

FINDING LASTING HOPE

How do we find lasting hope in the modern
world?



Hope for Today

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WALK IN BELIEF

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Author's Note

At the end of each section there are a couple of questions for you to answer. These questions are related to that topic and are designed to help you grow in Your walk with God. There is also a section for you to write a few personal notes, a place to record things and circumstances for which you are grateful, and a section to record situations where you feel you need to ask forgiveness.

My hope is that God will use the questions and the personal reflection at the end of each devotional to help draw you closer to Him.

God Bless!

John D Martin

Lasting Hope

There is a question that has been percolating in my mind for quite some time. The question is: how do we find lasting hope in the modern world? I do not have all the answers, but in the following passages we see the beginning of the pathway to finding lasting, soul-deep hope. The truth is that we do not just wake up one day and discover that we have found hope. Hope is a condition of the soul that is built over time. So, how do we build hope? This study is just the beginning of the topic of hope.

There is so much that the Bible says regarding hope. We could spend weeks, or longer, studying this topic. There are so many characters throughout the Bible that demonstrate true hope. This study is designed to be a quick one-week primer to jump start your study of hope.

Our world is such a broken place. People face unimaginable hardships each and every day. When we face hardship after hardship, we can become demoralized or downcast. Satan tries to use those times to cause us to lose hope. Look at Job. God tells Satan in [Job 1:8](#) that Job was a man of God, filled with integrity and there is none like him on the earth. Everything was right with his world. And then Satan attacked.

Job's First Encounter with Satan

In [Job 1:12](#) we see that God allowed Satan to attack Job because He was confident that Job would remain faithful to Him. God allowed Satan to take everything Job had except his health. I am constantly reminded of [1 Corinthians 10:13](#) where Paul tells us that while God does allow us to be

tempted, he does not allow the temptation to be more than we can bear. We see that evident in the situation with Job. God placed boundaries on the degree to which Satan could attack or tempt Job. With every temptation we must remember that God also provides a way of escape. We just need to trust Him.

Job Loses Everything

In one day, Job first lost all his oxen, all his donkeys, and his servants tending them were killed. Next, lightning struck and burned up all his sheep and the servants tending them. Then his camels were stolen and the servants tending them were killed. Finally, a great wind struck his oldest son's house, knocked it down and killed all ten of his children. In one day, Job lost all but four servants.

And so it was that Satan attacked Job and stayed within the boundaries set by God. Job suffered unimaginable hardship and loss, but he remained faithful to God. Look at [Job 1:20-22](#). Amidst all this hardship and devastation, Job was able to say "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away..." And Job closes by blessing the name of the Lord! I cannot imagine being able to say that after losing nearly everything.

Our Perspective on Job

We need to keep in mind that we have the benefit of being told of the exchange between God and Satan just before these things happened to Job. Job had no idea what Satan was up to and he had no idea that God was allowing these things to happen to him. The only thing that Job could grasp onto was the knowledge that his God was a good God and that there must be some purpose for his tremendous hardship.

It is easy to read the story and not grasp the full impact of what happened to Job. He was a pillar of the society at his time. He was a very successful businessperson and he had amassed great wealth. In contemporary times, we might say that he had the large house on the water with a swimming pool and enough room for family and friends to stay over. His business was thriving. And he had the sports car in the garage, and a luxury SUV for the times that he needed to get through snow or other bad weather. From the viewpoint of everyone around him, he had it made. He had everything a person could want. And now Job had nothing.

Job Loses All His Material Possessions

Job lost all his material possessions and the ability to earn a living. He went from the top of society to the bottom of society in the space of one day. Job was destitute. And about the time that Job likely thought things could not get much worse, Satan attacks again. Satan absolutely piles devastation on Job.

Job's Second Encounter with Satan

As if that is not bad enough, Satan goes back to God and taunts him regarding Job ([Job 2:1-5](#)). Satan wants to take his health. God allows it but forbids Satan from taking Job's life. He can take Job's health, but he must allow Job to live. Talk about horrible. Job no sooner buries his kids and realizes he has lost all his wealth and possessions and then he wakes up with a debilitating illness. Satan pressed Job as far as God would allow. It was horrible. But look at the end of [Job 2:10](#). "In all this, Job did not sin with his lips."

