

HOPE IS INDISPENSABLE

Hope's Importance

First, let us consider the importance of hope and the role it plays in our lives. Hope is absolutely crucial in so many ways.

- We don't change our diet without the hope that the diet changes will help us.
- We don't exercise without the hope of this activity helping us.
- We don't make lifestyle changes without the hope of the lifestyle changes helping us.
- We don't fight for survival without hope.
- We don't fight for health care coverage without hope.
- We don't read our Bibles or pray without hope.
- And so on.

There are not very many things that we do in life, if we have no hope of the activity achieving a goal or purpose. Without hope, the human tendency is to not do the activity. In the situation where we are fighting for survival or for the recovery of our health, we need hope, because without hope, the human tendency is to stop fighting, stop praying, and give up.

Consequently, it is imperative to have hope in order to be able to fight for the recovery of our health, or in order to be able to fight for survival.

Getting and Maintaining Hope

When our situation looks hopeless or impossible, how do we get hope and/or maintain hope? In Romans 15:13, God instructs us how to get hope and maintain our hope.

Romans 15:13 (NASB) says: Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God is called the God of hope, and He delights to communicate hope into our hearts. In fact, this verse tells us that God wants us to abound in hope; so He gives us the key to getting, maintaining and growing in hope.

This key is to get to know God, learning God's nature, God's character, God's ways and God's promises through the reading and studying of God's written word, the Bible. Romans 10:17 tells us that faith comes from hearing the word of God. As we spend time in God's word, faith is born in us and grows in us. This faith will then produce hope.

Hope comes by placing our faith in God's nature, God's character, God's ways and God's precious promises. As we rest in faith in God's love for us, in who God is, and in what God has promised, He fills our heart with hope. We maintain our hope the exact same way that we get hope. One good way to abound in hope is to praise and thank God for the hope that He has given us.

Faith, hope and love are a team that works together in a synergistic way. As we get to know God, our love for Him will grow. Then, we will discover this synergistic effect working in our lives. We discover

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that this team of faith, hope and love can become a strong motivator and can become a strong driving force in our lives that can greatly influence the decisions that we make. Faith, hope and love will give us the inner courage and strength to swim against the current of popular opinion and fight against huge obstacles. They will give us the inner courage and strength to fight for the recovery of our health and/or to fight for survival against all odds.

When our situations go worse (and sometimes this does happen) our faith, hope and love will be greatly tested. Yet, as we anchor our souls in the knowledge of who God is and what God has promised, our faith, hope and love will hold firm and steadfast through the storm and the time of difficulty.

A Joyous Hope

God knew the number of days we will live on this earth, when we were still being formed in our mother's womb; but we do not know that information. We do not know when our time to die will come. Therefore, we need to learn to live each day as if it is our last day on earth; and we need to learn to live each day ready to meet our God at any time.

When we are dying, our situation is still not hopeless. As a believer, we have a built-in hope. Heaven is God's home. Some of God's precious promises assure us that when we place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work at Calvary, we enter into the privilege of living with Him, in His home, for all eternity. God removes all fear of death, as we realize that we are going home to live with our Friend, the Lover of our souls. This attitude will fill our hearts with hope and anticipation of seeing our Lord Jesus Christ face to face.

Since all of us who have placed our faith in Him have the sure promise of an eternal home in heaven with our Heavenly Friend, death is the time of transition when our faith becomes sight and when we see the Lover of our souls face to face.

What a joyous hope!