

The Source of our Hope

Imagine the feeling of waiting for a job offer when you really need a job. Then imagine the feelings you might have when losing a loved one. Those experiences are very different, yet they share the desire for a better life, or a better situation than the present one. This is where many people turn to optimism.

But what if optimism distorts the way we hope for a new future? Optimism is often impersonal and a stranger to our emotions, as it often relies on circumstances as a compass. Optimism is a bad hope, and it can drive people insane as they are optimistic for something that never happens and optimism often relies on an *if something happens, I will be happier, better off, in a better position.*

Biblical hope however is totally different because it is a choice to rely on a person (Jesus), not our circumstances, and for that reason it is not dangerous. The biblical authors talk a lot about hope, and while they hoped for the same things, we all hope for, such as peace, safety, healing, love, to them, "hope" is not focused on the things or the stuff. Instead, it's focused on the promises and power of God. So, they write things like, *"My hope is in you, God!"* (Ps. 39:7) & *"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."* (Jer 29:11)

Unlike optimism, which only measures the surface, biblical hope goes deeper as we can ask Jesus to meet us right there in our sadness or our anticipation. Jesus often reminds his friends that they cannot understand how everything works, why people harm each other, why sickness continues, or when evil will finally end. But he does promise to set the world right, and he invites us to join him in repairing the world.

So, we find hope in every Jesus-like act of love, forgiveness, and generosity. His life, death, and resurrection are the anchor for our highest hopes that one day and one day soon, Jesus will come again and make all the wrong things right.

Jesus is the source of all hope because He shows us the path of life, in His presence is fullness of joy and in His right hand there are pleasures for evermore. What or who is your source of hope? If it is not Jesus, there will be limits to your hope. There is nothing that can give you hope in God, other than God himself. He is truly the source of all hope, so, let's stop dying in sin and let's get living in Christ and enjoy the wait for His return together.

1. What is your initial reaction to this topic? What jumped out at you?
2. Rico Tice Says "Christian hope claims to be a joyful expectation for the future, based on true events in the past". Describe some really hopeful people you've known. What about some not-so hopeful people? Do you think Rico is right?
3. Describe the differences between biblical hope and optimism as defined in this topic. Give an example of each.
4. Read [Psalm 39:7](#). What are some past acts of God that give you hope for moving forward?
5. Read [Romans 8:18-23](#). What do you think a redeemed/liberated creation will look like?
6. Read [Isaiah 40:27-31](#). Why should Christians today "wait upon" God? (Note: Some translations use the word "trust" instead of "wait" in 40:31. The Hebrew is "qavah.")
7. How do we "look back" to "look forward"?
8. Write a personal action step based on this conversation?

(For Info) The words used for hope in the Bible are somewhat linked with the words used for waiting. It is important to know that in the Bible, both in the Old Testament Hebrew and in the New Testament Greek, hope is used as a transitive verb. Meaning that the word hope is used to reference the act of waiting or expecting. Three of the words used by the bible writers for hope are two in Hebrew "Qavar" and "Yakhal" and one in Greek "Elpis" (pronounced Elpese) and all three of these words centre around waiting.