

A large, vibrant floral arrangement is centered on the page. It includes red, orange, and yellow roses, white hydrangeas, and various greenery like eucalyptus and dark blue leaves. The text 'OUR HOPE RENEWED' is overlaid in large, white, bold, uppercase letters within a white square frame.

OUR HOPE RENEWED

"Hope in the trials. Hope in the darkness. Hope in this life. Hope in the life to come"

By Julie Contreras

Welcome fellow hope seekers!

This past year has been a rough one for me, for my family, for my church, for the world. Helping to care for my terminally ill mother in law, her passing, deaths of friends, division in the world, disagreements in the body of Christ, a pandemic, trauma in the lives of those I've poured into, racial tensions, political tensions, and more had taken a toll on me. Honestly, I'd become discouraged and disheartened. My hope was dwindling. As I lay in my bed, forced to finally rest and to isolate due to a mild case of COVID, the Lord put it on my heart to renew my hope and to share it with anyone else who needed their hope renewed as well. I pray that you will find these pages life giving and hope refreshing!

A bit about me...I'm a follower and lover of Jesus and have been for 40 years now. I'm the wife of an awesome godly man who lead-pastors New Vision Church. I'm a mom to four young adult children who are my heart. I'm a fresh empty nester and loving this season of being back to just the two of us. I'm a teacher who helps people homeschool their kids through a charter school and a Regional Coordinator who oversees other teachers doing the same thing. I love to teach God's Word to women and see it come alive for them. I enjoy investing in people and watching the Holy Spirit do His work in them. My goal in life is to let Jesus use me in any way He desires.

A bit about this study...The homework is devotional in nature and not too long. This is purposeful as sometimes we need to get powerful small doses of God's Word in order to let it really sink in. All Scripture is New King James Version unless otherwise noted. NLT = New Living Translation. The messages are recorded and can be accessed at <https://newvision.city/our-hope-renewed>. These also aren't too long. I hope that it will be just enough to encourage you and renew you. The reading in the teachings are from the New Living Translation. You will know when it's time to watch a teaching as you will come to the note page in your book.

A bit about you...I know this year has held challenges and difficulties for you too. I am sure that your hope has been tested. I encourage you to commit yourself over these next three weeks to do the homework and to open your heart anew to our loving Lord to renew your hope. My prayers are with you.

Love, Julie Contreras





Week 1



Week One

Day 1: Our Need For Hope

We have been participants in a world that is hopeless. It was a little easier to deny this truth in 2019 and even in the first couple of months of 2020. However, as each month went on, our world plunged further and further into drama, desperation, and in need of deliverance. We became prisoners of fear.

Fear abounded...

Fear of sickness.

Fear of the unknown.

Fear of being a spreader.

Fear of death. Fear of racism.

Fear of being accused of being a racist.

Fear of being a victim of racism.

Fear of an unstable political system.

Fear of a corrupt election.

Fear of anarchy. Fear of communism.

Fear of not knowing what or who to believe.

These are just some of the many fears we have found ourselves exposed to in the past year. What was one of the fears you found yourself facing?

Week One

Day 1: Our Need For Hope

As Christians, we faced our own questions.
Is Jesus enough? Is my faith strong enough?
How do I reconcile my faith with my fear?
Is watching church online enough?
Is my faith growing or subsiding?

What faith question have you wrestled with this past year?

Do you feel your faith has grown stronger or gotten weaker in 2020?

What has contributed to your answer? Why do you think it has gotten stronger or weaker?

Then there was the whole problem of people. Forced isolation led to loneliness and lack of accountability. As issues came up, we were surprised to find that our friends may have had different views on who they favored politically, where they stood racially, and how they conducted themselves in the midst of a pandemic. So many opportunities for division, for friendships to end, for strife to exist.

Did you see the end of any friendships this past year?

Week One

Day 1: Our Need For Hope

Have you let any form of bitterness creep up in you as others may have had different opinions than yourself on the pandemic, politics, or racism?

Pray for a moment and ask God to reveal how this is affecting you spiritually and in your relationship with Jesus and His church. Write your insights below.

With all of this hopelessness, I am writing to remind you of our hope. Yep, that's it. I said it, I meant it. We have hope! Hope in the midst of all the things we are facing. Hope in the struggles. Hope in the trials. Hope in the darkness. Hope in this life. Hope in the life to come. In fact, we can and should abound with hope. I am asking you to join me on this journey of renewing our hope over these next three weeks together.

Look up Romans 15:13 in your favorite version and write it below. End this day by reading it out loud 5 times. Let the truth of it sink into your soul. We will talk more about it tomorrow.

Week One

Day 2: Who Our Hope Is In

Romans 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Yesterday we spent some time recognizing our need to renew our hope. Today let's rediscover what hope is. What does hope mean to you? When you say, "I hope _____ will happen." what do you mean?

Hope is defined as the expectation of something good, a desire for something good to happen, a feeling of trust (Blue Letter Bible and Oxford Languages)

How does Hebrews 11:1 show faith and hope are tied together?

