

We take this opportunity to introduce our new “book-in-progress:”

## **Let’s Retain Revival—*This Time***

The truths that we share in this book are those the Lord has shown us are key ingredients to the transformation of the Body of Christ required for us to experience survival of revival. *Revival survival*, the heart cry of the Christ in us, our hope of glory!

We prayed simply: “Father, teach us how to retain revival. Teach us to walk in the revival that lasts!” We have given the teachings distilled for this book over our 30 years of pasturing and itinerate ministry.

We believe there is coming an outpouring of the Holy Spirit revival — and we believe that we are seeing the early moments of it even while we are writing these words — that “church as usual” will not survive. We are not playing at “church” anymore beloved! If you can nod agreement to that, you are going to get blessed as we go through these chapters together.

It is our fervent prayer that you grow in your knowledge of Jesus and His ways with the Father and Holy Spirit during your time with us in these pages, and that you will continue to walk in Holy Spirit revival as part of the final unstoppable revival that will fill the whole world with His glory. It will take some changes in us all to do that. We pray these chapters release you into these changes!

May God richly bless your time in this book!

### **CHAPTER 1. THE SPIRITUAL POWER OF HOPE**

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful...”  
(Hebrews 10:23)

Hope is not a feeble, weak-kneed, half-hearted wish-upon-a-star hankering. It is a powerful spiritual force! Hope is a gift of God—an awesome weapon for warfare in the heavenlies—a powerful spiritual force that can believe for miracles in your life and in the lives of others. Hope is a confident and joyful expectation in the heart—a faith-filled anticipation that something good is going to happen. Hope is to the soul, what oxygen is to the lungs!

The Apostle Paul summed up the magnitude and importance of hope by telling Timothy simply “Jesus...is our hope”! (1 Timothy 1:1) Jesus, the personification of hope, lives within us to empower us to even hope against hope—that is, to persist in hoping for something against all odds. For, “...God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

Hope is not the opposite of faith. It is the object of faith. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11:1) We stand firm in our faith in the here and now, and with hope we stretch out into the future. Romans 8:24-25 puts it this way, “Hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.” In other words, we hope for something that is still to come in the future with the faith—the sure impression—that it truly exists and will truly come to us!

The word “hope” should bring to our minds a positive and joyful sense of quietly but firmly persevering in confidence, persevering in expectancy, and persevering in trust in the faithfulness of God who has placed that holy hope within our hearts.

There is no need to strive to make hope come true. We just need to stand in faith, and with patience eagerly await for the fulfillment of our prayers and petitions. When faith and hope meet together in God’s plan and in God’s timing, we witness the awesome exhibition of His power exploding in displays of His grace—miraculous answered prayer!

It was with excited and confident hope that we Christians could cope with, and overcome, “hopeless” situations that catapulted missionaries all over the world, armed with nothing but a divine vision of who Jesus Christ is. How could we present-day believers have forgotten that we are called to be the hope of the world? 1 Peter 1:3 fairly shouts it: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” We are born again to offer living hope to a hopeless world.

How can we regain this kind of dynamic hope? Let’s look at the progression into the full power of godly hope given to us in Romans 5:1-5: “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained an introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exalt in the hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exalt in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance, perseverance brings about proven character, proven character hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

Exalt in tribulation? That is something that is learned. Beloved, it does not come naturally to any of us! But we can set our mind on learning to exalt in God while we are going through tribulation, and doing that sets us on the path of developing hope. Tribulation means testings, trials, and temptations of all sorts, not necessarily physical tortures.

When we learn to exalt in tribulation by setting our mind and heart on the Lord in the midst of it, we develop a dogged perseverance: “a patient and unswerving endurance.” Now you have got to admit, that is a good character trait—one well worth developing—so let’s concentrate on our times of tribulation being times of production—producing perseverance.

As we develop perseverance, our character becomes proven—meaning it has been “tried and tested and proven to be good and valuable.” Proven character connotes maturity in our thought-life and in our behavior that is reliable—a tried integrity that consistently passes the test day after day.

As we develop proven character, hope grows and grows. We call that hope “blessed”. It is a confident expectation, a faith-filled anticipation that something good is going to happen. Hope developed through this process does not disappoint! It never runs out, it never lets us down, and it never fails. The Amplified version of the Bible says that this kind of hope “...never disappoints or deludes or shames us.” So, as the Spirit of the Lord starts stirring up your hope, you are not going to be disappointed, disillusioned or shamed. If you are disappointed, disillusioned, or shamed right now, remember the progression into hope given to us in Romans 5:3-5, and follow it to develop your hope until it dispels these downers.

