

12-3-2025 – Finding Hope at Christmas - - Mid-week Encouragement for the soul!

Finding. New Series. Hope. We hope for ...

Our definition of Hope? A desire or wish for something to happen.

Plenty of people right now live w/ NO hope b/c all they **cling** to is a **wish**.

Bible gives a different picture of **hope**.

Hope is not wishful thinking – it is a confident expectation of what God has promised, which is rooted in faith and the assurance of God's promises.

- **Hope, when based on faith, will not be disappointed.**

Rom. 5:5 - [NLT](#) – “And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.”

- This **hope** is based on knowledge: God’s **love** & God’s **character**.
 - o This isn’t just a **wish** for life to get better. It’s an **assurance**.
- It’s an assurance b/c it’s **rooted in faith**. Why? b/c God planted it.
 - o He **plants**, we must **nurture** it to grow. Here is how God plants it:

John 1:12-13 [NLT](#) – “But to all who believed him & accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.”

- o We’re **born again** w/ a **spiritual birth** from God w/ a **living hope**.

1 Peter 1:3-4 - [NIV](#) – “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”

■ Christianity (belief in Jesus’ resurrection) – is to be born again w/hope.

The process: Belief = born again; opens the door to the Holy Spirit.

God send us the H.S. to give us wisdom – knowledge – and hope.

2 Cor. 1:22-23 - [NIV](#) – “Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, **and put his Spirit in our hearts** as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.”

- Every Christian has the H.S. It lives in our hearts. Don't tune it out!
- It speaks to us, giving us knowledge & understanding:

[1 Cor. 2:12](#) – “We have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”

[John 14:26](#) – “But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have told you.”

The H.S. enables us to look back at scripture to look forward with hope.

Advent is the season for hope . . . from hopeless living to hope-filled living.

When Jesus was born, Israel had been looking for the Messiah. **Simeon.**

Their Hope for the Messiah was based on prophecy.

Gen. 3:15 - [NIV](#) – “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”

Israel was looking for the conqueror . . . Savior . . . Redeemer . . . Messiah.

- Genesis 3:15 is a **prophecy** – **God's telling** of the coming Messiah.
- “**He**” will be born of a woman and ultimately defeat evil.
- “**Her seed**” is unique, Bible usually traces genealogy through the man.
 - o “Abraham was the father of Isaac, - Isaac the father of Jacob, - Jacob the father of Judah . . .” - **Matt. 1**
- That unique phrase **hints** at the **virgin birth** of Christ.
- And other prophecies tell us how the Messiah will come:
 - o **Is. 7:14** - [NLT](#) – “the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means ‘God is with us’).”

Now look at **Matthew 1** – here is what happened when Joseph learned Mary was pregnant, before they were married:

¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet¹⁹ did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive & give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

God gave us a **prophecy . . . and it was fulfilled!**

That's why hope is based on knowledge: God does what He promises.

- Notice the lineage:
 - o "... and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah." – **Matt. 1:16**

Look at the most popular Christmas prophecy:

Isaiah 9 - the prophecy of the Messiah – this foretold what was to **come**:

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. . .

⁴ you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. ⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

If you need Hope right now – look back to this promise – this prophecy:

- A child will be born **for you**. **God fulfilled that promise.**
 - o Jesus, born in Bethlehem, for us. Given to us. Proof of God's love.
- To us **a son is given**. **God fulfilled that promise.**
 - o For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son so that everyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

And look back at the Genesis prophecy:

- **He will crush your head – Gen. prophecy.** God fulfilled that promise.
 - o Jesus was victorious/ Satan. Crushing the head signifies a fatal blow, total defeat. Jesus' death & resurrection conquered sin and death.
- **You will strike his heel** God fulfilled that promise.
 - o The striking of the heel suggests a wound or attack that is not fatal. At the crucifixion of Jesus, Satan appeared to have **won - victory**. But those nails were not the end. Jesus was resurrected.
 - The **Enemy's power is temporary; His victory is illusory.**
 - Jesus's power is real. He has the ultimate victory.

If you're walking in darkness, fan flame/H.S. & listen to the voice/truth & hope

- Just as He promised, God gave us His Son. A gift of love.
- Because He loves you . . . good gifts & blessings are ahead.
 - o **Matt. 7:11** – “if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.”
- His love never ends... unconditional... unending. He's the **Everlasting Father**
- The **yoke** that has burdened you can be lifted – walk with Jesus & find rest.
- You don't need your boots for battle anymore – the war is over.
- The Prince of Peace has come . . . You can live in Peace.
- Your heart can be healed . . . “by His stripes we are healed.”
- You won't be lonely . . . He puts the lonely in families & God won't leave.
 - o **You can have hope** that your future will be good . . . it'll be ok.
 - o You can have hope that Someone is in your corner, fighting for you.
 - o You can have hope that you will have all you need.

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Hope is the difference in living depressed or excited.

Rom. 16:20 [NLT](#) – “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.”

Dec. 10 – Finding Joy at Christmas

Dec. 17 – Finding Love at Christmas