

# 1 Timothy 1:1-2 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

1 Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus Who is our hope. (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** Paulos apostolos Christou Iesou kat epitagen Theou soterios hemon kai Christou Iesou tes elpidos hemon kai Christou Iesou tes elpidos hemon

**Amplified:** PAUL, AN apostle (special messenger) of Christ Jesus by appointment and command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus (the Messiah), our Hope, 2 To Timothy, my true son in the faith: Grace (spiritual blessing and favor), mercy, and [heart] peace [be yours] from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**ESV:** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, 2 To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**KJV:** Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; 2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord..

**NET:** From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, 2 to Timothy, my genuine child in the faith. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord!

**NIV:** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, 2 To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**NLT:** This letter is from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, appointed by the command of God our Savior and Christ Jesus, who gives us hope. 2 I am writing to Timothy, my true son in the faith. May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy, and peace. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Paul, Jesus Christ's messenger by command of God our saviour and Christ our hope, to Timothy my true son in the faith: grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and Jesus Christ our master. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**TLB:** From: Paul, a missionary of Jesus Christ, sent out by the direct command of God our Savior and by Jesus Christ our Lord—our only hope. 2 To: Timothy. Timothy, you are like a son to me in the things of the Lord. May God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord show you his kindness and mercy and give you great peace of heart and mind.

**Weymouth:** Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God our Saviour and Christ Jesus our hope: 2 To Timothy, my own true son in the faith. May grace, mercy and peace be granted to you from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Wuest:** Paul, an ambassador of Christ Jesus by command of God our Saviour and Christ Jesus our hope, to Timothy, my genuine child in the Faith. [Sanctifying] grace, mercy, [tranquilizing] peace, from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Young's Literal:** Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to a command of God our Saviour, and of the Lord Jesus Christ our hope, 2 to Timotheus—genuine child in faith: Grace, kindness, peace, from God our Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord,

PAUL AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS: Paulos apostolos Christou Iesou:

- **Apostle:** Ro 1:1 1Co 1:1

**A COMMAND FROM GOD  
A COMMISSION FOR PAUL**

**Paul** ([3972](#)) is from Latin, **Paulos** meaning "little, small". Before his Damascus Road experience he was known by his Hebrew name **Saul** (Greek **Saulos**) which means "desired" or "ask" (derived from Hebrew word for **ask**) **Paul** is always referred to as **Saul** in Acts until his clash with Bar Jesus at Paphos, when Luke suddenly writes,

But **Saul**, who was also known as **Paul**, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze upon him (Acts 13:9).

From this point in the Book of Acts (and in the epistles) the apostle is always referred to as **Paul**. Do not miss the descriptive phrase in Acts 13:9 **"filled with the Holy Spirit"** (cp Eph 5:18-note) for this description explains the **"power"** source of Paul's dynamic ministry and this supernatural confrontation (with "Elymas the magician...**full of** all deceit and fraud" Acts 13:8, 10). Remember that what fills a person is what "controls" a person. (See Lk 4:28 = "rage" and Lk 4:29 describes the resulting "effect" or action! Cf Lk 6:11, Acts 2:4, 4:8, 4:31, Acts 5:17, 18, 13:45, 19:28). Paul did not depend on his strength, his knowledge, his religious pedigree, etc, but solely upon the **power** (dunamis = supernatural power to accomplish a task) of the Spirit, the very "formula" Jesus had given to the disciples in His parting words in Acts 1:8-note. Remember last words are always vitally important, especially if they are followed by ascension of the One speaking them!

**Apostle** ([652](#)) (**apostolos** [**word study**] from **apo** = from + **stello** = send forth) (Click another discussion of apostle) means one sent forth from by another, often with a special commission to represent another and to accomplish his work. It can be a delegate, commissioner, ambassador sent out on a mission or orders or commission and with the authority of the one who sent him. The Biblical apostles had special authority and power given by God and when they died that was the end of the special office of an apostle. In other words, contrary to what some men teach there is no Biblical mandate for "apostolic succession."

**Apostle** is used in two ways in the Scripture - (1) to designate an official office as in this passage (2) Generically to refer to anyone who is one sent with a message.

In secular Greek **apostolos** referred to someone who was officially commissioned to a position or task, such as an envoy. Cargo ships were sometimes called apostolic, because they were dispatched with a specific shipment for a specific destination. In secular Greek **apostolos** was used of an admiral of a fleet sent out by the king on special assignment. In the ancient world **apostle** was the personal representatives of the king, functioning as an ambassador with the king's authority and provided with credentials to prove he was the king's envoy. As an aside, just as Paul could not have made himself an apostle, no man can truly make himself a minister today. A man may go into the ministry but he may never have received a clear call from God, and thus it is not surprising today to read of so many men quitting the ministry! **The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary** adds that...

The responsibilities of the preacher are so great, and the difficulties of his work so perplexing and oppressive, that nothing short of a profound consciousness of his Divine commission can sustain him. ([The Preacher's Complete Homiletical Commentary](#))

A parallel of **apostle** is our English word **ambassador** defined by **Webster** as

a diplomatic agent of the highest rank accredited to a foreign government as the resident representative of his own government for a special and often temporary diplomatic assignment. (cp Eph 6:20-note)

Paul was a **man with a mission** having been commissioned by Christ Himself, Whose will was made known in (Acts 9:15, 22:14, 15, 21, 26:16, 17,18). Paul further explained that he was

an **apostle** (not sent from [men nor through](#) the [agency](#) of [man](#), but [through Jesus Christ](#) and [God](#) the [Father](#), Who [raised](#) Him from the [dead](#) (Gal 1:1).

Paul was commissioned as Christ's **chosen instrument** (Acts 9:15) and ambassador to the Gentiles with a message of reconciliation (Ro 5:11-note, 2Co 5:18,19-note), a message that he "neither received...from man, nor was... taught, but ... through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal 1:12).

In his salutation (introductory address) to the **Romans** Paul added that

[through \(Jesus Christ](#) our [Lord](#)) we have [received grace](#) and [apostleship](#) to [bring about](#) the [obedience](#) of [faith](#) [among all](#) the [Gentiles](#) for His [name's sake](#). (Ro 1:5-note)

In short Paul was endowed with the **apostolic authority** and accompanying **power** necessary to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul was not "his own" but understood that he belonged to Christ, His Master and that he had received a commission to be His authorized representative with His message, the Gospel.

- **According to:** 1Ti 2:7 Ac 9:15 26:16-18 1Co 9:17 Ga 1:1,11 2Ti 1:11 Titus 1:3
- **God:** 1Ti 2:3 4:10 Ps 106:21 Isa 12:2 Isa 43:3,11 Isa 45:15,21 Isa 49:26 Isa 60:16 Isa 63:8 Hos 13:4 Lk 1:47 2:11 2Ti 1:10 Titus 1:3 Titus 2:10,13 Titus 3:4,6 2Pe 1:1 1Jn 4:14 Jude 1:25

**According to the commandment** - Not a suggestion, but a clear command. In other passages Paul states he is an apostle **by the will of God**". God's command was His will for Paul's life. In the same way, God's will for our life is His commands in Scripture (there are over 1500 in the NT). Clearly in establishing his apostolic ministry, Paul wanted to make sure that the recipients of the letter understood that it was not his will, but God's will. So what? Since it is God's will, the implication is that all Paul spoke in this letter is God's Word and carries His authoritative stamp. And so it is not surprising that **Paul** began five of his Epistles with a similar "*signature*" (will of God) authenticating his divinely ordained apostleship: ,

Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ **by the will of God**, and Sosthenes our brother (1Co 1:1).

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus **by the will of God**, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth with all the saints who are throughout Achaia: (2Co 1:1).

