

Hope Is Born - Pt. 1

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Introduction: The Two Greatest Threats to a Believer

In more than thirty years of pastoral ministry I have watched two forces derail believers more than anything else: becoming offended and becoming hopeless. Offense shuts the heart down. Hopelessness drains the heart dry. Our enemy is quite content to play the long game.

The first danger is offense (Jesus warned this would mark the last days):

10 And then many will be offended will betray one another and will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound the love of many will grow cold.
—Matthew 24:10-12

The second danger is hopelessness

A. The Danger of Hopelessness

Hope deferred makes the heart sick but when the desire comes it is a tree of life.
—Proverbs 13:12

Heart sickness is the quiet collapse of inward expectation.

SIGNS OF A HOPE DEFERRED HEART (DASHBOARD LIGHTS)

1. Emotional fatigue sleep cannot fix

This is the weariness that comes from disappointment, not exertion; rest does not restore it because the wound is in the soul, not the body.

2. Loss of vision for the future

Hope deferred clouds what once felt possible, making even God-given dreams feel distant, unrealistic or no longer worth pursuing.

3. Shrinking capacity to believe God

The heart becomes hesitant, once-strong faith feels fragile and trusting God requires more effort than it used to.

4. Growing cynicism skepticism and self-protection

Wounds harden the heart; instead of openness and expectation, the default becomes suspicion, guarding yourself from further disappointment.

5. Unbelief shaping prayer worship and obedience

Instead of bold engagement, everything becomes muted; prayers shrink, worship feels restrained, and obedience becomes selective or cautious.

6. Loss of spiritual resilience

Trials hit harder than they should; things that used to be manageable now feel overwhelming because the inner fortitude hope produces has been weakened.

B. Worldly Hope vs. Biblical Hope

1. Worldly Hope: When believers base their hope on circumstances improving rather than on the unchanging character and promises of God, their hope becomes fragile. Circumstantial hope rises and falls with what we see, so when situations remain unresolved or disappoint us, the heart becomes sick. Biblical hope is anchored in who God is and in what He has vowed to accomplish, not in whether life turns in our favor. Hope gets deferred so often because we keep tying it to outcomes rather than to the One who stands above every outcome.
2. Biblical hope is a confident expectation of good based on the unchanging character of God. At Christmas hope became a Person. A fruit of Biblical Hope is seen in Job's response to calamity:

And he said naked I came from my mother's womb and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave and the Lord

has taken away Blessed be the name of the Lord. 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

—Job 1:21-22

C. The Power of Focus

Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

—Hebrews 12:1-2

1. Not just “looking at, but “fixing by turning your gaze away from everything else.
2. To turn one’s eyes away from all other objects
3. To deliberately focus attention on a single person or thing
4. To look with undivided, sustained attention
5. To mentally fix your thoughts, hopes, and trust on something

(Over the next few weeks, we will explore these three thoughts: Hope Has a Name; Hope that Redeems; Hope in the Coming Advent)

Hope Has A Name

Names are significant: Calvin: bald; Kennedy: misshapen head; Portia: pig; Cameron: crooked nose

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call His name Jesus.

—Luke 1:31

The Christmas story is not about a baby only. It is about the arrival of Hope Himself.

A. Meaning of the Name “Jesus”

The name Jesus comes from the Hebrew Yeshua meaning “YHWH saves” or “YHWH” is salvation.”

B. YHWH is the name God revealed to Moses, known at the Tetragrammaton meaning:

1. I Am
2. I am the One who is
3. I will be who I will be
4. The One who exists, who remains, who is faithful

C. In John 8:58 Jesus declares His deity by saying “before Abraham was I am...”

D. His name declares why He came and the character and nature of God:

1. His name is His mission.

God Himself chose the name because it declares exactly why He came...to save.

And she will bring forth a Son and you shall call His name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins.

—Matthew 1:21

2. His name reveals the heart of God.

Jesus' name shows that God's intention was not to merely assist humanity but to deliver humanity.

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

—Luke 19:10

3. His name fulfills prophecy and divine pattern.

Joshua (Yehoshua) led Israel into the promised land. Jesus leads God's people into ultimate redemption.

For if Joshua had given them rest then He would not afterward have spoken of another day.

—Hebrews 4:8

4. His name is the exclusive source of salvation.

Hope is born because salvation is tied to a name with divine authority.

Nor is there salvation in any other for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Conclusion: These truths are an anchor for us

True Hope anchors us:

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil.

—Hebrews 6:19

1. Hope steadies us when circumstances shake us.
It keeps us from being tossed by fear, anxiety or disappointment.
Hope grabs onto God's unchanging character when everything around us changes.
2. Hope roots us in God's promises, not our emotions.
Our feelings rise and fall, but the promise of God does not. Hope ties our inner life to what God has spoken, not how we feel in the moment.
3. Hope keeps us from drifting spiritually.
Just like an anchor holds a boat in place, hope holds us firm in obedience, prayer, Scripture, and faithfulness.
4. Hope connects us to the presence of Jesus.
Hebrews 6:19 says hope "enters the Presence behind the veil."
Our hope is anchored in a living Person, the risen Christ, not an idea, mood or wish.
5. Hope strengthens endurance in trials.
Hope looks past temporary pain and sees eternal glory (2 Corinthians 4:17). It gives strength to keep going and not give up.
6. Hope lifts our eyes toward the future God is preparing.
It reminds us that suffering is not the final word. God is redeeming stories, restoring broken things, and preparing a world where all things are made right.
7. Hope protects our heart from despair.

When disappointment or delay comes, hope guards the soul from bitterness, cynicism or unbelief.

8. Hope pulls the weight of heaven into our present.
Hope is not escapism, it is a down-payment of future glory. It allows us to live today with the joy, courage, and peace of the coming Kingdom.
9. Hope assures us our labor is not in vain.
Every prayer, every act of obedience, every sacrifice is seen and rewarded (1 Corinthians 15:58). Hope stabilizes us with purpose.
10. Hope reminds us that God finishes what He starts.
He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Hope anchors us in His faithfulness when our strength fails.