



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Hope or Confidence

What do you think? Is the glass half empty or half full? Will things eventually get better, or worse? Will you reach your goal, or will it likely stay out of reach? Are you more likely to give reasons why something won't work, or why it might work?

Clearly, we humans display many different perspectives and attitudes. One such difference involves the exercise of hope. Hope is the ability to desire something while maintaining the expectation that the desire will be fulfilled. Some of us are pessimists and hold little expectation of goodness, success, or fulfillment. Others of us are optimists and remain expectant that our wishes will come to fruition.

The positive power of hope is noteworthy. Hopeful people tend to be positive and upbeat. They exhibit focused strength and endurance, seeing struggles as temporary. In times of crisis, leaders proclaiming hope rally the masses from despair into action.

For many of us, hope has become a fairly normal, even casual, element of life. We hope for good weather, for a safe trip, for a promotion, or a successful medical treatment. In the absence of a guaranteed outcome, hopefulness is as positive as we can be.

There are, however, some issues for which "hope" is insufficient. Crossing our fingers and wishing on a star only leaves us feeling insecure when absolute conviction is needed.

Consider these practical life issues.

- Will my house stand strong as I sleep within it tonight?
- Are these mushrooms safe to eat?
- Is this the right person for me to marry?

Now, consider these deeper life issues.

- What am I worth? Am I loveable?
- Does my life have any meaning?
- What about my special needs child?

Does her life have a purpose, or is she just a flawed mistake?

- Does God really care?
- What happens when I die?

Such questions call for answers wrapped in confidence, not just hopeful expectation. They call for bold certainty and the assurance of truth.

To attain such confidence, three elements must be present.

1. We must know the source of the answers given. We must know both the statements made by this source, and the character of the source. The character displayed will determine whether the promises and statements are ultimately true and trust-worthy.

2. We must intentionally trust what is trust-worthy. Embracing truth may require that we release certain fears, certain biases, and our ongoing efforts to control everything in our life. Letting go of this baggage empowers us to deeply trust and freely embrace what is true and worth believing.

3. We must actively live out what we hold as truth. There needs to be harmony between what we believe and how we act. Interestingly, the more we live out our convictions, the stronger they become as they guide and assure us.

True conviction based on trusted truth builds confident assurance. This confidence inspires us to be fascinated with our life and our future. It allows us to explore and be curious without needing to know all the answers. It frees us from worry and gives us a peace that is available only when we stand steadfast on the truths we claim.

So who do you trust? What do you really believe? Remember ... the quality of the truths you claim effects the quality of the life you live. Consider the source, release lies, embrace truth confidently, and never let hopeful expectations (as good as they are) occupy space reserved for confident convictions.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work.

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Spirituality and Confidence

When it comes to "spiritual hope", it's easy to become confused, since the words are used to convey two different attitudes. First, there are those who approach spiritual matters with positive expectations (hope) based on their own knowledge and actions. "I hope there is a God." "I hope He is kind and loving." "I hope I have lived good enough to get into heaven."

Then, there are those for whom "spiritual hope" actually means "spiritual confidence." It is absolute certainty based not on our efforts, but on the truths and promises of our God. Let's review a few of these.

1. "I have loved you with an everlasting love ..." (Jeremiah 31:3)
2. "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)
3. "If you hold to my teaching, ... you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31,32)
4. "... He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion ..." (Philippians 1:6)
5. "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1,2)
6. "... in all things God works for the good of those who love Him ..." (Romans 8:28)

This is truth from the Almighty ... promises as solid as rock! What difference will it make today if we confidently embrace this truth and live in its secure power?



"Faith is a living and unshakable confidence, a belief in the grace of God so assured that a man would die a thousand deaths for its sake."
- Martin Luther