

# Is There Any Hope

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**Text: Proverbs 13:12**

**Introduction:** Most people who are familiar with popular movies are familiar with the quote from the movie the *Shawshank Redemption*. One of the prisoners, “Red” played by Morgan Freeman, who had been in the prison for a long time, made the comment to a new prisoner, “Andy” played by Tim Robbins, about what he saw as the danger of hope in a hopeless situation.

**Red:** “Hope is a dangerous thing my friend, he can kill a man.”

**Andy disputes Red’s perspective:** “Nope it’s [hope] a good thing maybe even the best of things and good things never die.”

Different perspectives from different people. Different perspectives from different life experiences. It’s funny how life experiences can take a toll on your perspective.

**Illustration:** A young lady set in my office not too long ago in need of counsel. She paused and made the comment, “I used to think hope was a good thing. But I think it’s a bad thing.” What had happened in her life to change her mind? We could ask that question of many people. Why did they used to believe hope is a good thing, but now view it in a negative light?

**Proverbs 13:12 sums it up,** “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.” NIV

Look with me as we contrast the *differences* between hope fulfilled and hope unfulfilled.

## I. Hope That Is Unfulfilled Makes the Heart Sick.

### A. The source of our hope is often the reason it goes unfulfilled.

- a. If we hope in people, we get what people can do.
- b. If we hope in organizations, we get what organizations can do.
- c. If we hope in fantasy, our expectation is unrealistic from the beginning.
- d. If we hope in fairness, we are dependent upon someone else’s judgment.
- e. If we hope in our goodness, we always fall short.
- f. If we hope in the way things ought to be, we set ourselves up for frustration.

- B. It's the wait for our dreams to be fulfilled that often wears us down.**
- a. We are impatient
  - b. We are frightened
  - c. We are afraid of being forgotten
  - d. We struggle with doubt

## **II. Hope That Is Fulfilled Is A Tree of Life**

### **A. The hope we have is birthed in our heart by the Holy Spirit.**

**Romans 8:23-25 NIV** <sup>23</sup>Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

### **B. The hope we have is rooted in the grace of God.**

**Romans 5:1-3 NIV** <sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup>through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;

### **C. Our Hope is ONLY in The Lord.**

The psalmist wrote, "And now, O Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in you" (Ps. 39:7).

And, "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God . . ." (Ps. 42:5, 11; 43:5).

"For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him" (Ps. 62:5).

### **D. Our Hope and Trust in God's Character.**

**The psalmist encouraged the people of God,** "O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem" (Ps. 130:7).

"But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him'" (Lam. 3:21-24).

**The writer of Hebrews said,** "Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful" (Heb. 10:23).

### E. Jesus is both our Source and the Fulfillment of our Hope.

**Paul asked the skeptics to consider,** "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Cor. 15:19).

He counters instead with, ". . . we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:12)."

**Hebrews tells us,** "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 6:19, 20).

## Conclusion

**Max Lucado writes,** "Hope is the posture of confident expectation that is seen in those who wait upon God. Hope keeps God's people standing on tiptoe and scanning the distant horizon, anticipating the appearance and action of the One who makes and keeps promises. While Christian hope is necessarily directed toward the future, it is rooted in God's past faithfulness, which has been most clearly demonstrated in Jesus Christ. Hope has God as its object, is given shape by the coming and promised return of Jesus Christ, and is sustained by the Holy Spirit. Faith is a close relative of hope; it is the oxygen that keeps hope alive." \*

Hope is the seed of faith, therefore, as **Lewis Smedes noted,** "Those who hope must have *faith* — however fragile."

\*References: <https://preachingandworship.org/topic/Hope>