Achor (which He had cursed) a door of hope. There, Israel would sing as she did in the days of her youth. In other words, God takes what is cursed, what people have given up on, and makes it a door of hope.

The psalmist said, "I will hope continually" (Psalm 71:14), meaning, he would hope forever. It is not wishful thinking to have this hope. Hope is something God gives you because of who you are in Christ. You can and must and will have hope—and it will be realized either now or later.

Expectation That Perishes

"When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth" (Proverbs 11:7).

Just imagine that someone could live down here, perhaps work very hard, become successful, and have a beautiful family, and yet never receive Christ. When he dies, he has absolutely no hope and goes into a Christless eternity.

"The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death" (Proverbs 14:32).

The original text of this verse says that the unsaved person dies in his wicked state with no

hope of redemption. But the person who has God's righteousness has hope; and beyond hope, he has absolute trust in God's plan for his life.

The words "hope" and "wait" have the same meaning in the original text. According to Psalm 37:34, those who wait or hope upon God are exalted. God loves it when we keep hoping. And hoping, we keep believing. And when we keep believing, we keep hearing God's Word as we keep fellowshiping with God's life. It means we keep trusting God's promises. We continue to hope in mercy (Psalm 33:18) because we believe in the God of all mercy.

Desire That is a Tree of Life

"This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" (Lamentations 3:21-22).

When Jeremiah, the writer of that verse, recalled mercy, he was able to have hope again.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12).

The great realization of this verse is found in

the parable of the prodigal son. When he came home, the prodigal son was hoping just to be a servant. He couldn't wait just to be back working under his father. When his father saw him, he ran to him and started kissing his son's neck. All the son could say was "I have sinned against heaven and you, and I don't want to be anything but a servant." But the father clothed him, gave him new shoes, put a ring on his finger, and threw a party for him. And the son was hoping that he would just be accepted as a servant! What he got was a tree of life. That tree of course represents Calvary's tree, which brought new life for everyone who believed and received the Savior who died there.

Hope deferred is hope that hasn't come yet; it hasn't happened yet. So, every morning, you just keep on hoping till the tree of life satisfies the desire God placed in your heart.

Chapter Two

THE POWER OF SIMPLE FAITH

A woman had cancer and was given six months to live. Making matters worse, her husband left her and her child. Every morning, noon, and night, this woman would keep saying, “I am not going to die—just not gonna do it! God will keep me alive. I have to bring up this child. I am *not* going to die.”

The doctors told her to be realistic, trying to prepare her for death.

“You can prepare me all you want,” she said. “But I am not going to die.”

Twenty-eight years later, she is still alive. They gave her six weeks to live, but the doctors didn’t realize that she just didn’t want to die. “I am not going to die, my hope is in God,” she kept saying. She received a tree of life.

Think of hope.

A precious Christian I know is in a wheelchair right now. She hopes to walk again on this

earth. With the waves of healing that God brings, this can happen in an instant by the grace of God. But even if this doesn't happen, her hope will be fulfilled when she is dancing on heaven's streets of gold for billions of years to come in eternity.

Hope is a great partner to travel with on this earth.

Maintaining Integrity

"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

Job was a classic example of someone who had hope. "I don't know when I am coming out of this, but I know that God will deliver me" was the attitude Job expressed. Job's face was wrinkled and his body was covered with sores; he looked miserable. No one would shake hands with him (Job 17:3). His own brothers left him (Job 19:13), and his servants wouldn't speak to him (Job 19:16). Young children would have nothing to do with him and spoke evil of him (Job 19:18). His closest friends abhorred him (Job 19:19).

"This is strange," Job thought. "I used to be eyes for those who were blind and ears for those

who could not hear. When I spoke, I made people happy. I was a nobleman. I was a father to the fatherless, and I helped the poor.

"I had a funeral the other day, and there were ten caskets—they were for all of my children. Not only that, many of my servants have been killed; my possessions have been completely wiped out.

"My wife is nagging me and telling me to forsake God. And now, my three best friends have come to see me, but they haven't said a word for seven days and seven nights. I get new servants, and they leave me. But as I sit here on this ash heap, I want you to know something: I have hope in God's deliverance. I don't know when I will come out of this, but I will come out."

Our Redeemer is Faithful

Job had hope. Why? Job 19:25-27 tells us:

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

"Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins

be consumed within me.”

He also said something very beautiful in Job 27:5-6: “God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.

“My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.”

There are people who, when they can’t see a way out, lose their integrity toward faith. They lose their integrity toward hope. They lose their integrity toward prayer. They lose their integrity toward waiting upon God.

“...They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).

God is saying, “Always have hope. I will not let you down. Hope till the end. Whatever you do, have a lively hope toward me (1 Peter 1:3). Be encouraged by the hope and the grace that brings in the Word of God (1 Peter 1:13).”

Whatever we do, we must have hope.

Chapter Three

THE END OF EVERY MEANS

In every realm of our ministry, from every walk of life, are some of the most beautiful people in the world. When I am with them, we have such a rich, rich fellowship in our hearts. We have such hope, and it is hope that is built on nothing less than God's righteousness.

