

After all my expectations have been abandoned
 I have let go of my own plans and desires
 And even my own understanding of the "problem"
 What is left is hope.
 I am too small for that
 Transcendent perspective
 Where I could see had I the eyes.
 In God's great silent emptiness I let go
 Falling into the arms of grace that have caught me before
 And will hold me again.
 Only hope will carry me
 Beyond the horizon of my wants and needs
 Into the resurrection
 Of the One who made me and
 Wills my completion.

- Sam Pendergrast

Webster defines hope as the belief that something good may happen. For Christians I think hope has a greater complexity to it than that. It is not the 'Pollyanna' way of thinking that everything is supposed to be perfect or that bad things do not happen to Christians. It is more of a deep down understanding that there is a reason, a purpose, and order to the world. It is also the belief that in the end it will be alright. God will may things right. The mark of a Christian who has hope can be seen when things get tough, we trust God to make sense of it all.

-Monica Tillie

Hope to me is spelled JESUS CHRIST. Without Him, there is no HOPE.

-Sandy Mitchell

Hope implies a desire for the future; a promise of something better yet to come.

I know a woman who was trapped in a terrible, violent relationship many years ago. She had tried several times to escape, but had been caught in each of the attempts and beaten for them. Finally, one night, she made a decision ... she would escape or she would die trying. For my friend, a life bereft of hope was simply not worth living.

-Susan Bradish

Resurrection hope is a hope for the transformation of this world, not a hope of escape from it. It is a hope that evil in all its forms will be utterly eradicated, that history will be redeemed, and that all the things that ever were will be made new. It is the hope of a new creation, a new heaven, and a new earth, in which God is really honored as God, human beings are truly loving, and peace and justice reign on earth.

-The Study Catechism

Paul wrote that Abraham was hoping against hope when he imagined a future. What does hoping against hope look like? Does it look like competing hopes? One hope against another? Which hope will win? One group hopes for one thing and another has a different hope. Or does hoping against hope look like something else? When I was young we had a collection of old painted doors at our house. I don't know where they came from, but I remember them stacked together against the house. One door was leaning against another. Hoping against hope is like one door leaning against another. That kind of hope is not about competing hopes—winning hopes and losing hopes—but about adding hope to hope. Can you imagine the strength of hope to come from this? As followers of Jesus, we are called to hope like this and to imagine, work for, trust in God to provide a future that is rooted in God's eternal faithfulness.

- Jon Martin

Hope in God (Psa 33:22; 39:7; 42:5, 11; Eph 1:12; etc.) and in His promises (Acts 26; Rom 8; Gal 5:5; Col 1:5; 1 Thess 4:13; Titus 1:2; etc.). As First Peter says, According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you (1:3-4) and your faith and hope are in God (1:21). Thus we are to always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you (3:15, ESV).

So we hope in Christ and we hope for our inheritance with Him. Our hope is certain though invisible. If we hope in Christ, we already have the down payment (the Holy Spirit, Eph 1:13) on the hoped for inheritance.

Most will laugh if you say, Put on this life jacket and you will have hope. One might say, Well I tried everything else to make this boat ride fun, drugs, sex, rowing hard none of those worked, lets try this on and see if it makes for a better ride. But other passengers will laugh at him and as far as he is concerned you are a liar it just made him more uncomfortable. What if you said, See the hole in the boat, you are going down. He will keep it on, even though it is uncomfortable, and he will have hope.

Do not set your hope on things that make for a better ride (better job, car, house). And when you lose job, car, or house, you will not sink into despair. Do not put on the life jacket for a better job. Put it on to avoid drowning, because in Christ you know that after the floodwaters recede you will inherit the earth.

Rev. Justin L. Marple