



Hope For Life: A Bible Study

1 Peter 3:14-22

Christians know hope. We speak hope. We show hope. We share hope. The Gospel makes us people of hope. Christ Jesus has come, was crucified, is risen, and will come again. This gives hope to every person in every circumstance. There's humanity even in suffering. There's still opportunity in uncertainty. There's promise even in weakness. And there's still enjoyment in the unexpected.

God's Word places this hope in each human being whom He has graciously created, redeemed, and called. Wherever there's life, there is God's grace and Christ's compassion. We open our mouths, our hands, and our hearts as Gospel-motivated voices for life to proclaim and perform this hope. God never gives up and neither do His people.

1. **"In your hearts honor Christ the Lord"** – What does it mean that Christ is Lord?

Colossians 1:15-18 –

1 Peter 3:22 –

Matthew 5:45-46 –

2. **"Suffer for righteousness' sake"** – What sufferings do we face for righteousness' sake?

Romans 8:35-36 –

Luke 21:16-17 –

Romans 7:21-24 –

3. **"With gentleness and respect"** – What responses to suffering come naturally for us as sinners?

1 Peter 2:23 –

Genesis 3:11-13 –

Galatians 5:19-21 –



4. **“For the hope that is in you”** – What hope is in us?

Genesis 50:20 –

Mark 10:29-30 –

Philippians 3:20-21 –

5. **“A reason for the hope”** – What reasons do we have for our hope?

1 Peter 3:18-22 –

1 Corinthians 15:3-7 –

Romans 1:20 –

6. **“Anyone who asks you”** – To whom has our Lord made this hope available?

Acts 2:17-18, 21, 38-39 –

Romans 5:6-10 –

Matthew 11:5 –

7. **“Asks you for a reason”** – Why will anyone ask for a reason for our hope?

1 Corinthians 4:9-13 –

2 Corinthians 4:7-13 –

Acts 8:30-31 –

8. **“Always being prepared”** – How do we prepare to make a defense of our hope?

Matthew 26:41 –

Colossians 3:16-17 –

1 Corinthians 9:19-27 –



9. **“To make a defense”** – In what ways can we give a defense or reason for our hope?

Ephesians 4:15 –

Matthew 25:34-36, 40 –

Romans 12:6-20 –

10. **“With gentleness and respect”** – Why do we speak and show hope gently and respectfully?

Matthew 11:25-30 –

Galatians 5:22-23 –

2 Timothy 2:24-25 –

11. **“No fear of them”** – What encouragements and assurances do we have about sharing hope?

Isaiah 55:11 –

Philippians 2:13 –

Luke 21:15 –



Hope For Life: A Bible Study/Leader's Guide

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1. **"In your hearts honor Christ the Lord"** – What does it mean that Christ is Lord?

Colossians 1:15-18 – "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent."

1 Peter 3:22 – "[Jesus Christ,] who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him."

Matthew 5:45-46 – "... so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"

The gracious Savior who partakes in our human condition operates the entire universe. His influence includes His servants and their adversaries, as well as both favorable times and evil ones. Nothing happens without His knowledge, permission, and involvement. He orchestrates all things to accomplish His loving and life-giving will.

2. **"Suffer for righteousness' sake"** – What sufferings do we face for righteousness' sake?



Romans 8:35-36 – “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’”

Luke 21:16-17 – “You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name’s sake.”

Romans 7:21-24 – “So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

As did our Lord and His prophets and apostles, we suffer ridicule and slander. We get abandoned, excluded, and deprived because of our confession and testimony. Many Christians continue to lose sleep, friends, jobs, homes, health, family, freedom, and their very lives for their faithful witness. We even have to wrestle against our own sinful flesh as the Holy Spirit brings Christ to life in us.

3. **“With gentleness and respect”** – What responses to suffering come naturally for us as sinners?

1 Peter 2:23 – “When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.”

Genesis 3:11-13 – “He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?’ The man said, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’ Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this that you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

Galatians 5:19-21 – “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Our fallen reflexes react to difficulty and distress by making excuses or escapes and seeking distractions or anesthetics. When these measures and mechanisms end up only complicating matters, selfish



instincts kick in and compel us to blame, retaliate, and eliminate—first with hurtful words and finally with hostile and drastic actions.

4. **“For the hope that is in you”** – What hope is in us?