Our Encounters with Satan

Just like he did with Job, Satan tries to use our times of hardship to cause doubt. He wants us to denounce our faith in God. In fact, that is exactly what he believes will happen. He cannot believe that we will remain faithful to God even when our world seems to be crashing down around us.

It is easy to look at the story of Job and nod understanding. Maybe even admire Job for his perseverance. But what happens when we lose a job, or a house? What happens when life threatening illness strikes a family member, or worse, a child? What happens when all of this causes us to lose our social standing and all our friends? It is easy to admire Job for his tenacity and remaining faithful to God. The question that remains is what we will do with the example set for us by Job.

At the end of whatever hardship plagues us, will we be able to respond as Job responded. It is easy to bless God in the good times, but will we be able to bless Him in the difficult times as well?

Our Way Out

As mentioned earlier, I constantly remind myself of 1 Corinthians 10:13:

1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV) ¹³ *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

God is good! He only gives us what we can handle. Knowing that God does not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear is soul comforting news! We just need to always be looking for the way of escape that He has promised to provide. If we will allow Him, God will use the hardships we face to strengthen our faith in Him. He will use our struggles to strengthen us if we will lean on Him.

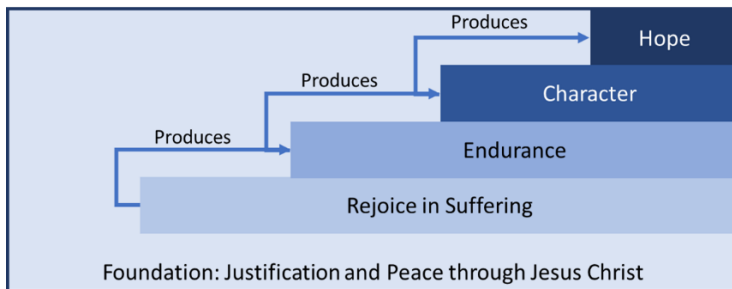
***God is good! He only gives us what we can handle.
Knowing that God does not allow us to be tempted beyond
what we can bear is soul comforting news!***

Finding Lasting Hope

Firm Foundation

Romans 5:1-5 (ESV) ¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

The truth is that hope is built in us over time. Take a glance at the graphic below:



At the beginning of the fifth chapter of Romans, Paul shows us a clear pathway to finding hope. The journey begins when we recognize that Jesus offers us justification and peace. Satan likes to keep us focused on the past. That is where we made some pretty big mistakes. Satan uses past failings to attempt to divert us from what God wants us to achieve in the future.

We need to be constantly focused forward. Once we begin to internalize what Jesus teaches us, we have a solid foundation upon which to build toward hope. I know, from my personal experience, that when I allow Satan to distract me with my past shortcomings, my foundation begins to shift. If we are to grow in hope, we must ensure that our foundation is formed solidly on the knowledge that Jesus loves us and has forgiven our past. He does not care about the past. He wants us focused on how He can use our past to minister to the needs of others.

Suffering

One of the things I have learned in recent years is that the closer I draw to Jesus, the more Satan attacks. It is easy and convenient for Satan to attack where we are perceived to be weak. He looks to our past to plan his attacks. His attacks are quick and insidious. Almost every time I am caught unaware, completely blindsided. Satan tries to fill me with doubt. The first attack is usually along the lines of: if God loves you so much, why is He allowing you to suffer so much? The answer is that He does not cause us to suffer, but He does allow suffering to happen. Some of the periods of suffering last a long time. Some of the periods of suffering are short but are stacked one on top of the other. Paul is teaching us that this suffering, assuming we keep our focus on Jesus, will build within us, endurance.

Endurance

Like an athlete, we make progress when we train. Training stretches us and causes us to grow in strength. For us, that training typically includes a dose of suffering. In this case, our spiritual endurance increases the more we learn to rely

on Jesus during times of suffering. Great long-distance runners train by building up to their goal distance over a long period of time. They continue to push forward, but they also change up their training. They run different distances each day or week. And they take a break in between runs. This break gives them a chance to rest, recover, and nourish themselves. So it is with our faith. Our faith grows when we learn to rely on Jesus during our times of suffering. We must keep in mind that “this too shall pass”.