How is God described in Romans 15:13... the God of _____
Hope is the essence of who God is.

Look up the following verses and write who our hope is in.

Psalm 33:22 _____

Psalm 38:15 _____

Psalm 39:7 _____

Psalm 42:5 _____

Romans 15:12 _____

Week One

Day 2: Who Our Hope Is In

In this life, people will disappoint us. We put our hope in people and while they may have good intentions, we find they cannot live up to our full expectations. How is God different from Deuteronomy 7:9?

From Romans 15:13 at the top, what does the God of hope want to fill us with? All _____ and _____

When we don't have hope, we don't have joy and peace. The key to receiving hope, joy and peace is in this verse as well. All joy and peace in

Who must we believe in again? The God of _____

How are we to live in hope? Again the answer is in Romans 15:13....Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may _____ in hope

Write the definition of abound.

God doesn't want us to have just a speck of hope, but a whole bunch of it! He knows we need it to get through this life.

How does He give us this abounding hope? Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the _____ of the Holy _____.

Week One

Day 2: Who Our Hope Is In

God puts His very self in us, in the form of the Holy Spirit, to cause us to abound with the hope of God. I think if we are honest, we can each admit our hope may not have been abounding as much as God desires for us over the past year. Refresh your memory and write down what God has done for you that you can abound in hope for.

Here is one verse that reminds me of what God has done for me...Romans 5:5: Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

When our vision gets shifted away from God, our hope begins to dwindle. Our eyes focus on the problems and the despair. We begin to forget who God is, His power, His hope, His love, His promises, His presence in our lives. Have you experienced that?

What verse from your devotion today, do you choose to think about for the day to rekindle that hope? Write it below and then keep it with you in some format all day to reread throughout the day.

Week One

Day 3: Hope Given

God could have just kept all of His goodness and hope to Himself. Instead, He chose to share it with us.

Colossians 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

From Colossians 1:27, what is the hope of glory? Christ _____

Look up 1 Peter 1:3. Who gave us hope?

How was this hope given?

The God of Hope enters us through Christ, in the form of His Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:13b-14 explains it further. "And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him." NLT This is a gift that must be received. Hebrews 6:18b says that we "have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us."

What do you think we flee from to get into the refuge of hope?

Week One

Day 3: Hope Given

We flee from our old lives, from anything we once had hope in that will disappoint, to run to the refuge of the God of Hope.

What have you left behind to be filled with Christ in you, the hope of glory?

Hebrews 6:19 goes on to say "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,"

What three words describe hope in the verse above?

"The Presence behind the veil" is referring to God's presence. Being in God's presence is our hope that we experience now and will for eternity.

How has the hope of God, including His presence, anchored you in your life?

What are some aspects of God that He has given you through His Holy Spirit who lives in you that bring you hope? For example, I know that God is in full control of this world, so I have hope and peace in knowing that God is still working, even when I can't see it.

Week One

Day 3: Hope Given

Take a moment now to write a thank you prayer to our God of Hope for giving you His Holy Spirit to live in you, to be your personal hope of glory.

Notice today as you go through your day, ways that the Holy Spirit living in you, is bringing you hope. Return at the end of the day to write one of those ways here.

Week One

Day 4: Eternal Hope

How do we maintain a positive, hopeful attitude in a world filled with daily struggles and disheartening news? While we need hope in our everyday life, our hope of eternity is what gives it to us. When we realize that this life is only a dot on the long line of eternity, it helps us to put real life in perspective. It adjusts our perspective from the daily to the long term. The hope of eternity with God helps us to have hope in our daily struggles.

Read Psalm 16:9-11

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. 10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

What emotion does the writer have and express in verses 9 and 11?

This joy is an emotion that is being experienced right now because of what in verse 9? My flesh also will rest in _____.

What gives this hope according to verses 10 and 11? Read them below in the New Living Translation to give further understanding. Underline or highlight the reasons for this hope in the verses below.

10 For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your holy one to rot in the grave. 11 You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever.

Week One

Day 4: Eternal Hope

There is a double meaning for verse 10. It's Messianic in nature, referring to Jesus not rotting in the grave when He rose from the dead, which is the reason why we too, will not remain dead but will have eternal life with Jesus. Notice the "joy of your presence". God's presence brings us joy now and forever!

Write below the first line of verse 11.

Now write below the last line of verse 11.

What two things does God do that give us joy from what you wrote above?

God has led me through very difficult decisions. He often whispers which way to go. I have great joy in knowing that I am not directing my own steps but that God is guiding me. I can trust that whatever comes as a result of these decisions is nothing that God can't handle and that He is working on my behalf as I try to obey and follow Him. I'm not saying that I always get it right. Yet, I have joy in knowing that when I don't, His grace and love still cover me. What is one example of how you have experienced this to be true in your own life? How has God shown you the way of life? How has His presence brought you joy?

Week One

Day 4: Eternal Hope

One day we will be with Jesus forever for eternity. We will get there either through death from this life or by another way. This way is also part of our eternal hope found in Titus 2:13. Look it up and write what we are hoping for and looking for.