Genesis 50:20 – “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.”

Mark 10:29-30 – “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.”

Philippians 3:20-21 – “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”

Because His crucifixion has accomplished our forgiveness, we believe Jesus coordinates every existing substance and sequence to ensure our survival and our salvation. He has promised to protect and provide for our body and heart in this life and the one to come. We wait upon His words and ways to relieve us and deliver us into the victory and ecstasy of the heavenly kingdom.

5. **“A reason for the hope”** – What reasons do we have for our hope?

1 Peter 3:18-22 – “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.”

1 Corinthians 15:3-7 – “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to



the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.”

Romans 1:20 – “For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.”

We have such great hope because of Jesus Christ’s bodily incarnation, miraculous signs, sacrificial bloodshed, and physical resurrection. The Scriptures written by eyewitnesses to these things along with the sacraments of His Gospel message and assembly confirm our hope. Humble scientific observation and honest logical thought also corroborate these truths.

6. **“Anyone who asks you”** – To whom has our Lord made this hope available?

Acts 2:17-18, 21, 38-39 – “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy ... And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved’ ... And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’”

Romans 5:6-10 – “For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person— though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”

Matthew 11:5 – “[T]he blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.”

The hope of both earthly and eternal life extends to each member of the human species. The Almighty Maker has included every person—



from unborn to expiring, however able or impaired, whether popular or “unwanted,” regardless of productivity or cognition, without respect to appearance or affluence, and even His enemies—in His ultimate gift. As long as there’s life—be it weak, wounded, wicked, or “worthless,”—there’s hope.

7. **“Asks you for a reason”** – Why will anyone ask for a reason for our hope?

1 Corinthians 4:9-13 – “For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.”

2 Corinthians 4:7-13 – “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, ‘I believed, and so I spoke,’ we also believe, and so we also speak ...”

Acts 8:30-31 – “So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.”

The Holy Spirit positions us to sparkle. Our conversation and conduct stand in stark contrast to other customs and cultures, especially in the Christian approach to suffering. The grace and patience, compassion and forgiveness, peace and anticipation we have – particularly during hardship – raise questions against the backdrop of people’s own experiences of brokenness and longing for eternal relationship.

8. **“Always being prepared”** – How do we prepare to make a defense of our hope?



Matthew 26:41 – “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Colossians 3:16-17 – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

1 Corinthians 9:19-27 – “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.”

God’s Word prepares us to express the hope He bestows. We learn to speak by listening to Scripture, remembering and reciting, studying and contemplating its applications. Disciplines like confession, prayer, and servanthood keep us observant to opportunities. Through our vocations our Lord orients us to interact with neighbors, notice their needs, and involve ourselves in their stories, until they hunger for the hope we enjoy.

9. **“To make a defense”** – In what ways can we give a defense or reason for our hope?

Ephesians 4:15 – “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.”

Matthew 25:34-36, 40 – “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you



visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ... And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'"

Romans 12:6-20 – "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' To the contrary, 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.'"

We can engage in sensitive conversations about God's commands and promises when relevant situations arise. We can celebrate the blessings He gives to us and the others around us. We can pay attention, take time, listen, embrace, and befriend when we meet desperate souls. We can assist in their necessities out of our abundances, either individually or cooperatively. We can put our hope into practice and offer it to others.

10. **"With gentleness and respect"** – Why do we speak and show hope gently and respectfully?

Matthew 11:25-30 – "At that time Jesus declared, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle



and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Galatians 5:22-23 – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

2 Timothy 2:24-25 – “And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.”

Our gentle, respectful God and Father shows us respect and deals gently with us. His Gospel gently and respectfully transforms us into respectful, gentle creatures. Rather than asserting superiority, we desire, as He does, that those to whom we declare our hope will come to know Him for themselves.

11. **“No fear of them”** – What encouragements and assurances do we have about sharing hope?

Isaiah 55:11 – “[S]o shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”

Philippians 2:13 – “[F]or it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

Luke 21:15 – “[F]or I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.”

Our Redeemer retains responsibility for the outcomes. He promises to accompany, inhabit, equip, and enable us as we attest to the hope He gives. Our hope-defending and reason-giving, inasmuch as it echoes and embodies His Gospel, will not fail to do exactly what He designed it for. Above all, He will not allow the evil one to overcome us.