

THE TEACHING  
**LEGACY**  
 OF DEREK PRINCE

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 Hope

*The Source of All Hope, Part 3 of 5*

In the midst of life's greatest difficulties, there is one small word that can comfort us, liberate us, and strengthen us for the future. That word is *hope*—a word so powerful it can give someone a completely new outlook on life. We know that in our world today, millions are suffering from hopelessness—including many Christians. What can you do when you've lost all hope? Fortunately, God has an answer to that important question, which we will discover in this third edition of our five-part Teaching Legacy series on *Hope*.

**E**arlier in this series, I shared from my own experience. There was a time in my life when I, too, had lost all hope, and found myself in desperate need of help from God. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit, our Helper and Comforter, took me to God's Word, and there He met my need. That is why I have a deep concern for Christians to understand and live in real hope—the kind that is revealed in the Scriptures. If, at this moment, you are worried or fearful that you are losing hope, please be encouraged. What God did for me, He can do for you! I fully believe that *genuine hope* can once again be rekindled in your heart. May God use this teaching, *The Source of All Hope* to help you in the process.

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 Three Eternal Virtues

Let's begin Part 3 of our study with a brief overview of what we have covered so far. In our first two

installments, we looked closely at Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 13:13:

*And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.* NJKV

As part of our discussion we focused on the product of each of these abiding realities: Faith produces work or action—otherwise it is a dead faith. Love produces sacrificial labor on behalf of others. And we described hope's main results as steadfastness, endurance, and perseverance.

I also explained the close relationship between faith and hope, emphasizing some important distinctions between the two. Faith is based on God's Word, which is invisible; hope is based on faith. Faith is in the present—it is a substance which we have here and now. Hope, on the other hand, looks to the future. But the only *valid* kind of hope is that which is based on present faith. Any other kind of hope is



mere wishful thinking; it may come true, but there is absolutely no guarantee. Let me repeat this point: faith is in the present; hope is in the future.

I then offered my own personal definition of hope, as I believe it to be presented in the Bible: *Hope is a serene, confident expectation of good.* Hope is not just passive and serene; it is also confident. The writer of Hebrews refers to this confidence by talking about maintaining the boast of our hope. (Hebrews 3:6)

## Hope's Focus

In our earlier teachings, we also learned that all hope, though based on present faith, must be focused on something in the future. What are we to focus our hope on? The Apostle Peter tells us in 1 Peter 1:13 to “fix our hope” on the return of Christ. The *ultimate* focus of all Christian hope is the return of Jesus Christ. This is *the blessed hope* set before all true believers. We may have other, less important hopes and dreams, but this is *the* hope.

Making Jesus' return our ultimate focus will have two main effects on the way we live. First of all, it motivates us to live in a holy way. Reading through the New Testament, we find that this was the main instruction for holy living that the Apostle Paul set before God's people. It was the expectation of the return of Jesus Christ.

The second effect this hope of Jesus' return will have upon us is to release us from the bondage of time. The people of this world don't have eternity in view—they are shut in a little prison of a few brief years allotted to them. In that regard, who of us knows how long we have to live? Beyond this present life, people with that mindset have nothing. But it is different for a believer in Jesus Christ. Although we also live in time, our hope takes us beyond time into eternity. *Hope in the coming of Jesus liberates us from the prison of time!*

## The Source of Hope

In this segment of our series on hope, I want to offer the Biblical answer to the question I asked at the beginning of this letter: *What can you do when you've lost all hope?*

Here is the first truth we need to discover to answer that question: the source of all hope is the love of God. Paul affirms this truth in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, verses 16 and 17.

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.*

Aren't those beautiful words? As we meditate on the words of this verse, five important aspects emerge:

**God's Love.** The first truth we see is what we cited earlier: the source of hope is God's love. God loved us, and therefore He gave us “eternal comfort and good hope by grace.” Always remember: the ultimate power behind the universe is the love of God. God is a Father, and when we know God as Father, we have this kind of hope—it is a gift of His love. It proceeds from a confidence in the Lord's unvarying love and faithfulness.

**Through Christ.** Second, although the source of hope is God's love, it comes through Jesus Christ. We know this because Paul mentions not only God our Father, but “the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.” Jesus is the only channel through which love from God and hope from God can come into our lives.

**By Grace.** The third feature of this hope is that it is a gift. But how do we receive it? By grace. Paul says God gave us “eternal comfort and good hope by grace.” Please remember, grace cannot be earned. Anything that can be *earned* is *not* grace. The gifts and blessings that come by grace, can only be received by faith. So you have to *receive* this hope—you simply cannot try to earn it. It does not come by trying to work out whether or not you are good enough. Nor does it come by trying to reason within yourself some rational basis why you ought to be hopeful. Hope can only be received as a gift of God's love—given by His grace.