One day Jesus will come back for us and take us to be with Him! It's called the rapture of Christ and we are looking forward to it. We will learn more about it in one of our teachings. But for now, if you have the capability, look up and listen to

Jordan Feliz's "Jesus is Coming Back" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPo4wuQoITQ> to end your devotion today.

Week One

Day 5: Suffering And Hope

I realize that yesterday's devotional ended on a very joyful and cheery note. While I wish things could always be happy go lucky, (that's the core of my personality) I realize that there are days, sometimes months, or even a year, where that is not the case. Instead, we have hard times, even suffering. The Bible offers us hope, even in the suffering.

Read Romans 8:18-25 in your favorite version. For the correct context, this was written to a group of Christians who were being persecuted for their faith. They were being thrown to lions, burned alive at the stake, and victims of false accusations to discredit them and their faith. They knew suffering. What suffering or difficulty have you been experiencing lately?

What does verse 18 say about the sufferings of this present time? What is the hope found in the suffering?

Verses 19-22 then goes on to compare that even the creation is suffering. Both Jesus followers and creation long for something. What are they longing for according to verse 23?

Week One

Day 5: Suffering And Hope

This hope of our resurrected body, of our new heavenly bodies that will not wear out or get sick and will last for eternity is what we long for and hope for.

Underline or highlight what this hope is that we are waiting for in Galatians 5:5 below.

For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Our new bodies will no longer be tempted any longer by sin. They will be righteous!

Let's read more about our new bodies in 2 Corinthians 5:1-9.

1 For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. 2 We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. 3 For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. 4 While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. 5 God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

6 So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. 7 For we live by believing and not by seeing. 8 Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. NLT

Week One

Day 5: Suffering And Hope

What do you learn about our new bodies from 2 Corinthians 5 above?

Romans 8:24-25 wraps it up in a nice summary about the essence of hope. How does it say we are to wait with hope?

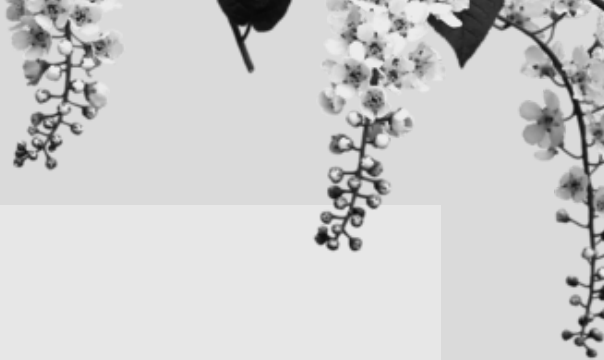
The New Living Translation says we must wait “patiently and confidently”. The New King James Version says we “wait for it with perseverance”.

How are you doing regarding your waiting in hope?

Do not give up hope! While this life seems long on certain days and difficult at times, one day, we will receive that new glorified body and be in God’s presence forever! That is a remarkable truth to fix our hope on!

End this week’s devotional thanking God for the new body He will create for you for eternity and that you will get to be with Him forever! Ask Him to increase your faith to persevere as you wait.

Week One



Notes



Week 2



Week Two

Day 1: Prisoners Of Hope

Zechariah 9:12 Return to the stronghold, You prisoners of hope. Even today I declare that I will restore double to you.

We may have times where we feel like prisoners to our environment, situation, or circumstances. However, as followers of Jesus, we are prisoners to something else. We are prisoners of hope! We are not chained to our disillusionments. We are chained to the stronghold of hope to Jesus. He brings us hope in the midst of any dismal circumstances as we put our eyes on Him. I would much rather be a prisoner of hope than a prisoner of disappointment!

What is the first thing Zechariah 9:12 says we should do?

Look up Nahum 1:7. Who is our stronghold and what is He like?

What does He do for those who trust in Him?

That is the basis for our hope! He is our strong place we run to because He is good and He cares for us. That is why we are prisoners of hope!

What promise does He end Zechariah 9:12 with?

Week Two

Day 1: Prisoners Of Hope

Jesus echoes this promise in Luke 18:29-30. What was Jesus asking and what was He promising in these two verses in Luke?

Jesus wants us to put Him first. He wants us to forsake all other things that would come before Him. God was challenging the people to do the same thing in Zechariah. They had gotten away from the Lord's work and the priority of putting Him first. They had returned from exile in a foreign land to rebuild God's temple and gotten sidetracked. The work had stopped. Their hearts had wandered. Things were more difficult than expected. The urgency was lost. Life had gotten more complicated. He was calling them back to return to Him. In the same way, we can be easily sidetracked from keeping Jesus first in our lives. Discouraging events, heartbreak, loss of control, family obligations, and frivolous entertainment are some of the things that can cause us to wander away from our Stronghold. We soon find ourselves feeling a prisoner of disillusionment rather than a prisoner of hope. The circumstances of our lives feel overwhelming and hopeless. All because we have shifted away from correct priorities.

Is there anything in your life right now that you find is coming before your hope and love for God? Is Jesus your most important priority? Is this reflected in the way you live? Sit quietly before God for a moment and ask Him to reveal this to you. Write what He shows you below.

