



hope

in His Word
is to be embraced

Romans 15:4

"...through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

"...faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17).

I. INTRODUCTION

The Psalmist declared, *"You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word"* (Psalm 119:114).

In the midst of life's challenges and uncertainties, hope can be found in Scripture! Many of us have found this to be true. When we're going through discouragement, or rejection, grief, anxiety or loss, God's Word has an amazing ability to encourage our hearts and prompt hope. It's almost as if scriptures come alive while we're reading or meditating on God's Word.

The Greek word referenced in the expression, "word of Christ," is *rhēma*. The term denotes "that which is spoken, what is uttered in speech or writing." The significance of *rhēma* (as distinct from *logos*) is exemplified in the injunction to take *"the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"* (Ephesians. 6:17). Here the reference is not to the whole Bible, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need; a prerequisite being the regular renewing of the mind with Scripture.



This teaching outline was developed in support of the resource, *Contagious Hope: For small groups*. Check out this resource and many others today at: greatcommandment.net/books

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a light for my path”
(Psalm 119:105).

“I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in His word I put my hope” (Psalm 130:5, NIV).

“By faith Abraham...went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise”
(Hebrews 11:8–9).

II. WALK IN THE LIGHT OF GOD’S WORD

We might envision a life of faith as one where we walk to the edge of a lighted path, where the next steps are surrounded by darkness. Yet as we take those next steps, we can be reassured and even hope-filled because of the certainty of God’s Word. It’s as if the “Word of Christ” provides a solid ground upon which to walk in faith.

When we’re busy living life, it may seem as if we’re running out of light. Whether we’re facing stressors of our own making or the unexplainable pain of life in a fallen world, there are times when we may feel uncertain about our next steps. How do we find the faith to step out? When we look around and all we can see is darkness, how do we know which way to turn?

A. Lessons from the Emmaus Road

Hope fades . . . when we miss out on embracing His Word.

“and He (Jesus) said to them , O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken” (Luke 24:25)!

Notice the indictment of being *“slow of heart.”* This phrase does not mean slow of mental assent, but slow of faith embrace. In the case of the Emmaus disciples, they sought a Deliverer and a Messiah, but missed the Suffering One. They missed seeing Jesus because they missed the opportunity to faithfully embrace His Word.

“Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory” (Luke 24:26)?

Many of us can recall a challenging time in our life when Scripture came alive through the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, and this truth empowered our faith. Embracing Scripture, when all else has failed, can empower our faith and replenish our hope.

B. Lessons from the Patriarch

How does the Lord inspire hope through His Word? Let’s remember just a few of the times when God’s Word has been a hope for God’s people.

We can remember Abraham, the patriarch of faith. He had grown weary in his old age and doubted his ability to bear a son. But Abraham was visited by the Lord who renewed his hope through the promise of His Word.

“I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you” (Genesis 17:6).

Abraham continued his faith journey holding onto the promises in God’s Word. *“By faith Abraham...offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your descendants shall be called.’ He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead”* (Hebrews 11:17–19).

“Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you” (Acts 27:24).

Colossians 3:16 Moment:
“Let the Word of Christ dwell deeply in you.”

Pastor/Teacher:
Pause during the sermon and share a personal story of when your hope was restored through the Word of God.

“He saw them straining at the oars because the winds were against them” (Mark 6:48).

“Sustain me according to your promise, and I will live; I have put my hope in your word”
(Psalm 119:116).

“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever” (Isaiah 40:8).

C. Lessons from the Apostle

The Apostle Paul was in the midst of his shipwrecked journey across violent seas when the Bible says: *“All hope was abandoned.”* But Paul heard these words:

“Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you” (Acts 27:24).

Hope was restored for Abraham. Hope was restored for Paul through the Word of God!

Whether we are growing weary like Abraham or find ourselves overcome by endless storms like Paul, there is encouragement through His Word. Hope is available, and it is ours for the asking when we allow God’s Spirit to lead us into His Word!

D. Lessons from the Storms on the Sea of Galilee

You may be in one of those unexplainable life events now. You might be weary of straining to make progress, financially or relationally, physically or spiritually. You might be experiencing the tormenting waves of unhealed relationships or unpaid bills. You might be dealing with troubling health reports or recent painful losses. Like the disciples, you may feel like you are *“straining at the oars,”* making no progress, uncertain of where to turn, or feeling like you are in the dark. There is a place to turn and find hope, to find light in the darkness.

It is God’s Word that sustains. **Hope is in His Word**—He awaits our invitation:

“And Peter answered Him and said, ‘Lord if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.’ So He said, ‘come.’ And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus” (Matthew 14:28–29).

With only one word from God, Peter found renewed hope and fresh direction. Christ literally spoke one word, and Peter was able to take a step of faith.

III. HIS WORD FOR YOU

What word from God do you most need to hear? What word from God would sustain you?

Peter discovered that the storms of life are at war for our attention. They distract us, overwhelm us, and cause us to doubt. Yet, no matter how threatening our life challenges may be, they do not render God’s Word invalid.

"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 1:20).



W10. Implicit, unwavering trust that His Word will never fail

When storms distract us, overwhelm us, or cause us to doubt, how can we refocus our attention? How can we stand on the hope of His Word?

As we continue to embrace God's Word in spite of life's distractions, the promise of His presence becomes even more real. Our hope is strengthened as we sense He is near. The promise of Scripture and the presence of Jesus combine to both entice and empower us into a prevailing hope.

Christ not only prays for you, He wants you to hear His Word. Jesus has promises to share with you. Just as He spoke to Peter, He wants to speak to you.

We may not need faith for "water-walking" today, but His Word is available for the challenges we might be facing. Listen as Scripture gives us hope.

(Perhaps these could be committed to memory in order for the Spirit to be able to bring them to our mind and prompt our hope.)

Take a moment to remember.

These promises from God are for us:

- I will be with you day after day after day, right up to the end of the age.
"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).
- I want My joy to be your joy, and your joy wholly mature!
"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11).
- In trusting Me, you will be unshakable and assured, deeply at peace. In this godless world, you will continue to experience difficulties. But take heart! I've conquered the world.
"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).
- In the same way that My Father gave Me a mission in the world, I give you a mission in the world.
"As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18).
- Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! You'll never—I promise—regret it!
"Do to others as you would have them do to you ... then your reward will be great" (Luke 6:31, 35).
- By opening your life to others, you'll prompt people to open their lives to God.
"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Colossians 3:16 Moment:
"Let the Word of Christ dwell deeply in you."

Pastor/Teacher:
Pastor, be sure to designate time for your own encounter with Jesus. Spend time meditating on His promises just for you. Then consider sharing about this experience during the worship/conclusion of the service

Pause and consider:

How might one of these scriptures bring hope to your life?

Embrace that promise and thank God that He notices, He prays, He cares, and He supports you with His Word!

Now, could you spend a few moments thanking Christ for sharing these promises with you?

Tell Him about your gratitude.

Give Him your praise!

You and I can find hope that these and countless other scriptures will be found true. Whether or not our life-storms ever cease, His Word remains true!

- **Finances** may remain a challenge, but He still says, *"I am with you."*
- **Healing** may not come, but He still says *"let your light shine before men."*
- **Relationships** may be conflicted, but He still says, *"I have told you all these things, so that in Me you may have peace."*

God's Scripture redirects the focus of our hope AWAY from the uncertainty of changing circumstances to the peace and certainty of God's Word.

"Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?' And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down" (Matthew 14:29–32).