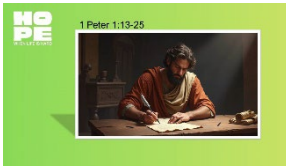


Hope in Action

1 Peter #2 • May 31, 2026



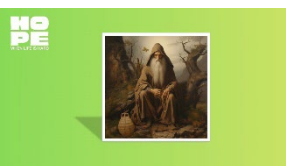
1 Peter 1:13-25

“Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.” (1 Peter 1:13–25, NIV)

Opening

Do you guys know Anthony?

This guy! His story is...interesting? Strange? (I’m searching for the words here...so let me just tell you about him).



Anthony was born in Egypt, probably about 250 [3rd century AD], to well-to-do parents who died when he was about twenty

*and left him all their possessions. A sermon text -- Jesus' command to the rich young ruler, "**If you would be perfect, go and sell all you have,**" -- changed the young man's life. The words seemed directed to him, and Anthony took them literally. He gave his lands to his fellow villagers, sold his other property, and donated the money to the poor. He put himself under the care of an elderly Christian who taught him the joys of self-denial. Anthony lived on one meal a day of bread and water and slept on the bare ground.*

To make sure he didn't drift into casual, insincere faith, Anthony later withdrew from the world. For about twelve years, he lived in a tomb. After that, he moved to an abandoned fort, where he lived for twenty years without seeing another person's face. His food was thrown over the wall to him, where he stayed and tried to focus on his commitment to Christ (fighting against the demons...maybe literally... that tried to call him back to a world of sensual pleasures).

Anthony's example as one of several "Desert Fathers" – Christians who lived a life of self-denial away from others – inspired other Christians to develop the notion of "monks." For better or for worse, Anthony communicated the idea that a truly religious person withdraws from the world, abstaining from marriage, family, and worldly pleasures.¹

I was struggling to find the right word or phrase to summarize Anthony's story, but I think my reaction is this:

What a waste!

I'm not questioning Anthony's devotion at all. I'm sure he could teach me a lot about self-denial and commitment! He's my (ancient) brother in Christ – yours, too! We won't speak badly of him as person.

But speaking of his tactics? I just think, "*What a waste!*"

¹ Curtis, A. K., Lang, J. S., & Petersen, R. (1998). [The 100 most important events in christian history](#). Revell.

If you have a life that is being transformed by Jesus, you can't just hide it away! You can't store it like a fancy car in a garage, only driving it a few miles on special occasions, and only when the road is dry. You can't tuck your life of faith away for the future. It needs to be lived out now!

There should be nothing *private* about your faith. It needs to be *shown!* It needs to be *lived out!* It needs to become *evident* through your conduct.

It needs to *match* what we find in today's passage from 1 Peter.

Our heavenly hope needs to show up in holy love to others!

Recap

Last week we started looking closely at Peter's letter to Christians who were facing difficulty. He wrote to give them *hope when life is hard*.

In the opening part of his letter, Peter shared that hidden, future promises aren't any less genuine or glorious because we don't have them yet. They are real, and they are worth the inconvenience of the very real, experienced gloom of the present. God hasn't forgotten you; **He is saving the best for last!** That is the joy we have. That is our hope when life is hard!

But as Peter continues writing, he makes it clear that hope isn't just an ethereal wish. No, he says, "*You need to hope like you mean it!*"

Hope Like You Mean It (1:13)

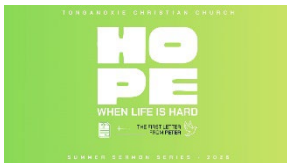
Look at verse 13 again.

"So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world." (1 Peter 1:13, NLT)

In my study this week, I wrestled with this passage in the original Greek language, trying to get the sense of what Peter was saying here. I usually love using the New Living Translation (NLT) because it is a readable translation. For a Christian who is trying to comprehend the

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HOPE
REVEALED



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basic meaning of a passage, the NLT is a solid choice. I use it frequently as my translation of choice when I'm sharing with you. But in this case, the NLT didn't quite land properly.