Week Two



Day 1: Prisoners Of Hope

Ask God for forgiveness of this wandering and shift in priorities. He is quick to forgive.

Ask Him to renew a spirit of devotion to Jesus in your heart.

Thank Him for His goodness to forgive and restore. He will bless you with even more than you expect as He promises in Zechariah and Luke. Praise Him for that undeserved gift. Write your thanks to Him below.



Week Two

Day 2: Hope Is A Practice

Lamentations 3:21-26

21 This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.

***22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,
Because His compassions fail not.***

23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

24 "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

***25 The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,
To the soul who seeks Him.***

***26 It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of
the Lord.***

If we are indeed prisoners of hope, why is it so easy to forget and to feel hopeless?

Hope must be practiced. It is not just something that we receive once and then do nothing with again. Instead it is something we actively pursue. Let's learn how to do this today by examining Lamentations 3:21-26

Lamentations is a book of laments or sad songs. These sad songs were sung in the worst of times, when the people were being forced to leave their homes, promised land that God had given their ancestors, and all they treasured to go into slavery in a foreign land. Yes, it was a result of their disobedience to honor God and keep Him first and their lives pure; but it was horrible nonetheless. After countless warnings and opportunities to turn from their sin, they were now facing the consequences of their refusal to do so. Yet even in the face of this awful truth, they sang of a glimpse of hope.

Week Two

Day 2: Hope Is A Practice

What was the first thing they did in Lamentations 3:21 that brought them hope? This I _____ to my _____. Therefore I have _____.

The first step in living in hope is training your mind. We must give our mind the practice of recalling truth and hope.

What do they recall from verse 22?

Through the Lord's _____ we are not consumed, Because His _____ not.

After they set their mind to remember hope, they dwelled on God's character. He is merciful and compassionate. What are some other things you know about God's character that you can recall?

Here's a verse from Jonah 4:2 that I love about God's character. ***Jonah says, "I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm."***

Verse 23 of Lamentations 3 mentions another wonderful truth about God that they remembered. What is it? They are _____ every _____. Great is your _____.

I love that with God every day is a new day that He longs to show me His love, mercy, and faithfulness. He doesn't keep a record of wrongs. He chooses not to bring up our past mistakes, sins, and failures once we have asked Him for forgiveness of those things.

Week Two

Day 2: Hope Is A Practice

The third thing to practice hope is to live each new day in God's mercy and faithfulness. Start fresh in Him daily.

The fourth thing they recalled was God's position in their lives. What was that according to verse 24?

"The Lord is my _____" says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

Portion means part, inheritance, possession, everything. It is a personal connection with God being all that is important. It doesn't matter if everything else is lost, as long as God remains my all, then I have hope in Him. This takes us back to the idea of being a prisoner of hope because God is of first importance in our lives.

Is God your portion?

If so, remind yourself of this truth daily and put your daily hope in Him. Lamentations 3:25 is a double practice. What are those two things?

The Lord is good to those who _____ for Him, To the soul who _____ Him.

Waiting and seeking go hand in hand. God is not our genie who instantly answers our beck and call. Hope is a practice of waiting on God and looking for Him. He will reveal Himself and His purposes as we wait and seek. If we always had what we hoped for, hope would not be needed. He cares about the details. Be detailed with Him about what you are waiting for and seeking. Wait and seek God for specifics.

Week Two

Day 2: Hope Is A Practice

What is something you are waiting on God for and seeking Him about?

Lastly, Lamentations 3:26 brings us back to our ultimate hope in Christ. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the _____ of the Lord.

One day we will experience our complete, eternal salvation. We will forever be in God's physical presence with our new bodies. This is our ultimate hope! Keep the end goal in mind of our ultimate eternal salvation as you daily recall your hope.

Let's recap the 6 practices of hope that we can incorporate daily to renew our hope.

1. Give my mind the practice of recalling truth and hope.
2. Dwell on God's character.
3. Start each new day fresh in Jesus' mercy and faithfulness.
4. Remember God's position in my life.
5. Wait and seek God for specifics.
6. Keep the end goal of my eternal salvation in mind.

Take a few minutes to end your devotion today with these practices to renew your hope. Write down any hope that comes to mind as you do so below.

Week Two

Day 3: Hope Grows Stronger

Romans 5:1-11 New Living Translation

1 Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. 2 Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward (a.k.a. HOPE) to sharing God's glory. 3 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. 4 And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. 5 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. 6 When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 7 Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. 8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. 9 And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. 10 For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. 11 So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

When we first understood and received the gift that Jesus offers to us, our hope began. What is the beginning of our hope according to Romans 5:1?

Week Two

Day 3: Hope Grows Stronger

Because of what Jesus did for us to make us right with God, we have peace with God. This is the beginning of our hope. Let's look a bit more at what Jesus did to give us this hope. Re-read verses 6-11 above and write below a one sentence summary of how Jesus brought us hope. What did He do to make it possible for us to have hope?