Character

As we are trained by our suffering and as our endurance grows, we find that our character begins to grow. Much of the endurance that is built within us through suffering is internal. We begin to change from the inside out. God wants His followers to be of high character. He wants followers who point to Him as they learn how to endure. Character is the outward evidence of the internal changes that have taken place, and are taking place, within the life of the believer. The more our endurance builds, and our character grows, the more the people around us will begin to notice the changes in us. Neither God, nor those around us, judge our character by what we say we believe. They judge our character by how well we walk our talk. Actions truly speak louder than words.

Hope

Notice there is a progression that starts with a firm foundation and ends with individual believers growing in hope. We do not become Christians and then suddenly we have hope. While this is true to an extent, deep hope is achieved as we take life one step at a time. We do not wake

up and suddenly we have hope. Quite the contrary. True, lasting, deep hope is forged in the fire of living life. As soon as we identify with Christ, Satan puts on a full court attack on the faith that we have found. These initial battles build within us the endurance and character that produce the hope we so desperately want to find. As tempting as it is to want to complain and question God during times of suffering, resist. Satan and his attacks will never go away. That will never change. What will change is how you respond in those times of great suffering.

True, lasting, deep hope is forged in the fire of living life.

Application

True, soul deep hope is built in the fire of living life. Paul tells us in several places in his writings that we need to rejoice, pray, and be thankful in all situations (see [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#)). Paul leaves no room for interpretation. All means all, including the tough times that come our way. As pastor Rick Warren says, we are to display this character *in* all situations not *for* all situations. We do not have to like all of life's situations, we just need to remember to thank Him for helping us through these times.

Reflect on Job's life from the section on suffering. Here is a godly man. A man who God identifies as devout and faithful to Him. Job has received God's favor in almost every way imaginable. And then, in [Job 1:13-19](#), in a single day he loses absolutely everything. He loses his possessions, his animals, his servants, and all ten of his children. I cannot imagine that kind of loss. Look how Job takes that loss in [Job 1:20-22](#). He does not understand why God allowed everything to be taken from him. He loses absolutely everything, and despite what was clearly gut-wrenching pain, he worships God!

Study Thoughts

1. **Situation/Circumstance:** How are you being tested today? Are you suffering? Take time to describe your situation in the space below.

2. **Grateful:** Now take some time to think about things for which you are grateful. Take time to record your items below.

3. **Pray:**
 - a. **Thankful:** Start by thanking God for what he has already done for you.
 - b. **Confess:** Admit to God the things for which you need forgiveness.
 - c. **Request:** Let God know what you need, but more important, ask Him how you can be of service to others.
 - d. **Close:** Jesus taught us to ask God for what we need, but to always ask for God's will to be done regardless of what you think you need.



Deeper Dive

Firm Foundation

Prayer for Today
God, today grant me
Strength to do as You please
Wisdom to discern Your best for me
Compassion to serve others who need You
Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

1 Peter 2:6 (ESV) ⁶ *For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*

Our Firm Foundation

The beginning of finding true, lasting hope is to understand the foundation upon which hope, and our very salvation, is built. At the times in my life when I have drifted, it is because I have decided, intentional or not, to wander from the firm foundation that has been set underneath me. Just like the foundation of a house will hold it up during violent storms, so it is with our spiritual foundation. We have a solid spiritual foundation that was foretold in the Old Testament and became reality with the birth of Jesus in the New Testament. Look at what Peter writes in [1 Peter 2:6](#) and compare that to the verse in [Isaiah 28:16](#) that he is quoting. God says in Isaiah that He is the One who has laid a foundation for His people.

Application

In [1 Peter 2:6](#), Peter quotes that verse from Isaiah. If we look at the beginning of the chapter, we find that Peter is referring to Jesus as the cornerstone in both [verse 3](#) and

[verse 5](#). So, you may be asking how this applies to you. We are told in [verse 4](#) that Jesus is a living stone and that He is chosen by God and is precious to God. But look again at [verse 5](#). Notice how God intends to use the foundation that He laid beginning with Jesus. Peter tells us that we are living stones and that we are being built into a spiritual house. The function of the foundation that God started is to build a spiritual house that will offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to Him. We are given the opportunity to be part of the house that God intends to build beginning with the foundation which is started with His Son.