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus **by the will of God**, To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: (Eph 1:1-note)

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ **by the will of God**, and Timothy our brother (Col 1:1-note)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus **by the will of God**, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus (2Timothy 1:1-note)

**God our Savior** - This phrase refers to God the Father as the Savior. Normally we think of the Son as the Savior, which of course He is. However since God is a Trinity with unity, it is not surprising to think of all members of the Trinity in some way participating in the divine works of God, even though the role of One Member of the Trinity plays a dominant role in a specific action. Indeed, God the Father planned salvation in eternity past, God the Son purchased our redemption and God the Spirit applies the salvation to our hearts in regeneration. Or more succinctly - The Father planned it, the Son purchased it and the Spirit applies it, "it" of course is our salvation.

**Savior** ([4990](#))(**soter** from **sozo** = rescue from peril > from **saos** = safe; delivered) refers to the Agent of salvation or deliverance, the One Who rescues, delivers, saves and preserves. Anyone who saves or delivers can be called a deliverer or rescuer (a soter), but only God can effects our supernatural rescue from bondage to the power of indwelling **Sin** and the dread fate of eternal death and separation from His presence. **Hallelujah!** If you have time, take a moment to worship **God our Savior** with this song by Laura Story [What A Savior](#) or this modern rendition by Aaron Ivey - [Hallelujah, What a Savior](#).

The highly respected Puritan writer **John Owen** helps us understand the interrelationship of the Trinity writing that...

Everything God does He does as the triune God. Each Person of the Trinity is involved in every action of God. Yet at the same time each Person has a special role to fulfill in that work.... There is no good that we receive from God but it is brought to us and wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. Nor is there in us any good towards God, any faith, love, obedience to His will, but what we are enabled to do so by the Holy Spirit.

**Jon Courson on the commandment of God** - The things that we have been commanded to do can sometimes become wearying when we find ourselves in situations we weren't anticipating—like prison. After all, it was from a Roman prison cell that Paul wrote to Timothy. And in this, I am reminded of another who found himself a prisoner...

'Oh, Lord, I cannot speak. I am but a child,' Jeremiah protested when called to minister.

'Before you were born, I knew you and ordained you to be a prophet,' the Lord replied. 'I will put My words on your lips—and you shall go.'

So Jeremiah did. And what happened? He eventually ended up in a dungeon.

'OK, Lord,' he said. 'Yes, You commanded me. Yes, You anointed me. But people aren't responding. No one is getting saved.'

So Jeremiah decided to quit prophesying, to quit sharing—until he realized that the Word of God was like fire in his bones and that he could not keep quiet (Jeremiah 20:9).

Maybe like Jeremiah, or perhaps like Paul, you feel imprisoned and are tempted to throw in the towel, to quit sharing the Gospel with people since none seem to respond. But if you do, the Word of God will burn in your heart as surely as it did in Jeremiah's, and, like Paul, you will realize you have no choice in the matter, for you are under the command of God. ([Courson, J. A Day's Journey: 365 Daily Meditations from the Word October 13. Santa Ana, CA: Calvary Chapel Publishing](#))

- **Our Hope:** Ro 15:12,13 Col 1:27 2Th 2:16 1Pe 1:3,21

## CHRIST OUR HOPE OF GLORY

### The Glory of Our Hope

**And of Christ Jesus** - The fact that Paul's command came from God our Savior and Christ Jesus is a strong attestation to the Godhood of Jesus and counters those who say that Scripture never teaches that Jesus is God. Jesus is God and this passage places Him on a par with God the Father. One can argue about it but frankly God said it and that settles it whether one believes it or not!

*Who is our hope* - The Greek literally reads **our hope**, the NAS adding "*Who is*" to smooth out the sentence in English. The literal rendering that describes "**Christ Jesus our hope**" is a beautiful truth, for what Paul is saying is that hope is not a vague, abstract concept but ultimately finds its very essence and fulfillment in the **Person, Christ Jesus**. Indeed "As God is the Author of our salvation, so Christ is the embodiment of our Hope." (G B Wilson) In using the personal pronoun "**our**" Paul is emphasizing that this **hope** is our very own possession. This is a simple truth, but take a moment and meditate on this truth and allow the Spirit to overwhelm you with the reality that such a great hope is really ours. We did not deserve it nor could we ever have merited it, but because of God's great salvation and our eternally secure position in Christ, we can cling confidently to the great doctrine of the believer's hope as "our hope!" Our **hope** is secure because the foundation is firm. Indeed, "from Christ's death flow all our hopes." (Ryle) "Our **hope** lies not in the man we put on the moon, but in the Man we put on the Cross." (Basham)

**David** echoes Paul's description of **Jesus as our Hope** writing...

And now, Lord (Adonai), for what do I wait ("hope" = Ps 39:7NLT)? My hope is in Thee. (Ps 39:7)

**Spurgeon:** The Lord is self-existent and true, and therefore worthy of the confidence of men; He will live when all the creatures die, and His fulness will abide when all second causes are exhausted; to Him, therefore, let us direct our expectation, and on Him let us rest our confidence. Away from sand to Rock (Ps 95:1) let all wise builders turn themselves, for if not today, yet surely ere long, a storm will rise before which nothing will be able to stand but that which has the lasting element of faith in God to cement it. David had but one **hope**, and that **Hope** (the Person of Jesus) entered within the veil (**Ed:** Heb 10:20-note, cf Heb 6:18-20-note), hence he brought his vessel to safe anchorage, and after a little drifting all was peace.

## SPES UNICA

### "OUR ONLY HOPE"

#### C H Spurgeon

Christ is our hope. We have not a shadow of a hope apart from Him. I remember, when on the Continent, seeing on a cross the words "*Spes unica*," (**Ed:** Latin = "Our Only Hope") the unique, the only hope of man; and that is true of the Cross of Christ, and of Christ Who suffered on it, He is our hope. (**Ed:** Our Only Hope, and also Our Sufficient Hope)

#### Pulpit Commentary

The object of the Christian's hope is the Savior — our "Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our **Hope**" (1Ti 1:1) **We hope for Him** — for His gracious presence revealed in fuller measure now, for the blissful vision of His glorious beauty hereafter (Titus 2:13, 14, 15-notes). That hope is patient. The husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth (James 5:7); the Christian waits patiently for Christ. It works patience in the soul. He can endure the troubles of life who is blessed with the lively **hope** of the inheritance reserved in heaven (1Pe 1:3,4-note). (Pulpit Commentary)

#### W. H. G. Thomas

No Christian life is complete which does not include in it a forward look of joyous certitude toward a bright future, for **hope** as a grace is not a mere spirit of what we call *hopefulness*, or a natural buoyancy of temperament. It is a distinctly Christian virtue, the result of union with God in Christ; and it has for its immediate object the Lord Jesus at His glorious appearing, and for its ultimate, eternal and exhaustless substance the glories of heaven and God as our All in All.

## MacArthur...

Christians have **hope** for the future because Christ purchased salvation for them on the cross in the past (Ro 5:1, 2), sanctifies them through His Spirit in the present (Gal 5:16–25), and will lead them to glory in the future (Col 1:27; 1Jn 3:2, 3).

## Geoffrey B. Wilson

Our risen and glorified Lord is Himself our Hope, because His triumph over sin and death provides the objective pledge of our final redemption.

## John Trapp

The law is a super-introduction to Christ our hope, Who is the end of the law to every believer, Ro 10:4.

## Ron Mattoon

Christ is our hope. This is where our joy comes from. Some Christians repeat a common slogan, *"Keep hope alive."* I've got news for you. Hope is alive because our hope is in a living, resurrected Savior and His promises are found in a living book, the Bible. We don't have to keep it alive because He will never die! Amen!

## Dave Branon

Corrie ten Boom lived through the hellish life of Nazi concentration camps—a place where hope was lost for most people. She survived to tell her story of **unfaltering faith and tight-fisted hope in God**. She saw the face of evil up close and personal. She saw some of the most inhumane acts man can do to man. And when she came out of it all, she said this: "If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. But if you look at Christ, you'll be at rest." Where are you looking? Are you focusing on the world and its dangers? Are you gazing at yourself, hoping to find your own answers? Or are you looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith? (Hebrews 12:1-2). (**Ed:** Are you looking to **'Christ Jesus our Hope'**? 1Ti 1:1) In an uncertain world, we must keep looking to Him.