*(Note: **Every** translation has places where the rendering doesn't capture the feel of the original – that's the nature of going from one language to another. So, this isn't a critique of the translation itself – the NLT is accurate! This is just a point of clarification.)*

Verse 13 is all one sentence in Greek, but the original has a single, main verb/action as its focus: **“HOPE”!!!**

When the NLT says, *“Put **all your hope**...”* it makes the mistake of treating “hope” like a **noun**. As if hope is something you have...you hold...you keep. And if you don't feel it right now, you could just reject Peter's words and claim, *“I have **no hope** to put on anything!”*

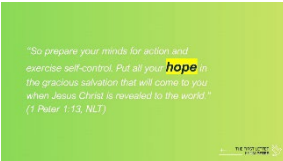
Often, we talk about hope this way. When life is hard, we no longer *have* (we no longer *feel*) “hope.” Feeling hopeful or not can be an accurate description of your mental state and emotions. But it fails to catch the Biblical sense of the word.

“Hope” in Scripture is more accurately a **verb**. It is a choice, not a feeling. “To hope” is to choose to trust that there is something better ahead. You hope (choice) based on God's promises. As one commentator said,

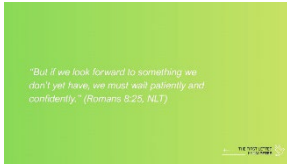
“Such hope is not a matter of temperament, nor is it conditioned by prevailing circumstances or any human possibilities. It does not depend upon what a man possesses, upon what he may be able to do for himself, nor upon what any other human being may do for him....

Because of what God has done in the past, particularly in preparing for the coming of Christ, and because of what God has done and is now doing through Christ, the Christian dares to expect future blessings [that are] at present invisible.”²

² Tasker, R. V. G. (1996). [Hope](#). In D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer, & D. J. Wiseman (Eds.), *New Bible dictionary* (3rd ed., p. 480). InterVarsity Press.



We **hope** (choice) based on our confidence in Christ. Someday (perhaps only in heaven) our confidence and our feelings will match. But the **choice** to hope today must happen before the feelings begin!



“But if we look forward to something we don’t yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.” (Romans 8:25, NLT)

That’s why Peter says simply: “HOPE.”

We are to “**prepare our minds**” – tie up any loose ends that could get in the way, set aside any distractions, silence the inner dialogue – and be “**sober-minded**” – thinking clearly, not in a panic of emotion, remembering God’s promises instead of worrying about our situation.

We are to HOPE in the salvation described in the previous verses.

Church, are you HOPING actively in God’s salvation? Are you reminding yourself of it? Are you re-reading his words about it? Are you setting priorities based on it?

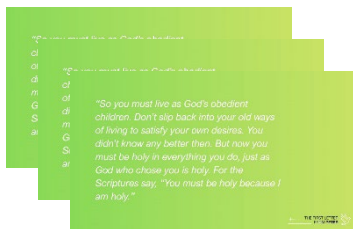


Heavenly hope will show up in your conduct...and your conduct should look different as a result!



Be Holy for All the Right Reasons (1:14-21)

Look at 1 Peter 1:14-21 again.



“So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say,

“You must be holy because I am holy.”

And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as “temporary residents.” For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.

God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake. Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And you have placed your faith and hope in God because he raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory.” (1 Peter 1:14–21, NLT)

If I confidently choose to trust that my long-term future is with God, I need to prepare for that future.



Deb and I have talked about a trip for our 30th anniversary (coming up in 2029). You know she loves going to Disneyland, and she has talked about maybe going to a different Disney park that year: Tokyo Disney!

Disclaimer: Even though I’m using it in a sermon illustration, that doesn’t make it a reality. I haven’t committed to it yet!

But, IF I did, what would need to change about my life now to prepare for my future then?