Study Questions

1. How has this glance into the foundation God started with His Son spoken to you today?

2. Based on what you have learned, how has this verse impacted your life? What will you do different knowing where you fit in the spiritual house God is building?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for providing Your Son as the cornerstone of the spiritual house You are building. And thank you that I am a living stone that is part of that construction. Help me today to live according to Your words and Your will. Help me to bring glory to You, to Your Son, and to Your house today.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Building Blocks of Our Foundation

Prayer for Today

God, today grant me

Strength to do as You please

Wisdom to discern Your best for me

Compassion to serve others who need You

Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

1 Corinthians 3:11 (ESV) ¹¹ *For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

Building Blocks of Our Foundation

Once the cornerstone is set, we must shift our focus to the building blocks of our foundation provided by God. When we keep our focus on Jesus and His Father, we remain on the solid footing of the foundation God has created for us. We know that God foretold in Isaiah that He would build a foundation starting with His Son as the cornerstone. In Paul's writing to the Corinthians, we are reminded that Jesus Himself is the cornerstone of our foundation. The cornerstone is the most important part of constructing a firm foundation. If the cornerstone is weak or out of alignment, the error will be noticed throughout the structure. In Jesus, we have the perfect cornerstone.

From my own life, I know that Satan attempts to get me out of sync with God. He does so by causing me to lose sight of the foundation which God has created for me. In business, we call it shiny object syndrome when a person is easily distracted from the key tasks at hand. I believe Satan uses that with us. He tempts us to wander from God by following an object that we think is better than what we have with

God. It is like an oasis in the desert. Dying of thirst, you know that you see water ahead. The only problem is you never get there. It is a mirage. All there really is, is dry arid sand. And what happens? We die of dehydration. The same thing can happen in our walk with Christ.

Application

Now look at what Paul is writing to the Ephesians in [Ephesians 2:20](#). Not only is Jesus the cornerstone of our foundation, but our foundation also includes the teachings of the apostles and the prophets. God has provided us with His words and His guidance so that we might live a life completely pleasing to Him. We just need to remember to always be building on the foundation that God has provided for us. I know that one of the greatest challenges I face, is staying focused on God and His word. So many things compete for my time and attention. None of the things that compete for my attention are of greater value than remaining focused on the foundation that God is building.

Study Questions

1. What is competing for your attention today? What “shiny objects” are competing for your attention and causing you to lose sight of what is truly important?

2. Based on what you have read in God’s word, how do you believe He is asking you to change? What can you do different today that will bring you closer to God?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for the foundation that you have provided. Thank you for providing Jesus as the cornerstone of our foundation. And thank you for the teachings of the apostles and the prophets. Help me to remain focused on You. Help me not to be distracted by the foolish things that Satan uses to attempt to distract me.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Benefits of a Foundation Built on God

Prayer for Today

God, today grant me

Strength to do as You please

Wisdom to discern Your best for me

Compassion to serve others who need You

Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

[Matthew 16:18](#) (ESV) ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Benefits of a Solid Foundation

I love this verse in [Matthew 16:18](#), it tells us that in addition to Jesus as the cornerstone of our foundation, we also have Peter as a rock in the foundation. Rocks are solid and heavy. Once they are set in place, they rarely move. Rocks can be used in foundations. They are also used in situations where builders are attempting to prevent landslides from wiping out whatever has been built on the other side. Large, heavy, solid rocks form a protective barrier around what the builder has constructed. In this case, we are part of the building that God is constructing ([1 Peter 2:5](#)). God uses Jesus as the cornerstone of the foundation, Peter is the solid rock of the foundation, and we are the living stones that God is using to build His house. Constantly reminding myself that God is using me to build on the foundation He started with Jesus and with Peter is humbling. It also helps me keep my struggles, no matter how desperate, in perspective. If God is using us as the living stones to build His house, He will never let us down.