The hope we have in Jesus Christ  
Replaces all despair;  
He fills us with His joy and peace  
And shows His love and care.  
—Sper

The stability which the anchor gives the ship when it has at last obtained a hold-fast, is like that which the Christian's hope affords him when it fixes itself upon this glorious truth. With God "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."- Spurgeon

Spurgeon says "look not to thy hope, but to Jesus, the source of thy hope."

"Holy hope"

It is by his life that we live; he is in us, the hope of glory, the spring of our actions, the central thought which moves every other thought. -Spurgeon

our piety is our pleasure, our hope is our happiness, our duty is our delight.

Our trials will then seem light and momentary afflictions. Let us go on boldly; if the night be never so dark, the morning cometh, which is more than they can say who are shut up in the darkness of hell. Do you know what it is thus to live on the future—to live on expectation—to antedate heaven? Happy believer, to have so sure, so comforting a hope. It may be all dark now, but it will soon be light; it may be all trial now, but it will soon be all happiness. What matters it though "weeping may endure for a night," when "joy cometh in the morning?"

**Hope** (1680)(**elpis**) is a simple but fascinating word because the definition one arrives at is directly dependent on one's worldview, specifically non-Biblical or Biblical. And so we shall see that hope in Scripture is (with few exceptions) not the world's definition of hope.

## HOPE FROM A SECULAR WORLDVIEW

The unregenerate, godless world says "I **hope** so" with a few rare exceptions (e.g., Acts 27:20). Hope, as the world typically defines it, is a desire for some future thing which we are uncertain of attaining. Worldly "hope" is pessimistically defined by the little boy who

quipped "Hope is wishing for something you know ain't gonna happen." The world says "I hope...this or that will happen" and it is this type of "hope" which explains why the lottery system is thriving in many states! Hope identified as cultural hope is merely an optimistic desire that something will be fulfilled. This hope is not a guaranteed hope because it is subject to changeable people and unforeseen circumstances. And so often when we use the word "hope" in casual conversation, it has a wavering, uncertain sound. (cf Lk 23:8, Acts 24:26 - neither Herod's nor Felix's hope materialized!). Most people live in hope that things will improve for them and that they will finally be satisfied, fully content, but such a hope is ill founded and destined to disappoint in the end.

One of the frightening observations of our day is that there are so many, particularly young people, who have no hope. Suicides are on the increase annually, and a recent poll observed that the majority of teens in our day say they have little or no hope for the future. It is not surprising then in view of such a negative sense of hope in the future, that so many young people choose to live so recklessly *hoping* to find satisfaction and contentment in the moment. As of September, 2012, the American dream is rapidly fading because of accelerating moral decay and continued bureaucratic mismanagement of taxpayer funds, with the result that many in our society are beginning to be gripped with a pervading sense of hopelessness. Unfortunately the Church is not immune to this hopeless feeling. Many who claim to be born again believers in Jesus Christ are searching for fulfillment in life in every place except **Christ Jesus our Hope** (1Ti 1:1)! The truth of Scripture is that human beings were not made solely for the present, and the present was never intended to fully satisfy us. "If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied" (1Co 15:19). True fulfillment and contentment comes only when one places their faith wholly in the Holy One, **Christ Jesus our Hope**. Are you feeling hopeless? Hope in God. Hope in Christ Jesus your only sure hope! You will not be disappointed in this life (Ro 10:11-note) or the life to come when hope becomes reality.

### HOPE FROM A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

On the other hand, **Biblical hope** is defined as a desire for future good with the expectation of obtaining it. Hope is the Christian's attitude toward the future. **Hope** is an absolute assurance of future good (Heb 6:11-note). **Hope** is a strong confidence that God will do good to me and for me in the future! **Hope** is always an expectation of something good as well as descriptive of something for which we must **wait**, which in turn depends on **faith** or trust that it is going to happen just as God said it would!

### RELATIONSHIP OF FAITH, HOPE & LOVE

**Biblical hope** means confidence in the future, a confidence born of faith. Faith, hope and love go together (1Cor 13:13). **Hope** relates to **love**, for Paul writes "hope does not disappoint, because the **love** of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who was given to us." (Ro 5:5-note) **Hope** relates to **faith** for when we have faith in God, we claim His promises, and His promises energize our hope in the future. Hope for the Christian is not a feeling of "I hope it's going to happen" but is an exciting expectancy and certainty it will happen because God controls the future. The tragedy for many saints is that their hope has dwindled, causing them to lose joy in their **present** life because they have no sure confidence in the promises to be fulfilled in their **future** life.

**Wiersbe** adds that

Biblical hope means confidence in the future. It's a confidence born of faith....When Jesus Christ is your Savior and your Lord, the future is your friend. You don't have to worry. Why is this hope so important? When we lose hope, we lose joy in the present because we have no confidence for the future...(Hope) is a confidence that God is in control, and we have nothing to fear. What is the basis for our hope? It is the character of God. We've been born again unto a living hope (1 Pet. 1:3-note). It's not a dead hope that rots and falls apart but a living hope whose roots go deeper and whose fruits grow more wonderful. You can have joy, confidence, encouragement and excitement today if you will remember that you have a living hope. Your hope for the future is founded in the promises of God's Word. Do you have confidence in the future? Make a mental list of His provision on your behalf during the past year--answered prayers, met needs and other blessings. God's faithfulness in keeping His promises in the past gives you confident hope for the future. (Prayer, Praises and Promises - comments on Ps 39:7)

### BIBLICAL HOPE PROVIDES POWER TO LIVE SUPERNATURALLY

**John Piper** says of the believer's **hope** that...Peter calls it "**living hope**." What does that mean? The opposite of a "**living hope**" would be a "dead hope," and that calls to mind a similar phrase in James 2, namely, "dead faith." "Faith without works is dead" (Jas 2:26-note), James says. That is, faith is barren, fruitless, unproductive (Jas 2:20-note). So "living faith" and, by analogy, "**living hope**" would be fertile, fruitful, productive hope. Living hope is hope that has power and produces changes in life. This is what "living" means in Hebrews 4:12-note, where it says, "The word of God is living and effective." So **Christian hope is a strong**

confidence in God which has power to produce changes in how we live. ([The Power of Hope](#))

## HOPE IS "FUTURE FAITH"

**MacArthur** explains the close relation of Biblical **hope** and **faith**...In its essence, **hope** is equivalent to **faith** (Ro 5:1-2-note; Gal. 5:5; Heb 11:1-note); it is trusting God (1Pe 1:21-note). The major difference between the two attitudes is that **faith** involves trusting God in the present (Ro 1:17-note; Ro 3:28-note; 2Cor. 5:7-note; Gal. 2:20-note; 1Ti. 6:12-note; Jas 1:6-note), whereas **hope** is future faith, trusting God for what is to come (Heb 3:6-note). trusting God for what is to come (Heb 3:6). Faith appropriates what God has already said and done in His revealed Word, and hope anticipates what He will yet do, as promised in Scripture. ([MacArthur, J. 1 Peter](#). Chicago: Moody Press or Logos)

**Richard Sibbes** has an interesting description of hope noting that "The nature of hope is to expect that which faith believes."

"The world *hopes* for the *best*, but Jesus Christ offers the *best hope*." (J W White)

Even more to the point, **Christ Jesus our hope** is the *only* hope for sinful men.

**Hope** focuses on the future and fuels present perseverance. Paul wrote to the saints at Thessalonica that he was

constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness **of hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father. (1Th 1:3-note)

**MacArthur** comments:

**Hope** transcends mere human, wishful anticipation and rests confidently in the consummation of redemption that Scripture says will certainly occur when Christ returns. Such **hope** will inevitably cause believers to triumph over the struggles of life because it derives from the type of true faith the Thessalonians received from God.