Hope is not a means to an end. Hope is the end of every means. Hope will come to pass. God will do it.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

The Holy Spirit groans with utterings that cannot be understood, humanly speaking. While we are hoping against hope, the Spirit is groaning, and the groaning has our name on it.

When the Bible speaks of God's love, never

take it with familiarity. When God says, "I love you," it is the most sacred and precious thing in the world. "I love you so much that I died on the Cross for you. I shed My blood for you. I will save you forever when you trust Me for salvation."

The unsaved person has hope that once he believes he will be saved forever. Hope is laid up in heaven forever (Colossians 1:5). Never be removed from the hope of the Gospel (Colossians 1:23).

For the believer, it is such a precious thing to say, no matter what you are going through, "My God loves me. My heavenly Father loves me so much that He sent His Son to die for me. He will be with me forever. Everything I have ever done or ever will do has been forgiven. The Father loves me, Jesus loves me, and the Holy Spirit sheds abroad His love in my heart. Furthermore, I have hope because of the Word of the living God" (Psalm 119:49).

This living, growing hope helps a person to prolong his days upon the earth. It can help a person defeat disease. It helps a person overcome adversity, negativity, and a poor self-image. It helps a person gain victory over sin.

If you are failing right now, you need to

know that the last round hasn't been fought yet. You are going to win! Your hope will get you out of failure. Have hope in your God, that your God will get you through your failure. He will give you His mercy. He is the God of patience and consolation (Romans 15:5). He is the God in whom we have hope.

Encouragement in Adversity

A girl had a terrible disease that caused her to become paralyzed. Another disease came along and crippled her even further. She couldn't walk, all she could do was use her hands.

We met this girl in the hospital, led her to Jesus Christ, and visited her often. Once she asked, "Pastor, what can I do for God?" I said, "Make phone calls and write letters. Tell your story. Just love us all, because we sure love you."

That girl was overwhelmingly encouraging and never seemed downcast. She had this hope.

Thank God and praise the Lord Jesus Christ that we can have hope against hope. It is a lively hope. It is based upon the Author of hope and the Word of hope. It is based upon the character of God.

The Word of God says in Psalm 22:9 and Ezekiel 13:6 that we can make others have hope.

A godly husband can cause his wife to have hope. A Spirit-filled wife causes her husband to have hope. A teenager can make his mom and dad have hope when they are going through difficult times. Through fellowship in the Body of Christ we can make one another have hope.

And no matter what you go through in the plan of God, Satan cannot steal your hope. He can't do it.

Abide in the Lively Hope

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

We have a hope that is steadfast and a hope that is sure—not only in trials, not only in adversity, not only when we are weak and frail, not only when people hurt us, not only when we

have hurt others, but all the time.

Live in this lively hope. Don't be occupied with anything but hope. Have God's character toward hope. Job stood on God's character. By the light of God's word, he walked through darkness (Job 29:3). Furthermore, God washed his steps in butter (Job 29:6).

I lived on a farm for many years, and as the youngest child in the house, I had to work the churn to make the butter. That's the way it was on most farms. I would churn and churn that milk until it turned to butter.

Washing our feet in butter means that we meditate continually on the milk of the Word of God until it becomes the substance of butter in our hearts. "I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope" (Psalm 130:5). The Word works on all the parts of the soul, prompted and motivated by the human spirit.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12).

"Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee" (Zechariah 9:12).

Job ended up with double of everything he lost—family, friends, wealth, livestock, land. He

was a prisoner of hope. He hoped against hope, and so do we. We wait upon God. It hasn't happened yet, but we are believing with all of our hearts because we are prisoners of hope. We have a way out of defeat: It is through the door of hope.

CONCLUSION

Thank God that our hope is in being fulfilled in soul winning through the tremendous hard work of so many people who go out to seek the lost. We have a vision to bring the Gospel to 220 countries. We have hope, and that hope will be fulfilled.

Whatever your situation, don't stop hoping. I don't care what a doctor may tell you, don't stop hoping against hope. You can be shocked by what hope can do. It has such power.

Everyone reading this has wanted to give up at one time or another. All of us have. But we can be revived immediately by hope. It is a lively, precious hope that comes from God.

Hope

*I hoped the sun would shine again,
piercing the clouds and rain;
I hoped that some relief would come
and drive away the pain.
I shared with hope the feeling
that the way would soon be clear;
And as we groped to find our path,
Hope was always near.
I hoped to find solutions
for the problems of the day;
I hoped to find the answers
to my questions on my way.
Yet day by day no answer came,
solutions fled away.
The path stayed dark, the journey drear,
but Hope was there to stay.
At journey's end 'twas just the same,
continued I to grope;
No answers or solutions came,
and all I had was Hope.
Did sorrow crowd my weary heart?
And did I weep and mope?
For 'twas not the end that brought me joy,
but trav'ling with my friend called Hope.*

*My life is rich and filled with peace
until my journey's end;
For Hope is constantly with me
and is my dearest friend.
My problem yet has not been solved,
yet I have learned to cope;
'Tis worth it all to travel with
My constant friend called Hope.*

(Author unknown)