Application

We know that the foundation upon which God's house and our faith is built, is both solid and unmoving. So, what does this mean for me? Look at what the Psalmist says in [Psalm 40:2](#). God pulled the Psalmist up from the pit of destruction, set his feet upon a rock, and made his steps secure. You see, the foundation that God built is unmoving. If our circumstance changed it is because either Satan is tempting us, or we have moved. God never moves, but He does place us on solid ground if we remain committed to Him.

Look now at [Luke 6:48](#). He compares our spiritual foundation with that of the foundation of an earthly builder. A good builder digs a foundation that is deep and built on solid rock or similar material. Notice the second sentence of that verse begins with "And when...". He does not say if but when a flood comes. It is not a matter of if we will face problems, it is a matter of when. And if we have built the foundation of our hope on Jesus, we cannot be shaken.

Study Questions

1. How has this discussion of the benefits of a solid foundation helped you in your faith walk today?

2. How have these verses helped you gain strength to push through your struggles? How is God challenging you to place more faith and trust in Him?

Prayer

Lord, thank you that You have built a solid foundation for the house that You are building. Thank you that I am one of the blocks that You are using to build Your house. Help me to walk today in the strength and understanding that You are there to protect me from the storms of life.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Suffering

Prayer for Today
God, today grant me
Strength to do as You please
Wisdom to discern Your best for me
Compassion to serve others who need You
Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

2 Timothy 4:5 (ESV) 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Suffering

I like this verse because it starts by telling us to be sober-minded. To me and according to [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com), that means we need to be rational or sensible about our faith and our walk while we are still on planet earth. The first thing Paul tells us, after he tells us to be sensible, is to encourage us to endure suffering. Why do we think Paul mentions that right after he tells us to be sensible? Perhaps because Paul knows, from firsthand, personal experience, what we should expect when we become believers. The things we believe and the truths we teach will not always be readily accepted by man. The next two things Paul tells us to do are to be an evangelist and fulfill our ministry. What Paul really wants is for each believer to stand firm in his or her faith. He wants us to have enough faith in God that we will do what He asks regardless of any consequence we may face.

Paul really wants us to follow the calling God has placed on each of our individual hearts. But he is realistic. He also knows the opposition we are likely to face.

Application

As we ask why life can be so difficult and why we should face such hardship, let's look at a couple of other examples of Christian living. In [Hebrews 2:9](#), the situation Jesus faced is described for us. If you think about it, Jesus' life was perfect before He came to this earth. He was with God the Father and with the Holy Spirit. He did not have to come to earth, but He did. He came to this earth on our behalf and suffered greatly as a result. He died one of the most violent deaths imaginable so that He might take our punishment for us. If Jesus had to suffer in this way on our behalf, why is it that we think we should live a life free of pain and suffering? God's own Son was disowned, beaten, and eventually murdered because of His faith in the Father.

So, we must come to realize that we are not promised an easy life free of pain and suffering. Quite the contrary, we are warned that these things will happen. And we have the examples of the apostles and the disciples. They all suffered for their faith in Jesus. Peter also tells us, in [1 Peter 5:9](#), that we should resist Satan and be firm in our faith. The sufferings that we face are not unique to each of us individually. Quite the contrary. These same sufferings are being faced by other believers around the world.

Study Questions

1. Do you struggle with hardships and suffering? What are the things that today bring you the greatest hardship and suffering?

2. What have you learned from these verses that will help you through your time of hardship and suffering? What courage, or strength, do you gain from the teachings in these verses?

Prayer

Lord, help me today to not be discouraged by difficult times. Help me to trust in You that You will bring me through these times of hardship and suffering. I pray that You would show me the ministry You have laid before me and provide me the strength to carry it out.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Endurance

Prayer for Today

God, today grant me

Strength to do as You please

Wisdom to discern Your best for me

Compassion to serve others who need You

Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

Romans 15:4 (ESV) *4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

Endurance

In [Romans 15:4](#) we see that the truths of the Bible are written for our instruction. The instruction we receive in this verse refers to hope. If we want to experience true hope, then we must learn endurance and we must learn the encouragement that comes from these Scriptures. We will not find true and lasting hope in the things of the world. That is a lie that Satan uses to draw us away from God. We learn endurance and encouragement when we learn the Scriptures. These Scriptures demonstrate how those who have gone before us have achieved lasting hope. It is remarkable that Paul is able to write to the Romans and talk about hope. He went from a persecutor of the church, to being persecuted by the religious leaders of the time. He was beaten, flogged, and imprisoned; yet he is still able to talk about the hope that we have in Jesus!