The **NET Bible Note** summarizes Paul's "staccato-like" sentence in 1Th 1:3 describing "the work produced by faith, labor motivated by love, and endurance that stems from hope in Christ." Biblical **hope** is every believer's firm foundation for **perseverance**, for remaining steadfast in face of continual, even ever increasing opposition from the world, the flesh and the devil. What makes this foundation so firm according to Paul? It is the certainty of the Source on which that hope is fixed. It is not fixed on a concept nor an idea but on a person, the Person of Christ even as reiterated here in 1Ti 1:1! It follows that the more intimately and experientially we know Christ and the power of His resurrection (cf Php 3:10-note), the more robust will be our hope, our confidence, our certainty regarding our future, a future which is as bright as the promises of God in Christ Jesus! The godly writer Thomas Manton adds that...

What an excellent ground of **hope** and confidence we have when we reflect upon these three things in prayer —the **Father's** love, the **Son's** merit and the **Spirit's** power!

While the believer's **hope** is future focused, it is not without merit in the present for it (hope) "is not a matter for tickling our minds but for changing our lives and for influencing society." (Stephen Travis)

Titus 2:13-note describes the **Blessed Hope** which is synonymous with the Lord's appearing or return. Our **hope** is that Christ is coming back! God clearly considers the truth of the Second Coming as a very important doctrine, for it is alluded to (directly or indirectly) in about **one of every 20 NT verses!** Why so often? One reason is that what you are **looking** for will (should) determine what you are **living** for! For example, the hope (certainty) of Christ's Second Coming is living hope (1Pet 1:3-note), a joyful hope (1Th 2:19-note), a comforting hope (1Th 4:13-note, 1Th 4:18-note), a hope of glory (Col 1:27-note), an anchoring hope (Heb 6:19-note) and a purifying hope (1Jn 3:3-note).

**John Piper** summarizes **Biblical hope** with a series of questions and answers...

### 1. What is the definition of Christian hope?

**Answer:**

a confident expectation of good things to come (Hebrews 6:11-note).

### 2. What is the ground of Christian hope?

**Answer:**

- the sovereign grace of God (2Th 2:16), and
- the good news that Christ died for sinners (Col 1:23-note).

### 3. What is the cause of Christian hope in the human heart? What brings it about and sustains it?

#### Answer:

- the work of God in regeneration (1Pe 1:3-note), and
- the promises of God in his Word (Ro 15:4-note).

### 4. What is the content of Christian hope? What are we hoping for?

#### Answer:

- the appearing of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13-note),
- the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23-note),
- the consummation of our righteousness (Galatians 5:5),
- sharing the glory of God (Romans 5:2-note), and
- inheriting eternal life (Titus 1:2-note; Titus 3:7-note).

**Ray Stedman** discusses the practical import of this doctrine (hope) to the integrity and vitality of the Church, the Bride of Christ who should be living in light of her Bridegroom's soon appearing...

One of the great reasons the Church is so confused in this day, one of the reasons the Church says so little of true significance to the world, is that it has neglected and abandoned, by and large, **the hope of the coming of the Lord**. There are very few sermons preached on it. There is very little said about it. There is no time given to a consideration of what this **hope** means and why it is set forth **so frequently** and **so clearly** in the Scriptures. Great sections of the Scriptures that deal with the **hope** of our Lord's return are simply ignored by Christians. ([Defense Against Defeat, Part 3 Ephesians 6:17](#)) (Ed: Stedman's analysis begs the question - When was the last time you preached a series or even a single sermon devoted to the doctrine of the Second Coming?)

## BIBLICAL HOPE: ROOT & FRUIT

**Christ Jesus our Hope** is our **righteousness** (Gal 5:5), our source of **glory** (Ro 5:1-2-note), our promise of **redemption** (Ro 8:18-25-note), our **full assurance** until the end (Heb 6:11-note), our power for **steadfastness** (1Th 1:3-note), our means and motivation for **boldness** (2Cor 3:12).

**Hope** is possible because of **Grace**, because God Who gives us the grace so that we might even be able to hope and set our minds on the certainty of God's promises He will fulfill in the future!

2Thess 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, Who has loved us and **given** us eternal comfort and **good hope by grace**

**Hope** is possible because of the **Gospel**.

Col 1:23-note if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the **hope of the Gospel** that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

**Hope** is possible because of the **New Birth** which gives us a new life and spiritual eyes to see and understand our living (not dead) hope...

1Pet 1:3-note Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be **born again** to a living **hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead

**Hope** is sustained by the **Scriptures**...

Ro 15:4-note For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have **hope**.

**Hope** is "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13-note)



**Hope** of His appearing engenders and energizes eager, expectant looking for that glorious day when He returns to take us all home forever and ever. (Titus 2:13)

**Hope** is the certainty of the final redemption of our bodies and the full and final deliverance from sin, suffering, disease, and death (Hallelujah!)

Ro 8:23-24-note And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in **hope** (of redemption of our body) we have been saved, but **hope** that is seen is not **hope**; for why does one also **hope** for what he sees?

**Hope** will not disappoint us since the believer's hope is based on God's promise and the completion of His salvation in us is more certain by far than anything we see with our eyes!

Ro 5:5-note and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

**Hope** is a truth which is like a helmet covering our head, protecting our prone to wander minds, stabilizing our sin tempted souls as we look forward to the consummation of the glorious coming of Christ, seeing Him face to face, hearing "Well done, good and faithful servant" and even receiving a grace-based reward from Him! That deserves an "Amen!"

1Th 5:8-note But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. (Have you put your helmet on?)

**Hope** of future good stimulates present **joy**! Calvin wrote that Paul warned us to not be content with temporal earthly "joys" (that wax and wane), counseling us to "raise our minds to heaven (cf Col 3:1-note, Col 3:2-note, 1Pe 1:13-note, Php 3:20-21-note), that we may enjoy full and solid joy." This truth that Biblically based hope brings joy is described in Ro 12:12-note - "Be **joyful** in **hope**". In other words in the sphere of (or "atmosphere" of a mind and heart filled with Biblical hope) the fruit produced by the Spirit is joy (Ro 14:17-note, Gal 5:22-note). Remember that Biblical Hope is founded on faith, faith, trusting in the promises of the trustworthy God. He said it, I believe it, regardless of how I "feel". His promises are "yea and amen in Jesus." This truth sets us apart. This truth renews our mind. This truth transforms us. This truth sets us free. This truth stirs up in our hearts a vibrant hope and that hope restores the joy of our salvation, a joy independent of circumstances, because it is supernatural joy, a joy birthed by the Spirit of Christ Jesus our Hope. Hallelujah! Amen!

**Hope** (laid up or kept safe for us in heaven where **Christ our Hope** is present!) generates **faith** in Christ and **love** for the saints. (Col 1:4-5NIV-note). Col 1:5NIV describes "the **faith** and **love** that spring from the **hope**." In other words **hope** is the root of **faith** (the plant) and of **love** (the fruit). Hope is anchored in the glories of heaven and in the heavenly One, and therefore inspires faith and love for "meantime living." John Piper writes that "**Hope** and **faith** are overlapping convictions. **Faith** is trusting a person, and when you trust that person for something they promise to do in the future, it is indistinguishable from **hope**." ([Faith in Hope, Against Hope, for the Glory of God](#)) And I would add that if you trust them, you are willing to **wait patiently** for the culmination/consummation of the **hope** which they promise! Therefore it is not surprising that in the OT Scriptures, the Hebrew word for "**wait**" is translated in some versions as "**hope**." (eg, Ps 25:5, 21 in NAS <> Ps 25:5NIV, Ps 25:21NIV, Ps 37:9 <> Ps 37:9NIV, Ps 39:7 <> Ps 39:7NIV, Ps 52:9 <> Ps 52:9NIV; Ps 69:6 <> Ps 69:6NIV, Ps 119:43 <> Ps 119:43NIV, Ps 119:74 <> Ps 119:74NIV; Ps 119:81 <> Ps 119:81NIV, Ps 119:114 <> Ps 119:114NIV, etc)

**Hope** is a powerful motivation for a passionate pursuit of personal holiness (1Jn 3:3-note) and diligent disciplining of one's self for godliness (compare 1Ti 4:7-note and 1Ti 4:10-note). Living in the light of the reality of Christ's future return (**our Blessed Hope**) makes (or at least should make) a daily difference in our present conduct. Since we someday will be like Him, a desire should be kindled within our hearts by His Spirit to become like Him now, growing in respect to salvation (1Pe 2:2-note), growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus (2Pe 3:18-note), being transformed into His image (2Cor 3:18-note, Ro 8:29-note). Similarly, the hope of Jesus' last words "**Surely (Yes) I am coming quickly**" (Rev 22:20-note) (**our Blessed Hope**) should motivate us to lives of daily, moment by moment submission and surrender to His Spirit Who progressively makes us more like Him. In short, the hope of **glorification** keeps before us the motivation to passionately pursue **purification** and His predetermined plan for our life (cp Eph 2:10-note). The great preacher **F. B. Meyer** once asked **D. L. Moody**, "What is the secret of your success?" Moody replied, "For many years I have never given an address without the consciousness that the Lord may come before I have finished." This may well explain the intensity of his service and the zeal of his ministry for Christ.