Find each mention of the word hope in the verses above and highlight or underline or circle them. The first time we see hope is in verse 2. I added it in parenthesis as the New King James Version uses the word "hope" while the New Living Translation uses "look forward". What is the hope or what we are looking forward to from verse 2?

Wow! One day we will share God's glory! What an awesome hope! The second time we see the word hope is in verse 4. This is where we see our hope growing and being strengthened. Let's work backwards in this verse. What is strengthening our confident hope of salvation?

What is strengthening our character?

What helps us develop endurance?

We see then that the problems we face, if we commit them to God, will be used to ultimately strengthen our hope. Problems lead to endurance which leads to character which leads to confident hope in God and the salvation He gives us.

Week Two

Day 3: Hope Grows Stronger

What problem are you facing right now?

How do you see it developing endurance in you?

How is it strengthening your character?

What is your hope in the midst of your struggle?

When I am going through a difficulty, I have a choice to either let it weaken or strengthen my faith and hope in God. Choosing to ask God about it specifically as we discussed yesterday and asking Him to help me see it from His perspective strengthens my hope in God. I know that He doesn't waste a hurt. He uses each problem, trial, and struggle to develop something in me that is making me more like Jesus. This is part of my hope, to be like Jesus. (1 John 3:2) The problems are helping me reach that hope.

How are you becoming more like Jesus in the midst of your current struggle?

We know we won't fully get it right in this life, but we can grow more like Him, with the hope that one day we will be fully like Him in glory!

Week Two

Day 3: Hope Grows Stronger

What do we learn about hope from Romans 5:5?

This hope will not _____!

Why won't we be disappointed in this hope according to the same verse?

God's love is closely connected with the hope He gives. Hope and love both come from the Holy Spirit who lives in us. It is because He loves us that He fills us with hope. He has already proven His love by His sacrifice of Himself as Romans 5:6-11 go on to remind us of. What is your understanding of the way God's love gives you hope?

Today when you encounter a problem, ask God how He wants to use it to grow your hope in Him and your hope of being more like Him. Ask Him what character quality He is working in you and ask Him to do it through His Holy Spirit living in you. This will change your whole perspective.

Write down the key words from Romans 5:3-5 with an arrow in between each word to show the progression of how hope grows. Think about that today. Let your hope grow. I'll get you started....

PROBLEMS -> ENDURANCE ->

Week Two

Day 4: Where Hope Is Found

We have learned who our hope is in, how our hope was secured and then shared, how to practice hope, and how to strengthen hope. Where our hope is found is essential to each of these truths.

Where do we find our hope according to Romans 15:4?

What other characteristics of hope do the Scriptures give according to Romans 15:4?

Read Psalm 130:5. What two things is this writer doing?

Waiting on God and hoping in His Word go together. We look for God and find Him in His Word. Describe something you learned about God while you were waiting on Him and reading His Word.

Read Psalm 119:49, 74, and 81. Where is hope found?

Week Two

Day 4: Where Hope Is Found

Why do you think we find hope in God's Word, the Bible?

We learn of the One we put our hope in through His Word, the Bible. We learn what He values, how He works, and how Jesus loves us. God's story is written in the Bible. It is fascinating, complicated, and yet simple. It is sacrificial, beautiful, and purposeful. It is worth reading, memorizing, dwelling on, and applying. You can read through it multiple times and have it stand out to you in ways it never has before. It brings light to our darkness and hope to our brokenness.

What does Hebrews 4:12 tell us about the Word of God?

It is the only book that is truly alive and working in each reader in a personal way. It is supernatural.

What does John 14:26 tell us about how the Holy Spirit works?

One way that He reminds us of what Jesus said is by recalling to our minds the words of Jesus that are written down in the Bible and the thoughts of God from the verses in Scripture. So how can we get lots of hope from God's Word? What is one or more ways you do this?

Week Two

Day 4: Where Hope Is Found

I have made the Bible a central part of my life. God speaks to me through His Words. He speaks truth and hope to my heart. I apply Bible verses to my life. I pray specific verses for specific people in my life. I read the Bible daily. I pray before I read, asking God's Spirit to give me understanding into what I'm reading. I have completed multiple Bible studies over the years from Bible Study Fellowship to Beth Moore to Priscilla Shirer and many other authors. I continue to listen to countless sermons and Bible teachings. I have read the Bible through more than once to get a fuller understanding of God's story and His ways. It is fascinating the way all the parts of the 66 books of the Bible written over thousands of years fit into one central theme of God's plan for humans through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus to give us everlasting life. This year, one spiritual goal I have is to memorize a book of the Bible by learning a verse a day and adding on to what I've already learned verse by verse each day.

What spiritual goal would you like to make for yourself this year to be in God's Word more to increase your hope?

Share your goal with a sister in Christ and pray for one another throughout the year for spiritual support in accomplishing this goal. Watch your hope grow the more you are in God's Word!

Week Two

Day 5: Hope In The Word

Yesterday we discovered that the Word of God is where we find hope. It is living, active, personal, and tells the story of God and His purposes. Let's dig into that a bit more today.

