

Joy
to the
World



AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

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Merry Christmas

This Christmas 2015, What is Your Hope?

[Heb](#)

[11:1](#)

Now faith is the substance of things **hoped** for, the evidence of things not seen.



What are you hoping for? Ambassadors For Christ - Faith In The Marketplace

What is hope?

- Hope happens when someone sees something, decides that it is desirable, realizes that they may not get it, but believes that there is still a chance of getting it.

Luk 23:8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long

season, because he had heard many things of him; and he **hoped** to have seen some miracle done by him.

- To put it tersely, though perhaps in a complex way, hope is expectation moderated by probabilistic estimation of a desired event.

[Act 24:26](#) He **hoped** also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and

communed with him.

- For hope to be a strong force for tension, the person's estimation that the desired event will occur must be both high enough for them to consider there to be a reasonable chance of it happening, yet not so high that they become complacent.

[Psa 119:166](#) LORD, I have **hoped** for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

- Charles Revson, founder of the famous Revlon cosmetics empire famously said that what he sold was 'hope'.

- In terms of how long an emotion lasts, hope is often long-lasting.

1Co 13:7 bears all things, believes all things, **hopes** all things, endures all things.

- Hope ... is also related to optimism, which can vary with the individual although we are all generally more optimistic than pessimistic.

Luk 6:35 “But love your enemies, do good, and lend, **hoping** for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful

and evil.

Hope Compared To Fear

- Fear is a form of negative hope.

[Luk 24:21](#) “But we were **hoping** that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

- Both are forms of anticipation as we forecast the future and experience emotions in line with our predictions.

[Job 11:18](#)

And you would be secure, because there is **hope**;

Yes, you would dig *around you, and* take your rest in safety.

Hope on the sliding scale

- Hope is not a single thing.

[Job 14:7](#)

“For there is **hope** for a tree,
If it is cut down, that it will sprout again,
And that its tender shoots will not cease.

- **Hope ... is more of a sliding scale that ranges across a scale from virtual certainty to utter desperation.**
- **It can range within a single conversation across this whole spectrum.**

<u>Psa 33:17</u>	A horse <i>is</i> a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver <i>any</i> by its great strength.
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- **You can raise a person's hope, dash it on the rocks of uncertainty, raise it out of the waters and toss it around until the other person will**

grasp at whatever straw you throw at them.

<u>Job 14:19</u>	As water wears away stones, <i>And as</i> torrents wash away the soil of the earth; So You destroy the hope of man.
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The hope curve

- **The actual hope that people feel does not necessarily match the real probability of success.**

<u>Job 19:10</u>	He breaks me down on every side, And I am gone;
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My **hope** He has
uprooted like a tree.

- Typically we feel optimistic or pessimistic at the extremes.

[Psa 31:24](#) Be of good courage,
And He shall strengthen
your heart,
All you who **hope** in the
LORD.

- At zero probability, we are realistically pessimistic, and we stay this way until there is sufficient probability to break out of the fear of loss.

[Psa 38:15](#) For in You, O LORD, I
hope;

You will hear, O Lord my God.

- As the event becomes more likely, we become disproportionately optimistic.

[Psa 39:7](#) “And now, Lord, what do I wait for?
My **hope** is in You.

Types of hope

- There are (at least) three types of hope:

Desperation – Weakness

[Psa 42:5](#) Why are you cast down, O my soul?

And *why* are you
disquieted within me?
Hope in God, for I shall
yet praise Him
For the help of His
countenance.

- **Desperate hope is when a deep need is felt.**

[Psa 62:10](#) Do not trust in oppression,
Nor vainly **hope** in
robbery;
If riches increase,
Do not set *your* heart *on*
them.

- **Someone who is desperate will do almost anything to satisfy the hope (with 'almost anything' being in proportion to the level of desperation).**

Optimism – Strength

<u>Psa 71:5</u>	For You are my hope, O Lord GOD; <i>You are my trust from my youth.</i>
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- **Whereas desperate hope often has a negative connotation, optimistic hope is often positive.**

<u>Psa 71:14</u>	But I will hope continually, And will praise You yet
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more and more.

- **Naturally ... in both cases, the probability of achieving the hoped-for thing can be very variable, often sitting at a very low probability of occurring.**

[Psa 119:114](#) You *are* my hiding place and my shield; I **hope** in Your word.

[Psa 119:116](#) Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live; And do not let me be ashamed of my **hope**.

Realistic hope –Percentages

- **Realistic hope is based on a fair estimation of probabilities.**

Psa 119:147 I rise before the
dawning of the
morning,
And cry for help;
I **hope** in Your word.

- **Thus, if something is over (say) 50% likely, then I might realistically hope that it will happen.**

Psa 130:5 I wait for the LORD, my
soul waits,
And in His word I do
hope.

Hope is a journey

Pro 10:28 The **hope** of the righteous *will be* gladness,
But the expectation of the wicked will perish.

- Robert Louis Stevenson said 'It is better to travel hopefully than arrive', indicating how hope can be pleasant in itself.”

Pro 13:12 **Hope** deferred makes the heart sick,
But *when* the desire comes, *it is* a tree of life.

- **In particular, hope is often tinged with the fear both that you will not get what you want, and also that even when you achieve your goal, it will not be as perfect as your fantasized eventualities.**

Pro 26:12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.

- **As a result, many people are happy just to hope.**

Jer 17:7 “Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD,
And whose hope is the LORD.

- Yet ... all you need to do is offer them this, as all gambling dens and casinos do - to their hapless customers. Many will merrily gamble away until their money is all gone, then return time and again just to experience that temporary thrill of hope.

[Lam 3:18](#) And I said, “My strength and my hope Have perished from the LORD.”

[Lam 3:21](#) This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope.

[Lam 3:24](#) “The LORD *is* my portion,” says my soul,

	“Therefore I hope in Him!”
<u>Lam 3:26</u>	<i>It is good that one should hope and wait quietly For the salvation of the LORD.</i>
<u>Lam 3:29</u>	Let him put his mouth in the dust— There may yet be hope .

So what? This Christmas ...

- As Christians ... use hope in persuasion ... through the ... relationship between perception and reality.

[Rom 8:24](#) For we were saved in this

hope, but **hope** that is seen is not **hope**; for why does one still **hope** for what he sees?

[Rom 8:25](#)

But if we **hope** for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance.

- **Build optimism by showing how real the chances of success are in God.**

[Zec 9:12](#)

Return to the stronghold,
You prisoners of **hope**.
Even today I declare
That I will restore double

to you.

- **Move people away from things by highlighting the chances of failure ... to believe God.**

Rom 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in **hope** of the glory of God.

Rom 5:3 And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

Rom 5:4 and perseverance,
character; and character,
hope.

Rom 5:5 Now hope does not
disappoint, because the
love of God has been
poured out in our hearts
by the Holy Spirit who was
given to us.



Let's Pray For More Hope This Christmas of 2015!

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Resources:

<http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/hope.htm>

<http://www.blbclassic.org/search/translationResults.cfm?Criteria=hoped&t=KJV&sf=5>