**Hope** is the foundation and "inspiration" for our development of **endurance** (not a passive acceptance but a Spirit enabled fortitude in the face of opposition or difficulty) when circumstances are difficult (1Th 1:3-4, 5, 6 - NIV = "your endurance **inspired by hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ", NLT = "your continual anticipation of the return of our Lord")

**Comment: Steadfastness of hope** describes the **steadfastness** as being characterized by **hope**, inspired by

**hope** (NIV) and sustained by **hope** in spite of set-backs and difficulties (Compare David's prayer to *wait quietly* which was based on his *hope* that came from God = Ps 62:5). In the context of First Thessalonians, where is the hope derived from? From the good news, the Gospel, the truth which turns an upside down world right side up and provides the assurance that true life is far more than this world calls "life". This hope includes the assurance that we one day will be saved from even the presence of sin and receive perfect glorified bodies ("future tense salvation") enabling us to have eternal unbroken fellowship with our Lord and His children. This is the hope that supernaturally inspires the believer to not just **hold on** in desperation but to **press on** with resignation, fully assured that the victory has already been won at Calvary. Indeed, this supernatural Spirit enabled **steadfastness** is not characterized by grim waiting but joyful hoping. **Hupomene** does not simply accept and endure but always has a forward looking aspect. For example, while the word "hope" is not used, even Jesus had a **future hope** which inspired present living (and dying). What was His "**hope**" in the following passage? Jesus "for the joy that was set before Him, **endured** (hupomeno) the Cross, despising the shame." (He 12:2-note).

**Hope** buoys up our souls when we are downcast, disturbed, in despair - Next time you are down, preach Ps 42:5 to your soul and follow through on the exhortation to hope in God. Indeed, hope is the antonym of and the antidote for despair.

**Charles R Swindoll** tells a somewhat humorous story about **hope** and **despair**: a missionary was sitting at her second-story window when she was handed a letter from home. As she opened the letter, a crisp, new, ten-dollar bill fell out. She was pleasantly surprised, but as she read the letter her eyes were distracted by the movement of a shabbily dressed stranger down below, leaning against a post in front of the building. She couldn't get him off her mind. Thinking that he might be in greater financial stress than she, she slipped the bill into an envelope on which she quickly penned "Don't despair." She threw it out the window. The stranger below picked it up, read it, looked up, and smiled as he tipped his hat and went his way. The next day she was about to leave the house when a knock came at the door. She found the same shabbily dressed man smiling as he handed her a roll of bills. When she asked what they were for, he replied: "That's the sixty bucks you won, lady. **Don't Despair** paid five to one." (Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life)

**Hope** enables us to praise God continually and in progressively increasing "increments" ("more and more"). The more we meditate on and "marinate" our heart and mind with the truth of our hope, the more the Spirit will enable our heart to praise our great King!

But as for me, I will **hope** continually, and will praise Thee yet more and more. (Ps 71:14)

**Spurgeon**: The holy faith of the persecuted saint comes to the front in these three verses. But I will hope continually. When I cannot rejoice in what I have, I will look forward to what shall be mine ("our hope"), and will still rejoice. **Hope** will live on a barren tract of ground, and sing on a branch laden down with snow. No date and no place are unsuitable for **hope**. Hell alone excepted, **hope** is a dweller in all regions. We may always **hope**, for we always have grounds for it: we will always **hope**, for it is a never failing consolation....(Re: praise...more and more Spurgeon says) "Superior" cries the eagle, as he mounts towards the sun: higher and yet higher is also our aim, as we soar aloft in duty and devotion. **It is our continual hope that we shall be able more and more to magnify the Lord.**

**Hope of future grace** (not just "hope" but "hope fully", be intensely desirous and fully confident that Jesus is coming again which) motivates present girding of your mind for action and living life soberly in the power of the Spirit and His present grace - (1Pe 1:13-note)

**Hope** which is living, "lively", equips beleaguered saints with power to follow Christ in the costly way of love, with strong confidence that if we lose our life doing his will, we will find it again and be richly rewarded. (1Pe 1:3-note)

**Piper** - We live in hope (a living hope). We wait to see our Lord face to face. We wait to have whole and healthy bodies which don't get sick any more. And we wait to have whole and healthy souls which don't sin any more.

**Hope** firmly and securely anchors our soul in the midst of the storms of life - (Heb 6:19-note) Hope is like an anchor, because our hope in Christ stabilizes us in the storms, but unlike an anchor, it does not hold us back. In other words what you're going through isn't the end of the story, but for hope teaches us that it is simply the journey (which may be rough) leading to the right destination, heaven (Php 3:20-21-note).

**Hope** gives us boldness - "Since we have such a hope, we are very bold." (2Cor 3:12-note)

**Hope** helps us to grow in patience - "If we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently." (Ro 8:25-note)

**Hope** gives us confidence in God (Ps 78:7) which in turn is the spiritual fruit of teaching Scriptural truth. (See "teaching" in Ps 78:5, 6) **Are you teaching your disciples the Scriptures dealing with Biblical hope that they might have confidence in God's**

## promises?

(God gave Israel the Law to be taught from generation to generation so) that they might **set their hope** (NAS = **put their confidence**) in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. (Ps 78:7)

**Note:** The importance of teaching the next generation about Biblical hope that they might have confidence in God.

**Spurgeon:** Faith cometh by hearing (Ro 10:17-note). Those who know the Name of the LORD will set their hope in Him, and that they may be led to do so is the main end of all spiritual teaching. "Their hope was to be set not in the law which punishes, but in grace freely given which redeems; therefore is it added and not forget the works of God." Johannes De Turrecremata

## RELATIONSHIP OF JOY AND HOPE

**Hope** gives us a reason to **exult** or to **feel joy** or **great delight**. In short hope gives us joyful confidence in our glorious future, this truth enabling us to even "exult in our (present) tribulations" and to wait in patience, not wondering if our life will end well, but that it will end with us forever sharing in Christ's glory! That's a truth to boast about!

Through Whom (Christ) also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand and we exult (boast, feel great joy) in **hope** of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance (Ro 5:2-3-note)

**John Piper:** The chief cause of joy in the Christian life is the eager expectation that we will see and share in the glory of God. Hope for God's glory is the heart of our gladness. ([Called to Suffer and Rejoice For Holiness and Hope](#))

**Vance Havner:** A seasick man was leaning in agony over the rail when a friend said, "Cheer up! Seasickness never killed anybody." "Don't tell me that," groaned the suffering voyager, "it's the hope of dying that has kept me alive!" **The Christian's hope of dying does help keep us alive through the trials and tribulations of this present time, for it speaks of heaven and seeing our Lord and reunion with dear ones gone before. The hope, not the dread, of dying can be a tonic, an elixir to the tired traveler in these lowlands. The best is yet to be and we can't lose for winning!**

Now pause a moment and sing joyful praise to God for your glorious hope is sure [Play "Rejoice, the Lord Is King" \(Vocal\)](#)

**Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord the judge shall come  
And take His servants up  
to their eternal home.  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!  
-Charles Wesley**

**Hope** establishes our security and safety - (Job 11:18)

**Pulpit Commentary comment:** Job, entering on this second period of prosperity, would be and feel secure; safe, i.e., from any return of calamity, because **hope** would once more animate him and be his predominant feeling. No doubt *"hope springs eternal in the human breast;"* and when Job's prosperity was actually restored (Job 42:12-16), these anticipations had their fulfilment.

