

A GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS STORY

INTRODUCTION

In its most basic sense, “hope” is a relational term. It is a great affirmation of trust in God, not because the believer knows what is ahead, but because God is known as wholly trustworthy.

- *Psalm 119:49-50 “Remember your word to your servant, in which you have made me hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life.”*
- *Psalm 130:7 “O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption.”*

DISCUSSION

How is hope a relational term?

EXPLANATION

What things in your life do you believe are out of control and you have lost hope over?

Are there any “things” that you have simply given up trying to fix?

When was the last time hope triumphed in your life?

APPLICATION

Read Psalm 130

How compassionate and full of hope are your actions?

Do you notice the downcast?

Do you express concern for others when there’s nothing to gain?

MISSION

Do you ever stop to think “Every word I speak offers a little hope or kills a little hope?”

How can you, by trusting Jesus and His hope, be a beacon of hope in your relationships?



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Genesis 50:19-20
Romans 12:12
Genesis 37:3-8
Genesis 39:2

Daniel 1:8
Acts 4:18
Acts 16:25

Genesis 39:6-15
Genesis 40:6-7
Genesis 41:39-43

Week 2

& SCRIPTURE VERSES



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Genesis 50:19-20 *But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.*

In the Old Testament, most often where we find “hope” is *miqweh*, *tiqwah*, or *yahal*. Each Hebrew word has an idea that wants to look ahead eagerly with confident expectation. Each also calls for patience, reminding us that the fulfillment of hope lies in the future.

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Today, researchers find that people respond to affliction and adversity in two ways:

- 1) They give up (they lose hope).
- 2) They learn to hope and enlarge their capacity to handle problems.

As the centuries drifted by, the prophets in the Old Testament revealed more and more of God’s plan. The shape of the hoped-for future took on clearer and clearer form. When Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, Jeremiah’s words reassured the Jews (31:16-17) *“Thus says the Lord: “Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future. God had not rejected his people...”*

PEOPLE OF HOPE EXERCISE CONTROL INSTEAD OF RESIGNING
Joseph was a prisoner...far from home...His robe gone...and the writer of Genesis says this comment *Genesis 39:2 “The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master.”* Joseph lost freedom but was not powerless; he had hope.

Faith believes that we are never just helpless victims, we are children of God.

Giving up produces a pattern of giving up, living without hope gets easier.

PEOPLE OF HOPE REMAIN COMMITTED TO CHRIST WHEN TEMPTED TO COMPROMISE

Joseph wrestles with temptation and runs from sin.

CS Lewis - *“we would think people are most vulnerable to temptation in seasons when their energy level and appetites are the highest, in fact, it is when we are in the valley, when we are struck by sadness or desolation, that we are in the most dangerous place.”*

God doesn’t spare His kids much, but He is with us. Joseph decided he would rather face life with God and have NOTHING than face life without Him and have everything.

PEOPLE OF HOPE FIND MEANING AND PURPOSE WHEN LIFE MAKES NO SENSE

Joseph found meaning in a simple way, *helping others*. Joseph didn’t become isolated or focus on his disappointment; he acts like Jesus and takes an interest in others.

“It is in this whole process of meeting and solving problems that life has meaning... It is only because of problems that we grow mentally and spiritually...It is for this reason that wise people learn not to dread but actually to welcome problems and actually to welcome the pain of problems.” Scott Peck

Dallas Willard *“I meet many faithful Christians who, in spite of their faith, are deeply disappointed in how their lives have turned out. Sometimes it is simply a matter of how they experience aging, which they take to mean they no longer have a future. But often, due to circumstances or wrongful decisions and actions by others, what they had hoped to accomplish in life they did not. They painfully puzzle over what they must have done wrong, or whether God has really been with them.”*

Jesus’ story is much the same. He wore a robe; it was also taken. Crowds mocked Him. Friends abandoned Him. Peter denied Him. Judas betrayed Him. Soldiers crucified Him. He was laid in a tomb...Not the way you think a story should end up!!!

DISAPPOINTMENT?- OR HOPE?

Three days later, while all the people who put him to death were feeling good, hope rises. No bad news can separate you from God.