Paul's life is a remarkable testament to what the word of God can do for us, especially when we are enduring hardships for reasons unknown to us at the time.

Application

Let's look at a handful of verses that talk about the benefits of learning to endure hardship. First, look at [Hebrews 10:36](#). In this verse we are told that we need endurance so that we may receive what is promised for doing God's will. In [Hebrews 12:1](#), we are told to run the race that has been placed before us with endurance. But we can only experience the kind of endurance that we need if we put away the weight and the sin which clings so closely. Let's look carefully at that. Sin clings so closely. Satan knows our weaknesses and he is always hovering nearby waiting to tempt us and slow us down. If we do not put our sin behind us, Satan will only use that sin to slow us down in the race God has set before us. It is far easier to build endurance when we are lean and not carrying extra baggage. So how does this apply to us? Let's look at one last verse. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, [2 Corinthians 6:4](#), Paul tells us that we will need great endurance to face our hardships. Look how Paul describes those hardships. He calls them afflictions, hardships, and calamities! That just about covers every aspect of life. We may suffer physically, financially, or as a larger family.

So, again, when we ask why life is so difficult, let's remember what the Bible teaches us. Christianity is not a free pass out of the suffering and hardship that is common to all men. Quite the contrary. Life is likely to get more difficult. Why? Because through the hardships of life we learn to lean on

God and rely on Him and Him only to get us through those difficult times.

Study Questions

1. What have you learned today about the Christian life and the need to learn endurance?

2. What hardships do you face today, and how have these verses helped you handle those hardships?

Prayer

Lord, thank you that nothing I face today is new or unique. Our struggles are common with the struggles faced by others. Help me today to learn how to endure hardship and trust in You and You only for the strength to carry through difficult times.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Character

Prayer for Today
God, today grant me
Strength to do as You please
Wisdom to discern Your best for me
Compassion to serve others who need You
Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

Job 1:1 (ESV) ¹ *There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.*

Character

Other than the character of Jesus which we see described throughout the Bible, I see one definition of true character that stands out, and that is in the book of Job. Granted, there are many men and women of God throughout the Bible who demonstrate the character God desires for each of His children. What I like about Job is the simplicity of the description of his character. Look at how Job is described. The verse mentions four attributes of his character: blameless, upright, feared God, and turned from evil. To me, that is the most succinct definition of character I can imagine.

Job lived his life right in the eyes of God. He did not cheat or swindle people. He did not walk a grey line between doing the will of God and experiencing all the world offered. I am sure Job made his mistakes and repented of those mistakes, after all, the only perfect person is Jesus. But Job was obedient to God and for this reason God viewed Job as blameless and upright.

The other key to Job's character is that he turned away from evil. He did not allow himself to be tempted by the world, he turned his back on the temptations of Satan.

Application

Now let's contrast Job's character with Satan's character. In [John 8:44](#), we see that the Satan's attributes of character include: murderer from the beginning, is not truthful, he is a liar, father of lies. What a contrast between the character of Job and the character of Satan. In chapters 1 and 2 of the book of Job we see Satan's character demonstrated. Satan is convinced that Job is considered blameless and upright because of all he has. God allows Satan to take Job's possessions, servants, all ten of his children and eventually his health. Despite the unfairness of the situation, Job remains true to his character, even in the absolute worst of times. Even Job's wife tells him to curse God and die, but he does not. Job maintains his character and integrity throughout an exceedingly difficult time in his life.

In [1 Corinthians 10:13](#) we see that Paul is telling the Corinthians that God will never allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear. God always provides a way of escape. God promises not to let us be tempted beyond our ability. We see that in the life of Job. Job's life went from complete success to complete catastrophe of the worst order in a record amount of time. Yet Job still worshipped God.