**Hope** guarantees our eternal life (Titus 3:7-note)

"He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:5-7-note)

**Hope** as the world typically defines it is a desire for some future occurrence of which one is not assured of attaining. The ancient world did not generally regard **hope** as a virtue, but merely as a temporary illusion. Historians tell us that a great cloud of **hopelessness** covered the ancient world. Philosophies were empty; traditions were disappearing; religions were powerless to help men face either life or death. People longed to pierce the veil and get some message of hope from the other side, but there is none outside of Christ.

From Hebrews 3:6-note we learn that while holding fast to one's Biblical **hope** does not save a person, it is one evidence that an individual is truly saved.

**Gabriel Marcel** said "**Hope** is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism." Indeed, a study of concentration camp survivors

found that those prisoners who were able to hold onto their sense of hope ('things are going to get better' or 'we're going to get out of here one day') were much more likely to survive. Hope then is not optional but for these prisoners proved to be a matter of life and death.

Biblical **hope** is not "finger crossing", but is alive and certain because of the **resurrection of Jesus Christ** from the dead. Life without Christ is a hopeless end whereas life in Christ is an endless hope. Biblical **hope** is confident expectancy. Someone has put it this way "**Hope** is faith in the future tense." **John Blanchard** rightly says that "**Hope** is biblical shorthand for unconditional certainty." The Puritan writer **Thomas Brooks** says that "**Hope** can (allow us to) see heaven through the thickest clouds."

Make us thy mountaineers  
We would not linger on the lower slope,  
Fill us afresh with hope,  
O God of hope.  
-[Amy Carmichael](#)

**John Bunyan** author of *Pilgrim's Progress* wrote that **Hope** has a thick skin and will endure many a blow; it will put on patience as a vestment, it will wade through a sea of blood, it will endure all things if it be of the right kind, for the joy that is set before it. Hence **patience** is called "patience of hope" (steadfastness of hope 1Th 1:3) because it is **hope** that makes (enables) the soul (to) exercise patience and long-suffering under the cross, until the time comes to enjoy the crown.

**Hope is never ill when faith is well.**

**F F Bruce** gives this description of Christian **hope**...We are refugees from the sinking ship of this present world order, so soon to disappear; our hope is fixed in the eternal order, where the promises of God are made good to His people in perpetuity.

**J. Gresham Machen** writes that...The Christian hope is the hope of a time when even the possibility of our sinning will be over. It is not the hope then of a return to the condition of Adam before the Fall but the hope of an entrance into a far higher condition.

**John Piper**: Why are you downcast, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? **Hope** in God. For he is a God of matchless grace. He elects by **grace**. He calls by **grace**. He sanctifies by **grace**. He sustains faith by **grace**. And he will glorify you by **grace**. You cannot earn it or deserve it or merit it. It is free. Believe it. Rest in it. Delight in it. And it is yours. ([Why Hope? Grace!](#))

Unbelievers have no hope of a future resurrection to eternal life (1Th 4:13). Dr. Victor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist, observed that a prisoner did not continue to live very long after hope was lost. But even the slightest ray of hope—the rumor of better food; a whisper about an escape—helped some of the camp inmates to continue living even under systematic horror (*Man's Search for Meaning*).

The atheist [Jean-Paul Sartre](#) declared shortly before death that he so strongly resisted feelings of despair that he would try to convince himself by saying "*I know I shall die in hope.*" His self-deceptive maneuvers however left him hopeless and so in profound sadness, he would add "*But hope needs a foundation.*" (devotional) The irony is that Sartre was actually half correct - hope does need a foundation and here in First Timothy Paul says that the foundation is the Solid Rock, **Christ Jesus our hope!** The atheist Sartre was hopeless for he had refused to believe in Jesus Christ, the only source of genuine, eternal hope. [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) (surely in the spirit of antichrist 1Jn 2:18) made the foolish declaration that "*Hope is the worst of evils, for it prolongs the torment of man.*" Wrong! Hope has just the opposite effect of stabilizing and encouraging the life of the Christ follower! "The foolishness of God is wiser than men!" 1Cor 1:25

**A HOPELESS DECEPTION** - When Alexander the Great was setting out on his campaigns, he divided all his possessions among his friends. Someone said, "But you are keeping nothing for yourself." "O yes, I am," he said. "I have kept my hopes." A man can endure anything so long as he has hope, for then he is walking not to the night, but to the dawn. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible](#))

**Comment:** Alexander's reasoning sounds plausible but it did not prove true for he suffered an ignominious end, dying at the young age of 33 without hope, without God!

**Seneca** Rome's leading intellectual figure, tutor of the nefarious emperor Nero and contemporary of Paul defined hope as "*an uncertain good*" the antithesis of the believer's blessed hope! What a difference the new birth makes in one's perspective. Hopelessness is characterized by absolute despair with no expectation of good. The Bible refers to those who have only a hope that perishes...Bildad the Shuhite, one of Job's "friends" declaring "*So are the paths of all who forget God and the hope of the godless will perish.*" (Job 8:13 cf Job 27:8, Pr 10:28) Bildad gives an accurate description of the hope of those without God and without Christ...in the end they will "*perish*", where the Hebrew word is "*abad*" which means be lost and in a state of ruin and destruction. It refers not so much to annihilation as to that which is ruined and is no longer usable for its intended purpose. The upshot is that unbelieving men and women who were created in the image of God for the express purpose of glorifying Him, will "perish" and lose all hope of ever achieving their purpose (see Eph 2:12-13-note), cp the similar fate of those who "set their hope" on works to achieve

salvation - Jn 5:45). Their end is tragic! No wonder cynics like **H. L. Mencken** were forced to quip that "*hope is a pathological belief in the occurrence of the impossible.*"

## **THE SUSTAINING POWER OF HUMAN HOPE**

In 1965, naval aviator James B. Stockdale became one of the first American pilots to be shot down during the Vietnam War. As a prisoner of the Vietcong, he spent seven years as a P.O.W., during which he was frequently tortured in an attempt to break him and get him to denounce the U.S. involvement in the war. He was chained for days at a time with his hands above his head so that he could not even swat the mosquitoes. Today, he still cannot bend his left knee and walks with a severe limp from having his leg broken by his captors and never reset. One of the worst things done to him was that he was held in isolation away from the other American P.O.W.s and allowed to see only his guards and interrogators. How could anyone survive seven years of such treatment? As he looks back on that time, Stockdale says that it was his hope that kept him alive. Hope of one day going home, that each day could be the day of his release. Without hope, he knew that he would die in hopelessness, as others had done. Such is the power of hope that it can keep one alive when nothing else can. ([1500 Illustrations for Biblical Preaching - arranged by topic and indexed exhaustively - Michael P. Green](#))

**Comment:** Clearly hope is essential to our survival. If such is the power of human hope, how much greater is the potential for Biblical hope! When we don't feel like we can survive our current "prison like" circumstances, what effect can a vibrant Biblical hope potentially have on our outlook? If Stockdale's hope of going home, of one day being released from prison gave him the wherewithal to keep on living, beloved, but our great God promises that one day we too will be going home, and that one day we too will be set free, released from every struggle with sin (even released from the presence and pleasure of sin!), released from, every heartache, released from every pain and even released from every tear we've shed. Beloved, if that is our hope, can we not endure the "prison" of this present world, holding fast to that hope, firm until the end? Yes, but not by our might, not by our power but by the enabling power of the Spirit of Christ, through Whom we are more than conquerors in this life and the one to come! Amen!

**G. Campbell Morgan** tells the story of a man whose shop had been burned in the great Chicago fire. He arrived at the ruins the next morning carrying a table which he set up in the charred remains of his store and upon which he placed the sign,

"Everything lost except wife, children, and hope.  
Business will be resumed as usual tomorrow morning."