- **Finances** – saving more money.
- **Language** – I should learn some words so I can communicate and navigate.
- **Diet** – I should lose a few pounds because seats are smaller and I want to fit on the rides!

I would need to adjust who I am to fit into the culture I would join.

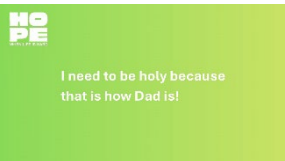
Our heavenly hope requires similar changes. If I confidently choose to trust that my long-term future is with God, I need to prepare for that future.

That means I need to be holy for all the right reasons!

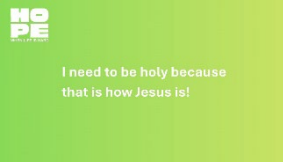
I need to be holy because that is how Dad is!

“*Be holy because I am holy,*” God says. Peter quotes that refrain from the Old Testament (stated in places like Leviticus and echoed in Ezekiel). If we are going to be in the presence of the Father, we need to be **holy** – different, set apart, pure.

You can’t have a tux on the beach. You can’t have flip flops on the ski slopes. You can’t have an umbrella in a lightning storm.



Our old way of life – doing whatever we want to satisfy whatever we desire – doesn't match up with our holy, heavenly Father. So, if we reverently know (and respect!) God's power and preferences, we need to adjust to the culture that our salvation is preparing us for.



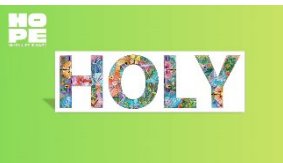
I need to be holy because that is how Jesus is!

Our Savior is our ransom that saves us from the empty culture we humans have developed! And Peter fills this passage with truth about how Jesus is:

- His blood is precious!
- He is spotless and blameless
- He was known in advance
- He is shown now
- He rose from death
- He is glorified now

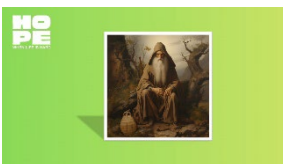
Nothing worthless (even silver and gold) compares! *THE* one and only Jesus Christ offers salvation. And He died so that we would no longer be slaves to death and sin!

Remember: our works DO NOT EARN anything. We aren't really paying God back by our "good" behavior. It is only through His grace that we are saved! Ad every good thing I do afterwards borrows even more from God's grace to enable me to change. The work of holiness is not my own...it is His. But that means it is a work I cannot neglect nor ignore.



Church, are you pursuing HOLINESS in your actions? Are you checking your daily behavior against the pure standard of Jesus Christ? Do your lips speak holy words? Do your eyes stay pure? Do your decisions honor self or honor God?

We must be holy for all the right reasons.



Anthony in the desert knew that. He believed it. And if that were the whole case – we need to live holy lives to honor our Father and our Lord – then his plan to be a hermit makes sense.

In isolation there would be no more looks that invited longing, no more tastes that unlocked cravings, no more chemicals that

took away the pain, no more neighbors to keep pace with, no more stupid questions to tempt my tongue to respond...

In isolation, you and I could have heavenly hope produce holy conduct.

But, there's one problem. Peter isn't done. And what he says next means that Anthony's solution was...*a waste*.

Heavenly hope does lead to holy conduct...BUT that holy conduct must pour out LOVE.

Share a Lasting Love (1:21-25)

"You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart. For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God. As the Scriptures say,

"People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. But the word of the Lord remains forever."

And that word is the Good News that was preached to you."
(1 Peter 1:22-25, NLT)

Our heavenly hope needs to show up in holy love to others!

It is still motivated by our eternal hope – the salvation of Christ.

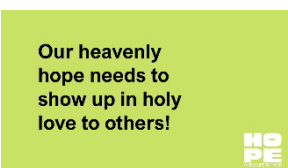
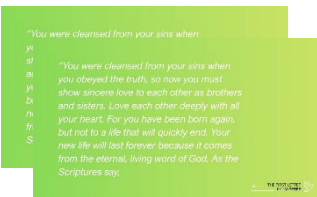
It is still expressed through holy actions – in obedience to what God asks of us.