Everything we have is on loan from God. Job realized this when he acknowledged that he came into this world with nothing and will leave this world with nothing. We would do well to follow Job's example in the hardships of life that God is allowing us to endure. The key is to remember that God allows hardship because it teaches us complete dependence

on Him. It builds endurance, character and eventually hope. All these attributes of character prepare us for what God has in store for each of us.

Study Questions

1. What impact has the life of Job had on your walk of faith? What have you learned from the character of Job compared to the character of Satan?

2. How has 1 Corinthians 10:13 and the life of Job changed your perspective on the hardships you are enduring? What changes will you make in your daily life as a result of these verses?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for the example of Job. Job is living proof of the truth in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that we are not tempted beyond what we can handle. Thank you that you do not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to handle. And thank you for the reminder that the life of Job is to me today. Job did nothing to deserve what happened to him, yet he still worshiped You. Help me display that same character in my life today.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Hope

Prayer for Today
God, today grant me
Strength to do as You please
Wisdom to discern Your best for me
Compassion to serve others who need You
Power to overcome the world's temptations

Bible Verse

Titus 3:7 (ESV) ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hope

With the foundation we have built, we can now look at the question at the beginning of this study. How do we find hope? The previous topics all build toward the hope that we have in Jesus. So, how do we find hope? By building a relationship with God and doing His will for our life. Notice in Titus 3:7, we are told that we are justified by the grace of God. There is no better justification than that which God offers us through His Son! And because of this grace, we "...become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

There is no greater hope than knowing that regardless of what hardships we face while on this earth, we are being prepared for a life with our Creator and King.

There are several reasons why people lose hope. Here are two that bear mentioning. First, when our focus is off target, our hope wanes. When we are enduring hardship, we can lose the feeling of hope unless we keep our focus on God. By focusing on Him during times of hardship, we will grow closer to Him and begin to experience true hope. One of Satan's great attack methods is to shift our focus from God to the

hardship. When we focus on the hardship in which we are involved, we quickly lose hope. Satan knows this. We must remember to always keep our focus on the Creator.

Second, we need to remember that our hope is eternal not temporal. Our hope is not defined by the hardships we face. Our hope is defined by the eternal reward that awaits us at the end of our time on earth. We need to constantly remind ourselves that the hope we have is eternal, meaning in heaven and eternity spent with God.

Application

There is a resurrection that awaits every person who has lived on earth. In [Acts 24:15](#), we are told that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. Every person will meet Jesus. Only the just, those who have true faith and hope in Him, will be ushered into eternity spent with Him. The unjust face eternal punishment for the way they lived their lives. Our hope is defined by the promise God has made to us. In [Titus 1:2](#), we are reminded that God is truth, that He does not lie. God, since before the beginning of time, has promised those justified by His Son eternal life with Him. Hope does not get much better than that.

Study Questions

1. How has this study changed your perspective on hope? What have you learned about the hope that we have in God and in His Son?

2. What has God impressed upon your heart that you need to change? Will you be obedient and begin to make those changes today?

Prayer

Lord, thank you for the eternal hope that we have in You. Thank you that we have this hope because of the justification You alone provide. Help me to live my life today with the hope that I have been given in You.

Personal Reflection

Journal

Grateful

Amends

Key Verses

1 Peter 2:6 (ESV) ⁶ For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

Isaiah 28:16 (ESV) ¹⁶ therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’”

Job 1:20-22 (ESV) ²⁰ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

²² In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

1 Corinthians 3:11 (ESV) ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:20 (ESV) ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

Psalms 40:2 (ESV) ² He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

Matthew 16:18 (ESV) ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Luke 6:48 (ESV) ⁴⁸ he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

2 Timothy 4:5 (ESV) 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Hebrews 2:9 (ESV) 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

1 Peter 5:9 (ESV) 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

2 Corinthians 6:4 (ESV) 4 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,

Hebrews 10:36 (ESV) 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

Hebrews 12:1 (ESV) 1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Job 1:1 (ESV) ¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.

Job 2:10 (ESV) ¹⁰ But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

John 8:44 (ESV) ⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is

no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV) ¹³ *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*

Acts 24:15 (ESV) *15 having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.*

Titus 1:2 (ESV) ² *in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began*