God promises to give us hope to fulfill His divine plan. Jeremiah 29:11 says God has a plan for you, “plans for welfare and not for calamity, to give you a future and a hope.” That is good news! Is it any wonder then, that the writer of Hebrews urges us to, “...seize and hold fast and retain without wavering the hope we cherish and confess, and our acknowledgement of it, for He Who promised is reliable (sure) and faithful to His word.” (Hebrews 10:23 AMP) So, reach out for hope. Seize hope and hold it fast, and by God’s enabling power, retain it without wavering. Hope is too precious a treasure, too valuable a weapon to let slide through our fingers. The Bible is not a wishing well—it is a hope chest!

Just as Romans 5:3-5 shows a progression into developing hope through our righteously handling tribulation, we can also use these passages in reverse to observe how our unscriptural response to experiences can cause us to spiral down into hopelessness.

We enter the maelstrom of hopelessness subtly, by embracing disappointment in our life during a time of testing. Our hope—our expectation of something good coming out of a trial—withered as we center our thoughts on the problem instead of exalting in our God’s greatness. The

“situation” then looms bigger than God in our mind’s eye, until we lose the joy we established in having constant and close fellowship with our Lord in all things. When we lose our joy, we lose the strength to persevere through the hard times.

We find that as our perseverance wanes, our expectation is squashed. There is a special joy in expectation, and when that is quenched, we lose its power to lift us up out of our difficulties into the presence of God. As our joy is smothered, our strength is drained because “...the joy of the Lord is our strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10)

With our strength to persevere weakened by our loss of joy, we start seeing just the weakness in our character. So, instead of persevering and gaining proven character that develops more hope, we rapidly start losing hope! When we start to lose our hope, we have no object for our faith to work on, so we just don’t “faith” any more, for anything. When this happens, we really have a problem, because: “...without faith it is impossible to please God...” (Hebrews 11:6)

So when we lose our hope and have nothing for our faith to work on, we become aware that we are not pleasing to God. Beloved, there is nothing more disappointing to a Christian than to think we are disappointing to God! What we have actually done is start at the top of this spiral into hopelessness again, only now we are not entertaining a disappointment over something somebody did to us or something that happened to us, we are entertaining a disappointment in our very own selves—in “bad old me.”

We can feel that spiral down into hopelessness getting tighter as we discover how disappointed we are in us, and “know” of course, that God is even more disappointed in us. What kind of expectation can I have in something good ever happening to “rotten old me”? Now it’s not just “bad old me”—it’s “rotten old me”! So down, down, deeper, and deeper into hopelessness we spin. Each time we repeat the spiral, our hope gets weaker and hopelessness gets deeper, until we become completely hopeless, filled with hopelessness, totally depressed.

We’ve been there. We understand what it means to start sliding down that hellish funnel. That’s why we can teach this! We allowed our disappointment to rule our lives because we focused on our flesh and on our circumstances instead of on the truth that Jesus is our hope. In His mercy and His grace, He restored our ability to hope by urging us to go ahead and use just the little bit of hope we still had, to reach out to others and dare to trust in God’s faithfulness and love again. He led us to exult Him in the midst of our troubles even when we didn’t feel like it! And as we did, we became a little bit stronger, and then a little stronger still, and by His grace our hope arose as from a grave into new life.

We want to stir up and reinvigorate your hope where you are today, but you need to want to exercise the bit of hope you may have left. Even if it is just a little bit, use it! You don’t need a whole lot. Just use what you’ve got!

It is true—use it or lose it! Use it, and it begins to grow, and grow, and grow.

Can you admit that your hope has waned, or drained, or even that you have let it go all together?

Do you want your hope restored to increase the effectiveness of your faith? God said, “For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes.” (Jeremiah 31:25) So if your hope is languishing, God’s promise to you is He will refresh it! Grab hold of that promise from God, and rejoice!

God wants you hoping, especially for yourself. You have to hope because you need to be able to cope with what is poised to descend upon this world and upon the Church. We have to learn now in the lull of the storm, so that we may be prepared and help others to be prepared for that day when only we can offer a living hope to the world, that will, because of the coming turmoil, look at things as being totally hopeless.

Unless we are actively hoping for ourselves, we cannot help others hope. Ask the Spirit of the Lord to stir up your hoping, because otherwise you are going to project hopelessness when you are trying to minister hope! “This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:21) How can we say that? We can say this because we have experienced this Biblical truth in our own lives. People we are ministering to believe us when we have gone through the fire and still hope in the Lord because our words are coated with faith—even if they do smell a little smoky.

Have you lost your hope that you will ever develop the flow of spiritual gifts and calling that you were sure were to be yours when you first came into the things of the Spirit?

Have you given up hope that you are ever going to be able to obtain real freedom from some besetting sin in your life?