**Beyond Time.** Fourth, together with that phrase, “good hope,” Paul says God has given us “eternal comfort.” I have already made this statement but it bears repeating many, many times because it's so important: *With hope, there comes a comfort that goes beyond time.*

Our expectations, our anticipations, our satisfactions are not limited to this brief span of time. That word

“eternal” is such a rich word, such a vast word. It means “that which is not subject to time; that which is not in time; that which was before time and will be after time.”

Eternal hope lifts us out of the confinement of this net of time and puts us onto a different level—an eternal plane of living. We can walk this earth like kings, queens, and princes because we have this hope. We are no longer slaves of time; we have been liberated by the gift of hope—given to us through God’s grace.

**For Holiness.** Finally, a point we have noted previously, but deserves repetition for emphasis—hope makes us strong for holy living.

After Paul has spoken about the eternal comfort and the good hope, he says that God will “comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good word and work.”

Let’s be honest: a hopeless person is a weak person. He doesn’t have any real motivation. When the going gets tough, he has nothing to make him hang in there. He gives up. His hands fall slack, he shrugs his shoulders, and he says, “Well, I suppose it’s no use.” But a person with the kind of eternal hope we are talking about has strength and resolve. In times of hardship and trouble, that person endures. He holds fast. God strengthens his heart through this hope.

Let me just briefly recapitulate the five points we have noted from this passage in Thessalonians: 1) The source of hope is God’s love; 2) It comes through Christ; 3) It is a gift by grace; 4) It is eternal; 5) It makes us strong for holy living.

### Liberated to Live

To conclude my talk today, I want to emphasize again the eternal nature of hope by looking at the words of Paul in Romans, chapter 14, verses 7–8.

*For none of us lives for ourselves alone and none of us dies for ourselves alone. If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.* NIV

We do not live or die to ourselves alone. To be so self-focused is to be very lonely—and this world of ours is full of lonely people. They are shut up in a prison of their own self. They live for themselves; they die by

themselves. They have no other expectation. They have no other interests, and their concerns do not reach beyond themselves. They are in a prison of self.

But through Christ, we are liberated from this prison! Paul says we don’t live to ourselves, we don’t die to ourselves. We live for Christ and we die in Christ. “Whether we live or whether we die, we belong to the Lord.” So, death has no real dominion over us. It has no terror for us. It is simply a release into a higher plane of living.

### The Ultimate Issues

We need to understand that Christ has dealt with the ultimate issues we face—which are life and death. For people who subscribe to any kind of religion, faith, or philosophy that cannot deal with life and then with death, that belief system is totally inadequate to human needs, because every one of us faces life and faces death. This truth—that Jesus died and rose from the dead and became Lord both of the living and of the dead—liberates us from that bondage of self, of time, and of self-preoccupation.

We are not living to ourselves. We are living to Christ, and if we die, we die to Christ. He is there to receive us; we belong to Him. We have become God’s responsibility. We don’t have to carry the burden of arranging everything, providing everything, managing everything for ourselves. Our lives are the responsibility of the Lord.

In closing, let’s look at the words of the psalmist David in Psalm 17, verse 15, who so beautifully sums up this expectation. He says:

*As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Your likeness when I awake.*

You see, there is a hope that extends beyond the grave. David is saying, “I’ll fall asleep in death. But there is a day coming, a moment coming, when I will awake. I will see His face. I will be clothed with His righteousness. And I will be satisfied.”

Satisfied! What a powerful word that is. When I meditate on the Scripture we have just cited, I like to repeat it over and over to myself: “Satisfied. . . satisfied . . . fully satisfied. I will be satisfied.”

You see, that is my hope. That is my hope in life; and that is my hope in death. That is the hope that has liberated me from time and all its petty concerns and worries, liberated me from my own littleness, from my own inabilities—from my own weaknesses and frustrations. I am not shut up in that prison. What has liberated me? Hope! Oh, how I thank God for that hope!

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## Words of Hope

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You may want to join me in thanking the Lord for the hope that is so satisfying. But possibly, you may feel like the hopeless person described in earlier parts of this teaching. Do you feel weak and empty? Do you hear yourself saying, “It’s no use?” Let me reassure you that you are not alone. When that was my condition, I cried out to God in my hopelessness and He met my need.

Would you like to pray together with me now? Let’s go to God’s word together, and lift our prayer based upon the verse we studied earlier:

*Father, I thank You for the promise of a hope that can liberate me. I want to receive it from You. I look to Your word now, and in faith I declare this: Your love is my source of hope. Hope comes to me through Jesus Christ. It is a gift to me by grace. Hope is eternal; and it will make me strong for holy living.*

*I thank You Lord, that as I say these words, You will breathe new hope into my heart. I trust You and You alone to meet my need. Thank You, Lord, for this liberating hope. Amen.*



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This teaching is taken from the *Derek Prince Legacy Radio* series entitled “Hope.” For further study, we are making the CD of the teaching “The Love of God,” available to you at no charge. Just use the enclosed reply slip to request your copy.

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