**Spurgeon** - It is reported that in the Tamul language there is no word for hope. Alas! poor men, if we were all as destitute of the blessed comfort itself as these Tamul speakers are of the word! What must be the misery of souls in hell where they remember the word, but can never know hope itself!

**June Hunt** has an interesting note on the use the anchor to symbolize hope...

For centuries, anchors have been a symbol of hope. This emblem was especially significant to the early persecuted church. Many etchings of anchors were discovered in the catacombs of Rome, where Christians held their meetings in hiding. Threatened with death because of their faith, these committed Christians used the anchor as a disguised cross and as a marker to guide the way to their secret meetings. Located beneath the ancient city, 600 miles of these tomb-like burial chambers served as a place of refuge during perilous times of persecution. Thus, the **anchor**—found even on some tombstones today—has become the symbol of guaranteed hope for the eternal security of true Christians. (Biblical Counseling Keys on Hope: The Anchor of Your Soul)

**Chuck Swindoll** writes in one of the few books in the last 100 years to specifically address the subject of **Biblical "Hope"**

(**Hope**) is something as important to us as water is to a fish, as vital as electricity is to a light bulb, as essential as air is to a jumbo jet. **Hope** is basic to life....Without that needed spark of **hope**, we are doomed to a dark, grim existence. How often the word "**hopeless**" appears in suicide notes. And even if it isn't actually written, we can read it between the lines. Take away our **hope**, and our world is reduced to something between depression and despair....**hope** is more than wishful thinking.

**Hope** is a vital necessity of life--a gift that God wants to give to you. And in a world that regularly writes dreams off as foolish and drains the **hope** from the heart with dark pessimism" (**Biblical hope**) "is a voice crying in the wilderness...a word of enthusiasm for life in the midst of any difficult situation you are in....If you want to smile through your tears, if you want to rejoice through times of suffering, just keep reminding yourself that what you're going through isn't the end of the story...it's simply the rough journey that leads to the right destination...Solid, stable, sure **hope**. **Hope** to press on. **Hope** to endure. **Hope** to stay focused. **Hope** to see

new dreams fulfilled" Charles R. Swindoll in his book [Hope Again: When Life Hurts and Dreams Fade](#)

**A W Tozer - Hope** is a word which has taken on a new and deeper meaning for us because the Savior took it into His mouth. Loving Him and obeying Him, we suddenly discover that **hope** is really the direction taken by the whole Bible. **Hope** is the music of the whole Bible, the heartbeat, the pulse and the atmosphere of the whole Bible...**Hope** means a desirable expectation, a pleasurable anticipation. As men know this word, it often blows up in our faces and often cruelly disappoints us as human beings. **Hope** that is only human will throw us down and wound us just as pleasurable anticipation often turns to discouragement or sorrow.

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**Do You Have Hope?** - Several years ago, millionaire Eugene Lang was asked to speak to a class of sixth-graders from East Harlem, New York. What could he say to inspire these students, most of whom would drop out of school? Scrapping his notes, he decided to speak to them from his heart. "Stay in school," he admonished, "and I'll help pay the college tuitions for every one of you." That was a turning point. For the first time in their lives, these students had hope. One said, "I had something to look forward to, something waiting for me. It was a golden feeling." Nearly 90 percent of that class went on to graduate from high school.

People without hope are people without a future. But when hope is restored, life is restored. This is especially true for those who come to know Christ. He gives a sure basis for hope. He has promised to return to earth to take us to our eternal home (Jn 14:3; 1 Th. 4:17). Till then, there is help through the power of the Holy Spirit (1Th. 1:5). The believer experiences a new kind of life now and anticipates its fulfillment when Jesus returns.

Is that hope alive in your heart? If not, admit that you are a sinner. Trust Christ as your Savior. And He'll give you a hope that makes life worth living.

A strong defense to guard the soul  
Is ours from heaven above;  
God fills our hearts with steadfast hope  
And gives us faith and love.  
— D J De Haan

**If Christ lives in your heart,  
You have a living hope.**

**Related Resources: Devotionals on Hope from Our Daily Bread**

**1 Timothy 1:2 TO TIMOTHY, MY TRUE CHILD IN THE FAITH: GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE FROM GOD THE FATHER AND CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD: Timotheo gensio tekno en pistei charis eleos eirene apo Theou patros kai Christou lesou tou kuriou hemo):**

- **Timothy:** Ac 16:1-3 1Th 3:2
- **my:** 1Ti 1:18 1Co 4:17 Php 2:19-22 2Ti 1:2 2Ti 2:1 Titus 1:4
- **Grace:** Ro 1:7 Ga 1:3 2Ti 1:2 Titus 1:4 1Pe 1:2

**To Timothy** - Timothy is the recipient of this epistle, the young man Paul refers to later as **"my son"** (1Ti 1:18, 2Ti 2:1). In other epistles Paul calls Timothy **"my beloved son"** (2Ti 1:2), **"my true child** in the common faith" (not the act of believing but the truth that is believed) (Titus 1:4) and **"my beloved and faithful child** in the Lord" (1Cor 4:17) Paul reminds the saints at Philippi that they knew of Timothy's "proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the Gospel **like a child** serving his father." (Php 2:22) Careful observation of these preceding passages indicates that Paul was not Timothy's natural father, but his "spiritual father". Luke gives us Timothy's natural lineage writing...

And he (Paul) came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. (Acts 16:1-2)

**My true child** - As discussed above, Paul had no natural child, but here he describes his supernatural child. It was through the instrumentality of Paul that Timothy heard and received the Gospel and was born again as a child of God. Paul viewed Timothy even as a father would his natural son, so close was their friendship and intimate bond. Paul was the teacher and Timothy was his disciple, and ultimately was a disciple of Christ Jesus. This begs the question dear reader - Have you a tender regard and interest in those in whose lives God has used you as a vessel of honor?

**Grace** (charis) is God's free, unmerited favor toward sinners, which grants those who believe the Gospel complete forgiveness forever through the Lord Jesus Christ (Ro 3:24; Ep 1:7)

**MacArthur - Peace** with God and from Him in all life's circumstances is the effect of grace (Ep 2:14–15; Col. 1:20), flowing out of the forgiveness God has given to all the elect (cf. Ps 85:8; Isa. 26:12; 2Th 3:16). "Grace upon grace" (Jn 1:16) is an expression that defines the boundless flow of divine favor, while peace comes with such fullness that it is divine and beyond human understanding (Jn 14:27; Php 4:7). Believers receive surpassing grace for every sin (Ps. 84:11; Acts 4:33; 2Cor 9:8; 12:9; Heb. 4:16) and abundant peace for every trial (Jn 14:27; Jn 16:33).

**From God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord** - The source of the grace, mercy and peace was God the Father and God the Son, again a clear indication that Paul considered Jesus to be fully divine and co-equal with God the Father.

**1 Timothy 1:2 Safe Climbing** - AMONG the safety rules mountain climbers must remember as they scale rocky cliffs is this: Keep three points on the rock. In other words, before you move a foot, make sure the other foot and both hands are firmly positioned on solid rock. And if you are going to move a hand, make sure your other hand and both feet are securely placed.

That's a good safety tip for our spiritual lives as well. To keep from falling, we need to keep a grip on three rock-solid truths: grace, mercy, and peace, the words the apostle Paul often used to begin or conclude his letters.

The first message I heard Dr. M. R. DeHaan preach was part of a series of lessons called "Three Sisters of Salvation," which were about these three words. I made up my mind then that I would make these three qualities part of my life.

We are given our salvation as a gift of God's grace. His wrath is withheld from us because of His abundant mercy. And His peace enables us to stand in quiet confidence when the howling gales of adversity swirl around us. They will give us security during our spiritual mountain climbing experience.

We can appropriate these gifts through prayer and obedience. In the storms of temptation we will not fall if we always keep three points on the Rock. —D C Egnor (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

**1 Timothy 1:1, 2; Acts 16:1-5 Good Counsel** - But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. - Philippians 2:22

The first seven chapters of Proverbs are believed to have been written by King David for his son Solomon. David was about to hand over the kingdom to his son, and he wanted to take the opportunity to share wise advice and counsel, exhorting his son to pursue wisdom and to live righteously.