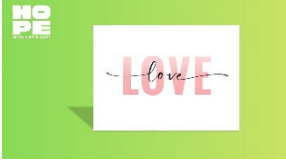
But it must be shown with a sincere heart for people.

"I am writing to remind you, dear friends, that we should love one another. This is not a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning." (2 John 5, NLT)

(Can you be any more basic, Steve? – Love others? Really?)

Yes! We all need to be reminded of these basics.





Peter says we should love one another deeply/earnestly.

Church, are you LOVING the people around you? Are you checking on them? Encouraging them? Praying for them? Serving them? Meeting their needs?

Not just the ones you like. Not just your friends. But the brothers and sisters in this congregation.

Start by knowing their names – have a conversation instead of bolting to the door.

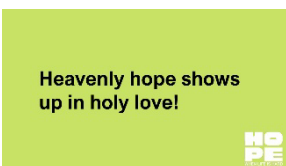
Then continue by asking about their life – write down some notes to bring to the Father in your prayers.

And follow-up – with a call, or text, or next time you see them in the seat across the aisle.

You might think it is hard to love people in this church, especially when you spend time with us! But Peter reminds us that our heart for people is not due to “acting” among us, but because of a “transformation” in us.

We are “born again!” The good news of Jesus makes a permanent change (it “remains forever,” Peter says as he quotes another Old Testament passage). It enables us to love more and to love more genuinely.

You and I can’t love people the right way in our own flesh. But through God’s abiding word...through the new birth we have received from Christ... we can show a sincere heart.



Heavenly hope shows up in holy love!

Conclusion

If you aren’t loving others (in Christ-like action), you are wasting a beautiful, powerful opportunity! Your conduct isn’t showing that you have any hope in heaven. If your focus is on self, you’re already off track. Heaven will be focused on God and what matters to Him; anything different certainly won’t be special and holy!

But your heavenly hope will show up in holy love!



Anthony figured it out, eventually.

The hermit could never totally detach himself from the world. In 311 AD, Maximian (one of the last pagan emperors of Rome) persecuted Christians, and Anthony? He showed holy love.

Motivated by his own hope of heaven, Anthony left his home, willing to die for his faith. Instead of dying, though, he ended up **ministering** to Christians condemned to work in the imperial mines. That experience convinced him that **living** the Christian life could be as saintly as **dying** for it.³

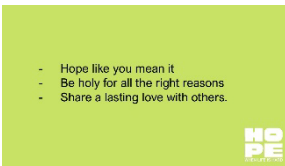
His heavenly hope showed up in holy love to others!

Church,

- Hope like you mean it
- Be holy for all the right reasons
- Share a lasting love with others.

Prayer

Invitation



³ Curtis, A. K., Lang, J. S., & Petersen, R. (1998). [The 100 most important events in christian history](#). Revell.

Sermon Notes

Hope Like You Mean It (1:13)

(Romans 8:25)

Be Holy for All the Right Reasons (1:14-21)

Share a Lasting Love (1:21-25)

(2 John 5)

Sermon Discussion Questions

- Read 1 Peter 1:13-25. What is one verse that stands out to you in this passage? Why?
- How do you prepare your mind to engage in “hope?” (1:13)
- Why is it important to think of “hope” as a verb instead of a noun?
- How are you “hoping” actively in God’s salvation? Share some of the thoughts that help you place your trust in His salvation?
- “*Be holy because I am holy,*” God says (1:16). What does holiness mean? How is God holy?
- Do you consider “holiness” to be an achievable goal? Why or why not? What truths about Jesus might help you better achieve holiness?
- Why is Christian love rooted in the gospel message?
- Can holy love be practiced in isolation from others?
- How close are you to others in the church? What are some ways you could improve the way you engage with people to show and receive the love of Jesus?