What did Jesus say about the Scriptures, which is another name for the Word of God, in John 5:39?

Jesus was talking to the Jewish leaders who studied the Old Testament Scriptures as part of their duties. He was telling them, "Those words you priests have been reading for thousands of years are telling you all about me, yet you are missing it!" Read His conclusion in John 5:46-47.

Jesus is connecting the Old Testament writings with His words which we now have recorded in the New Testament. Both parts of the Bible tell us about Jesus! Look for Jesus, who is our hope, as you read the Bible. This is where we find out more about Jesus, our hope.

One example of this is in one of the greatest Old Testament passages about Jesus, found in Isaiah 53. Read through it and write below one or two verses which speak directly about what Jesus would do in the future and where we now have it written down in the New Testament.

I am continually amazed at God's plan throughout time to give us our hope in Jesus!

John 1:1 is the first verse the apostle John uses to introduce us to Jesus. What does he claim Jesus is?

Week Two

Day 5: Hope In The Word

Not only does the Word of God speak about Jesus. Jesus is the Word itself, one with God the Father, existing forever.

Hebrews 1:1-3 is a powerful passage that continues this thought. It speaks about who Jesus is and what He did. Read it below and then refer back to it to answer the following questions.

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Hebrews 1:1: Where in the Bible do we see God speaking to the fathers by the prophets? Hint, we read from it when we read Isaiah 53.

Hebrews 1:2 refers to the work Jesus came to do, to speak to us. What is the position God gave Him as a result of His work?

Who did God make the world through according to this verse?

Week Two

Day 5: Hope In The Word

Hebrews 1:3 reinforces that Jesus is God (the brightness of His glory and express image of His person) and then says a powerful statement about the Word.

How does Jesus hold everything up? By the _____ of His

He did the ultimate deed that brings our hope. He _____ our sins.

Now where is He according to the end of Hebrews 1:3?

So the Word is a powerful book because it tells all about Jesus, who is the Word and who holds everything together with His powerful words. Let the Word of God reveal Jesus' powerful words to you and His character. What is one thing that strikes you about Jesus when you read His Word?

End your time today by thanking Jesus for being the Word and for holding all things together with His Word of power.

Week 3



Week Three

Day 1: Hopeful Ones Enjoy Jesus

We have spent two weeks learning about our hope. We have so many reasons to live in hope. How do we transfer the knowledge of hope we have learned to our daily lives? How can we keep hope alive in the midst of the constant struggles of this life? This week we will discover five principles of hopeful followers of Jesus. The first one is that hopeful ones enjoy Jesus.

According to Proverbs 10:28, what does our hope lead to?

Our hope makes us glad! This gladness is expressed through our enjoyment of Jesus.

Hebrews 7:19 says: But now we have confidence in a better hope, through which we draw near to God. NLT This drawing near to God brings us confidence and gladness.

As we draw near to God, listen to Him through His Word and prayer, it helps us to understand what, according to Ephesians 1:18 below?

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called —his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance. NLT

Look up Psalm 4:6-7 in whichever version you prefer. What is the opening question that many of us have been feeling over the past months?

Week Three

Day 1: Hopeful Ones Enjoy Jesus

Where is the answer found according to the end of verse 6?

What does seeing the face of God, His countenance, having Him smile upon us, do for our hearts according to verse 7?

The good we need that brings us daily hope is found in the face of God! We see His face when we draw near to Him, when we spend time with Him. This time should not be an obligation, an item to check off my devotion time with God on my to-do list. Instead it should be a time where we are in His presence, enjoying Him, letting Him bring us gladness. Do you experience this during your time with Jesus? Why or why not?

When I'm not experiencing the gladness of the presence of God in my time with Him, it's often because I am rushed. Another reason may be that I have forgotten to start off by giving Him all of my burdens, of laying all of my concerns at His feet so that I may truly see Him and who He is.

I cannot experience the gladness He is wanting to give me, when I am clutching on to all of the heaviness of this life.

My soul is thirsty, yet I'm trying to quench it with water which I'm attempting to dig up in my own efforts, instead of the living stream of water that is flowing through the Holy Spirit to me.

Week Three

Day 1: Hopeful Ones Enjoy Jesus

Read this conversation between our souls and God:

Soul: As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

Jesus: Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Soul: O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.

Jesus: If anyone thirsts, let her come to Me and drink. She who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of her heart will flow rivers of living water. I am the bread of life. She who comes to Me shall never hunger, and she who believes in Me shall never thirst.

Psalm 42:1-2, Matthew 11:28-30, Psalm 63:1, John 7:37-38, John 6:35

If we are experiencing a thirst for hope, a hunger for peace, a lack of gladness in our life, redirect the hunger and thirst to the One who can actually take care of it. Read the Word of God anticipating a verse to come to life and speak to your soul. Pray, giving all of your burdens over to the One who wants to ease them for you. Listen to His Holy Spirit speaking words of hope and assurance to your soul. Trust Him to take care of all of your problems and to give you wisdom on how to proceed.