Has your hope faded that you will ever be steadfast on the job, as a witness for Jesus, in the midst of the filth and corruption that goes on day in and day out, in the world all around you?

Have you given up being a real light in a dark place? It could even be your own home! But you know that God wants you to be a light.

Have you found it difficult or impossible to overcome tribulations, trials, and temptations because you just don’t expect that you can anymore?

Have you given up hope for your marriage ever to be healed? Or have you given up hope of ever having a trusted friend again?

No matter what our present circumstances, the hope that was released by the finished work of Jesus on the Cross is available to us. He has established Himself within us, and given us new hearts and a new hope.

For example, if you are struggling to have hope for your children, start applying the hope of Jeremiah 31:17: “ ‘There is hope for your future,’ declares the Lord, ‘and your children shall return to their own territory.’ ”

Now you are mature enough to be hoping for something higher than just possessions or concessions to make your life more comfortable. You know that God is calling for a people who have left their selfish motives behind on the cross, and have embraced God’s divine plan for their life. Your hope is based on the absolute truth that Jesus died for you and was raised from the dead that “...[you] might live through Him.” (1 John 4:9 paraphrased) That is the foundation of hope.

We have a living God who is interceding before the throne of grace on our behalf and is going to be returning as King to right the wrongs, and claim us as His bride. So, like Job, we can declare to all the world with a certainty, “And after my skin, even this body, has been destroyed, then from my flesh or without it I shall see God.” (Job 19:26 AMP) That is an expression of our ultimate hope, Beloved! But God also wants us hoping for the here and now.

Our hope must not be based on the report in the morning newspaper, or the evening news. Our hope must not be based on our experiences, good or bad. Our hope must not be based on how and when our prayers are answered, or even the promises we pluck out of the box of promise Scriptures. No! Peter exhorted us to “...prepare your minds for action, keep sober in the spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:13)

Our hope is in, and rests on Jesus, and that which is revealed by Jesus and God’s words, both in the Scriptures, and as ministered by the Holy Spirit to our heart. He is the core of our hope, the solid center that makes the anchor hold. He wants us to cry out for such a revelation.

David said in Psalm 71:5, “For thou art my hope, oh Lord God, thou art my confidence.” It grieves us to think that David had a clearer revelation of who his hope was, than we do. Our hope is developed by getting to know Him, who is our hope. We have been called to spend time with Him. “God is faithful through whom you were called into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Corinthians 1:9) How God longs to reveal His Son to a people who are willing to risk everything for the hope that lies before them—to a people who are willing to declare, like Job: “Though He slay me, I will hope in Him.” (Job 13:15)

God is building a people who are willing to take their wills and wishes and submit them to Him for purifying so that their hope is based on the reality of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, not on their own imaginations or fleshly appetites or some one else’s “idea” of a prophetic word of guidance. It takes courage to let go of those tattered expectations. We have grasped them so tightly in our fists for so long, they have almost become a part of us, but He wants to replace them. They are the old wineskins, the cracked vessels. He wants to give each one of us a new wineskin for the new, fresh, bubbling new wine of hope that He is going to pour into us.

We ask you to place your hope in the faithfulness of your faithful Father God, by taking all of your present hopes, all of your dreams, all of your present expectations, your plans, even the promises you have received from prophetic words and visions, and place them on the altar before God, even as Abraham, in faith, placed his son, Isaac. Beloved, when we say to put these on the altar, know that you are putting them there for God to come down and consume them or to sanctify and purify them.

Give everything you have been hoping for to God. Please don’t hold any back, because the only way God can put in your hands what He wants you to hope for, is for you to let go of what you are hoping for now. You have already agreed that you’re not too good in this hope area, so you have got nothing to lose but your frustration and your disappointment. Lay down those worn out hopes so that God can give you new ones—that ones He wants you hoping for.

Ask God to sanctify these hopes, these visions, these dreams, these desires, by His cleansing fire. Be willing to see them all go up in smoke as an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord. Some were products of fleshly, wishful thinking. Others were by-products of erroneous teaching, questionable prophecies, or misunderstanding of the Scriptures. Be willing to entrust all of them, even your most treasured ones, to a loving and just Father God who gives us the ability to hope again. “There is a future and your hope will not be cut off.” (Proverbs 23:18)

Then be prepared to receive back from Him sanctified, God-breathed hopes and dreams and promises and plans and visions and wishes and desires—those that He has fashioned especially for you. They will be jewels left after the consuming fire, and those will be just for you, from God. And He will use these new hopes to strengthen your faith and your trust in Him.

Our prayer for you is: “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.” (Romans 15:13)

Beloved, abounding hope will not disappoint!