



People Spot Missile: Understanding Hope

For many years I didn't comprehend how important was the concept and understanding of hope. Though my comprehension was limited, I did know that if you wanted to destroy someone, take their hope away. That should have given me a clue. Sometimes I can be dense. However, we have to be careful what we put our hope in. People will fail us, churches will fail us, systems will fail us, technology will fail us, education will fail us, and government will fail us. There is only one place where we can place our hope that will never fail. That is in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Naomi understood this lesson as she talked with her daughters-in-laws.

*Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still **hope** for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—[Ruth 1:11-13](#)*
Even though she felt she was without hope, God blessed and she found hope in God through the relationship of Boaz and Ruth and their son

Life has many troubling moments. People we thought were friends disappoint. Family members don't treat us as we think they ought. Financial troubles often beyond our control create problems. Even Christian brothers and sisters can be less than kind on occasion. The Psalmist shares *Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my **hope** is in you all day long.* [Psalm 25:4-6](#)

What does God want from us? It isn't too complicated. Our God wants us to put our hope in Him. It sounds easy but can be difficult when the storms of life are crashing all around and all we can see is the wind and the waves.. The Psalmist adds *the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their **hope** in his unfailing love.* [Psalm 147:10-12](#)

What a challenge. As believers we are to be patient in affliction. I heard one devout Christian who I respected greatly make this comment, "I will never pray for patience again." I smiled and understood. Frankly, it has seemed to me that there is little spiritual growth in the good times. It is in the midst of affliction that our faith grows and is enriched which is why we must be patient in the tough times. Paul also suggests that a faithful prayer life will help us through those difficult moments. *Be joyful in **hope**, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.* [Romans 12:11-13](#)

I have been traveling the American Church for over 35 years. I am amazed that there is so little joy among so many churches. We sit around and are sad and wonder why people don't come to

be sad with us. What is the problem? We haven't put our hope in that which will not fail. As Christians our hope is to be in the resurrected Lord. Have you ever heard someone say, "I deserve to be happy!" I have come to understand they will never come to know their desired end. Happiness or joy is not something to be sought. It is like the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Joy is always three steps beyond where you are at the present time. Joy comes because we place our hope in the God who will never fail. *May the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.* [Romans 15:12-14](#)

My great grandfather, S. J. Montgomery, was a minister in the Churches of God from 1883 until his death in 1918. He was serving a four church charge. The two larger churches dismissed him. He continued on with the two smaller ones and continued to praise the Lord in spite of that adversity. He concluded the letter by quoting the following: *but those who **hope** in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

[Isaiah 40:30-31](#)

The key to hope as an individual or a church is what we place our hope in... Joshua proclaimed, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Where have you placed your hope?

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