This month we will study the books of 1 and 2 Timothy, letters written by the apostle Paul to his spiritual son, Timothy. In a similar way to Proverbs 1-7, Paul wants to pass along wise advice, helping to prepare Timothy for the ministry that he had been given.

It's likely that Timothy became a believer when Paul first passed through Timothy's hometown of Lystra on his first missionary journey (cf. Acts. 14:8-20), meaning that Paul was Timothy's spiritual father since he introduced Timothy to Christ. Although Timothy and his mother were believers, his father was not (Acts 16:1). Paul was a Christian mentor, entrusting ministry responsibilities to Timothy and viewing him as the successor to his own legacy of ministry. Paul and Timothy exemplified a father-son relationship through Christ that still provides a model for believers today.

Understanding this relationship provides the lens through which we can read and understand Paul's letter. First Timothy provides important and urgent instruction for the church, but it isn't a formal church document. Rather, it's a personal letter meant to cheer, instruct, and strengthen a young pastor-missionary. Although Timothy was certainly a man held in high esteem both by Paul and the churches in which they had ministered together (Acts 16:2-3), he was altogether "ordinary," just as we are. Young and timid, he needed Paul's encouragement (cf. 2Tim. 1:7). Raised by an unbelieving father, he didn't have the perfect Christian heritage we might expect. We learn how God often delights to work powerfully through the most unlikely candidates.

## THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP OF BIBLICAL HOPE & JOY

The 1828 Webster's Dictionary describes JOY as "the passion or emotion excited by the expectation of good (this latter phrase is an excellent description of Biblical HOPE!)." Why is frequent...meditation on BIBLICAL HOPE so important? Because "the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and JOY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT (joy produced by the Spirit as we

meditate on Biblical HOPE)." (Romans 14:17) Biblical HOPE is vital because when we LOSE HOPE (we call this "despair") in the future, we LOSE JOY (we call this "grief" or "sorrow") in the PRESENT because we have no firm foundation for confidence in the FUTURE. In short, the soothing balm of Biblical "HOPE (allows us to) see heaven through the thickest clouds." (Puritan Thomas Brooks) Spurgeon has a pertinent question about hope: "The JOY OF HOPE—who shall measure it? Those who are strangers to it are certainly strangers to the SWEETEST MATTER in spiritual life. With the exception of present communion with Christ, the JOY of a believer in this present state must be mainly the JOY OF HOPE. "It does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him just as He is (OUR HOPE)." (1John 3:2) We thank God that we shall be satisfied when we wake up (from the sleep of death) in the likeness of Jesus! This ANTICIPATION (HOPE) of Heaven makes (the hurt of) earth become endurable! And the sorrows of time lose their weight when we think of the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory (Our future HOPE)." (2Corinthians 4:17) And so Spurgeon encourages us to continually focus our "TELESCOPE OF HOPE to the starry promises of heaven" because HOPE of our future time in heaven serves to stir up a lively JOY during our present sojourn on earth! Is your JOY at low ebb? Then drink deeply from the springs of BIBLICAL HOPE and the Holy Spirit will empower you to "REJOICE in the Lord (Our "Best HOPE" and JOY of our Desire) always and again I say REJOICE" (Philippians 4:4) because "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the GLORY (OUR HOPE) that is to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18). Dearly beloved of God, "Do not be grieved (joyless), for the JOY OF JEHOVAH is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10b) and that JOY grows well when watered by the good HOPE found in God's Word of Truth. (See below for link to study on Hope).

In Romans Paul links JOY with HOPE writing "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand and we REJOICE IN HOPE of the glory of God." (Romans 5:2) "Peace with God" takes care of the PAST: God will no longer hold our sins against us. "Access to God" takes care of the PRESENT: we can come to our Father at any time for the supernatural enablement we continually need. "REJOICING IN THE HOPE of the glory of God" takes care of the FUTURE: the promise that one day we shall share in His glory! Notice again that it is the certainty of our bright FUTURE HOPE that is the grounds for our PRESENT REJOICING, and this hope fueled joy enables us to live as lights "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Php 2:15), as God's ambassadors of reconciliation (2Cor 5:18-20), "filled with JOY and with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13:52) Who enables us to radiate His JOY which is not natural (like happiness which depends on what happens) but is supernatural, independent of circumstances, be they benevolent or bad! This great truth begs the question dear child of the Most High God, "Are you rejoicing in hope today?" If not take a moment to meditate on Romans 5:1-2 (memorize it!), asking God's Spirit to renew your thinking and enable you to set your mind on the things above and not on the things that are on the earth (Col 3:2). Spurgeon would agree for he observes that Ro 5:1-2 "is a golden staircase (Ed: A "Staircase" which transports the eyes of our heart "heavenward", focusing them on our Great God and His glorious plan of redemption!)—justification brings peace and peace brings access into this Grace wherein we are established! And then comes the JOY OF HOPE—and that HOPE fixes its eyes on nothing less than the GLORY OF GOD. GRACE is the stepping-stone to GLORY—and they who are JUSTIFIED BY FAITH shall in due time be GLORIFIED BY LOVE!" Hallelujah!

In Romans 12:12 Paul writes that we are to be "REJOICING in HOPE, persevering in tribulation" or as Piper paraphrases it we are to "Let our joy be the JOY that comes from HOPE." In other words "hope is the soil in which joy is rooted—the ground where joy grows." Like a fish needs the environment of water to thrive, JOY needs HOPE to be alive in our heart. When a believer's HOPE is fresh and full and focused on CHRIST JESUS our HOPE (1Ti 1:1) and the glorious FUTURE He promises us, this great HOPE functions like "spiritual rain" falling on our heart, bringing forth the fragrant fruit of JOY, birthed by the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Piper adds "for the Christian things may go really bad right now and yet not rob him of his JOY. The JOY is the JOY OF HOPE. Christians set their hearts on how good it will be in the age to come and in the presence of Christ after death. This is why Christians can REJOICE in tribulation and not just in health and peace and security. Tribulation drives the roots of JOY down into HOPE. The future JOY streams back into the presence and lightens every load." As someone has said, when we are filled "With the JOY OF HOPE we can sing as we suffer!" Matthew Henry wrote that our "JOY and peace as believers arises chiefly from our HOPES. What is laid out UPON us is but little, compared with what is laid UP FOR us (in glory); therefore the more HOPE we have the more JOY and peace we have. We do then abound in HOPE when we HOPE for great things from God and are greatly established and confirmed in these HOPES. Christians should desire and labor after an abundance of HOPE, such HOPE as will not be ashamed!"

Spurgeon adds "To be with Christ in Glory is the JOY OF HOPE, the HOPE which makes not ashamed. Our HOPE is no dream—as sure as we are here today, we who are trusting in Christ will be in Heaven before long—for He prays that we may be with Him where He is and may behold His Glory! (John 17:24) Let us not wish to postpone the happy day! Shall our bridal day be kept back? No, let the Bridegroom speedily come and take us to Himself. WHAT A JOY to know that this head shall wear a crown of glory and these hands shall wave the palm branch of victory! I speak not of myself alone, my brothers and sisters, but of you also and of all who love His appearing (2Ti 4:8). There is a crown of life (James 1:12, Rev 2:10) laid up for you which the righteous Judge will give you. Therefore, have patience a little while. Bear, still, your cross. Put up with the difficulties of the way, for the end is almost within sight!" And so undergirded by God's grace, enabled by His Spirit and for the glory of the Lamb we declare with C H Spurgeon "Away dark thoughts! UP, faith and HOPE!" Not gloom but gladness, not dreariness but delight, for Jesus Himself declares "Yes, I am coming



quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." (Rev 22:20)

Annie Johnson Flint writes...

I look up -- into the face of Jesus  
For there my heart can rest, my fears are stilled;  
And there is JOY, and love, and light for darkness,  
And perfect peace, and every HOPE fulfilled.

SEE IN DEPTH STUDY OF GOD'S WORD OF HOPE...

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