Week Three

Day 1: Hopeful Ones Enjoy Jesus

What do you need to do to improve your gladness in the Lord's presence?

Close this day by asking Jesus to give you gladness in His presence daily to increase your hope in Him.

Week Three

Day 2: Hopeful Ones Guard Our Mind

As we are experiencing the gladness of hope, the world and all of its problems are hammering at the doors to our hope with a battering ram, trying to knock it down and destroy our hope. How can we protect our hope? How can we guard our minds so that we can stay hopeful?

Look up 1 Thessalonians 5:8

What are we to put on our heads to stay hopeful?

The helmet protects our head, which is where our brains are, keeping track of the good and the bad, the difficulties and the joys, the lies and the truth.

What is the helmet made of?

_____ of _____

We know that Jesus has secured eternal life for us. We are not living for this life alone. We hope in a life forever with God, free of pain and suffering, enjoying His presence. This is God's gift to us. We need to keep this long range hopeful truth before us as we deal with the problems of this life. We discover more of how to do this in Psalm 78:7.

Psalm 78:7 That they may set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;

Week Three

Day 2: Hopeful Ones Guard Our Mind

First, we set our hope in God. We anchor it there. We secure it. One of the ways we do this, which is part of guarding our minds, is found in the second phrase of the verse above. What is it?

We don't want to forget all that God has done in the world and in our lives by offering the gift of hope. Some of the way we do this is what we learned about yesterday. Another part of the way we do this is found in the last line of the verse above. What are we to do?

Obedience to God's ways keeps our hope strong. As we spend time enjoying Jesus, in His Word, whether it be by reading it on our own or listening to messages explaining the Word or discussing it with other believers, we need to obey what God reveals to us. This can be very difficult at times and even scary. However, there is so much reward in it.

Let's see what Jesus says about this in John 14:15-17. What is the evidence of our love for Jesus?

Does He make us obey Him in our own strength?

Week Three

Day 2: Hopeful Ones Guard Our Mind

Who has He given us to help us?

I appreciate that Jesus helps us to obey Him by giving us His Holy Spirit to live in us to help us to do so.

The culmination of our salvation is found in 1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies herself, just as He is pure.

We will be like Jesus! Sin will no longer be an issue for us. Our hope will be fully realized in continual joy and peace. Because of this, what do we, as hopeful followers of Jesus, do now, according to the last phrase of the verse above?

We choose to live a pure life. A pure life is lived in obedience to God, with God's help. We do not participate in the sinful ways of this world but we live a life devoted to Jesus. In this way, we are allowing the Lord to do the following from 2 Corinthians 3:18...And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image. NLT

In closing, hopeful people guard their minds by remembering their eternal salvation daily and in response live in obedience to God. Is there something in your life right now that God is showing you you need to obey Him in? If so, what is it? Will you commit to Him today to do that?

Week Three

Day 3: Hopeful Ones Are Purposeful

While our minds are guarded by the hope of salvation, we have a purpose in this life now. We do not just sit back and only wait for the day that our salvation is finally fully realized and we are in eternity; hopeful people seek to be used today.

Remember how we have been discussing that the whole Bible is the story of God preparing and then revealing Jesus to us, to bring hope to the world? In 2 Corinthians 3:7-18, Paul compares the Old Testament ways before Jesus to life in Jesus. He says in verse 8 that the ministry of the Spirit is glorious. It is a wonderful, hopeful, glorious thing to let God use you to help accomplish His purposes in the world. One of the purposes is to give others the message of this hope that we have. In verse 12, Paul in fact tells us...Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech.

From the verse above, how do we speak because we have this hope in Christ?

We don't need to be afraid, shy, or bashful to let others know the reason for the hope and peace we have when everything and everyone else is fearful and falling apart. We stand out when we aren't responding in fear and confusion. As God shares with us in our time with Him, we are able to go confidently along in this life with the hope that He gives us. For example, when COVID hit, Pete and I had to decide how we were going to manage ourselves in ministry with the risk that it presented. We reevaluated our hope in Christ, our ultimate hope of salvation. The Lord reminded us of our call, to minister to those in need with the love of Jesus, even if that meant getting sick and possibly dying. We made a conscious decision to be available to meet in person with those who needed it. Yes, we wore our masks but when someone needed a hug we gave it.

Week Three

Day 3: Hopeful Ones Are Purposeful

If someone needed hands laid on them in prayer, we did it. We knew that this put us at risk for getting sick. I, in fact, did get COVID as a result of ministering to those in need. I am thankful the Lord brought me through without any complications. I had peace going through it because of the hope I have in Christ. If I was to die, I am going to be with the Lord for eternity. To live is Christ, to die is gain. I have been given opportunities to share this hope with people who don't understand why I am readily available in the midst of the risk.

Look up 1 Peter 3:15 in your preferred version. What is Peter telling us to do?

Based on what you have learned from this study on hope, what is the reason you have hope that you can share with others?

Who do you know needs this hope of Christ in their lives?

Begin praying daily for them by name and for the honor of being used to share the hope of Jesus with them. A powerful way to share is to talk about the hope you have experienced personally. Write down 3 things from your life with Jesus and the hope He gives you that you think is important for others to know about.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Week Three

Day 3: Hopeful Ones Are Purposeful

Another powerful thing to share is Scripture. God's words have more power than our own. Look back over your previous homework days and write down 3 Bible verses about hope that have been helpful to you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Psalm 31:24

Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, All you who hope in the Lord.

Ask the Lord to give you courage and boldness to share these truths with someone today. If you do, return here and write about what happened.

Week Three

Day 4: Hopeful Ones Praise

Psalm 71:14

But I will hope continually, And will praise You yet more and more.

Our hope leads to an outpouring of praise. Our praise to God is an expression of thanks for who He is and the hope He has given us. It is a chance for our souls to connect with God.

How often should we praise God according to Psalm 71:8?

Let my mouth be filled with Your praise And with Your glory all the day.

Highlight or circle in the selected verses below from Psalm 71 what we can praise God for.

3 Be my strong refuge, To which I may resort continually; You have given the commandment to save me, For You are my rock and my fortress.

14 But I will hope continually, And will praise You yet more and more.

15 My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness And Your salvation all the day, For I do not know their limits.

16 I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only.

19 Also Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You who have done great things; O God, who is like You?

20 You, who have shown me great and severe troubles, Shall revive me again, And bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 You shall increase my greatness, And comfort me on every side.

23 My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing to You, And my soul, which You have redeemed.

24 My tongue also shall talk of Your righteousness all the day long;

Week Three

Day 4: Hopeful Ones Praise

Which of the circled/highlighted words speak personally to you about why you want to praise God?

Praise reminds us of and renews our hope. As we praise God, we turn our focus away from self and onto God and His character and His ability to answer prayer. What are some ways you praise God?

We praise God through speaking well of Him to ourselves and to others. We praise God when we sing songs of worship to Him. We praise God when we talk about what He has done, is doing, or will do. We can praise God individually or with others. We can praise God quietly by speaking to Him silently or singing and shouting at the top of our lungs.

Considering this, what are some settings you can or do praise God in?

I praise God privately at home, in my car, and on walks. I praise God with others at church, when I text and receive texts of answers to prayer and on the phone or virtually with others.

Take some time today to end by praising God. I like to put on worship music, crank it way up, and sing at the top of my lungs. Sometimes I kneel, often I lift up my arms in surrender, sometimes I dance. Whatever way the Spirit is moving me, I express my thanks, worship, and praise to the One who has given me hope. Won't you join me now in renewing your hope through praise?

Week Three

Day 5: Hopeful Ones Persevere

We end this devotional coming full circle to where we began. Now we know more about hope and how to nurture it. To keep hope alive, we need to renew our mind daily with our hope.

Read these verses from Hebrews and then answer the following questions.

Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

What is the author of Hebrews asking the church to do in Hebrews 6:11 and Hebrews 10:23?

What two qualities will help us to be diligent in our hope so that we inherit the promises according to Hebrews 6:12?

What is the promise we hold onto at the end of Hebrews 10:23 that encourages us to hold on to our hope through this life?

What does it mean for you to hold fast to your confession of hope?

Week Three

Day 5: Hopeful Ones Persevere

Through whatever comes our way, the struggles, the challenges, the difficulties, as well as the joys of life, we hang onto our faith in Jesus. We continue to hope in His promises of eternal life, of Him caring for us through this life. There are many promises in the Word of God to encourage us in our wonderful hope through the sufferings of this life. Let's read a few of them.

Psalm 33:18 Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, on those who hope in His mercy.

What comfort do you find from Psalm 33:18 above?

This life will have suffering and difficulty. Look up 2 Corinthians 1:7. What does it promise we will receive?

In our suffering, God will console and comfort us. He helps us with it.

I close our homework with this beautiful passage of blessing.

2 Thessalonians 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, 17 comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. NLT

Underline or highlight the reasons God gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope in verse 16 above.

Week Three

Day 5: Hopeful Ones Persevere

What effects will this grace, comfort, and hope have in our lives according to verse 17?

Hope is a wonderful thing. It lifts our spirits, gives us confidence, and strengthens us for the work God gives us in our lives. I encourage you, dear sister, to keep your hope alive! Practice the principles of hopeful ones to strengthen your hope daily and in the struggles of life. Don't let any problem, disappointment, or person take away your hope in Christ. God orchestrated His entire plan throughout the timeline of humanity to send Jesus to pay a steep price to offer us this eternal hope. Persevere, hang on tight, nurture your hope. Let yourself be a prisoner of hope. Remember that your hope is in God and in His Word, the Living Word Jesus as revealed through the written word. Our coming salvation is not a myth. It is a soon to be reality. One day, we will exit this speck of life and enter into eternity with our Lord. We may get there through the death of this body or through His rapture. Jesus is coming back one day for us and we may be the generation who gets to experience this! There is so much to hope for and in. Live your life in hope in Christ.

What will you incorporate into your life to grow your hope?

Commit that to God in prayer as you wrap up this devotion.

