

EVERYDAY

hope

Holding Fast to
His Promise

KATIE ORR



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Introduction

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born
again to a living hope.*

—1 PETER 1:3

I'M PARTICULARLY DRAWN to instructions. I long for someone to tell me what to do when in order to achieve my desired outcome. Whether it be how to put a savory, yet nutritious meal on the table in less than an hour cooking time, or the best way to maximize my time as a work-at-home mom, I'm especially drawn to the how-to's in the areas I feel weak.

I think many people are this way, and our spiritual life is no different. It only takes a quick stroll down the self-help book aisle to see what we all crave: something more than what we have now. It's easy to feel depleted and defeated emotionally, relationally, and spiritually.

As a Christian, the pressure's on to be a beacon of light to the lost world around me, yet sometimes I can't seem to shake the feeling I should be doing or experiencing something I'm not. Scripture tells us that Christ came to earth to provide a living hope (1 Peter 1:3). It's one thing to read these words on a paper and say, "Amen." However, it's quite another to experience this living hope in our everyday lives.

Maybe you feel this dissonance as well?

You and I are on a voyage. A journey toward this living hope and abundant life our Creator and Savior has promised. However, our



INTRODUCTION

travels can feel more like we're aimlessly tossing in a storming sea of hopelessness. If you hold this study in your hands, I assume it is because, on some level, you desire to find a way to hope better for the trip ahead. You may find yourself today looking for a way out of the chaos, for the ladder that will lead to the lifeboat that promises rescue from the storm. Or, maybe you've given up altogether, and all you have left is a weak cry for help from the bottom of the boat.

You may have heard from others: "Keep your chin up. Don't lose hope!" It's easy to hope as a verb—something we need to do. An action we need to take. Though there are actions we can and should take when our soul is in despair, trying to conjure up the strength to be hopeful is not helpful.

It's impossible.

Hope is a noun, not a verb. It is not something we do to escape the storm. Hope is what we hold fast to, as we endure each wave.

Hope is a treasured possession, not an action.

Hope is a guiding light, not a ladder to climb.

Hope is a steadfast anchor, not a search for more.

Hope is a harbor of promise, not a way of escape.

Our hope is the gospel of Christ. The good news of Jesus is not a one-time experience; it's a moment-by-moment need. This study of hope is a study of this good news—our salvation by grace through faith—and the



INTRODUCTION

implications it brings into our everyday lives. I'm so glad you're on this journey with me.

—Katie

God, we are desperate to experience the hope of Christ in our everyday. We look forward in anticipation to all You have planned for us through Your Word. Open our eyes to see the truths the Bible holds about our gospel-hope. Soften our hearts to receive them. Enable our souls and minds to follow You in obedience as we respond to all You will speak to us.





PREPARING TO **FOCUS**

Hope Is My Treasure





Hope Is My Treasure

PREPARING TO FOCUS

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

—MATTHEW 13:44

IN THE MOVIE *Divergent*, Beatrice Prior learns to control her fears in order to control her environment. Beatrice (Tris for short) must undergo a clinical test of hallucinations—the results of which hold significant implications. Tris defeats her greatest terrors by telling herself what is true. Though everything in her screams, “Panic!” she successfully faces her fears through the hallucinations: a flock of attacking birds and then a near-drowning experience. She is able to escape her most dreaded situations by remembering her reality. These crows are not real. The water is not real. Instead of giving into fear—and losing hope—she overcame frightening and debilitating situations with truth.

“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32).

Though I’ve already been set free from sin, through the atoning death and powerful Resurrection of Christ, I’ve spent many moments living in bondage to hopelessness. For far too long, I wandered this earth as a “Christ follower” without really knowing the hope I had in the One I claimed to follow. I knew all the facts of the gospel—the good news about Jesus—and the implications of it for my eternal destiny, yet I wasn’t experiencing the hope of Jesus’ work on the Cross for my here and now.

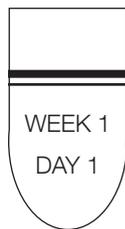


This study of hope is essentially a study of the gospel. And until we come to see Christ and all He's done for us as our greatest treasure, we will experience hopelessness. The first step to experiencing hope in our everyday is to know for a fact you are saved from your sin. If you do, you have a hope that nothing—and no one—on this earth can take away.

The gospel of Christ is our hope. Hope is the gospel of Christ.

1. Take a moment to begin your study in prayer. Use the space below to journal a prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to the reality about hope. Commit these next four weeks of study to God. Ask Him for the grace and strength to hold fast to the truth about your hope in Christ.

Before we move into our inductive (verse-by-verse) study of our three passages on hope, we need to get a better picture of what hope is, so we can cling to that hope. To start our journey toward a better understanding of hope, let's read a few verses while asking the question, "What is true about hope?"



2. Start first with Ephesians 2:12. What do you learn about hope from this verse?

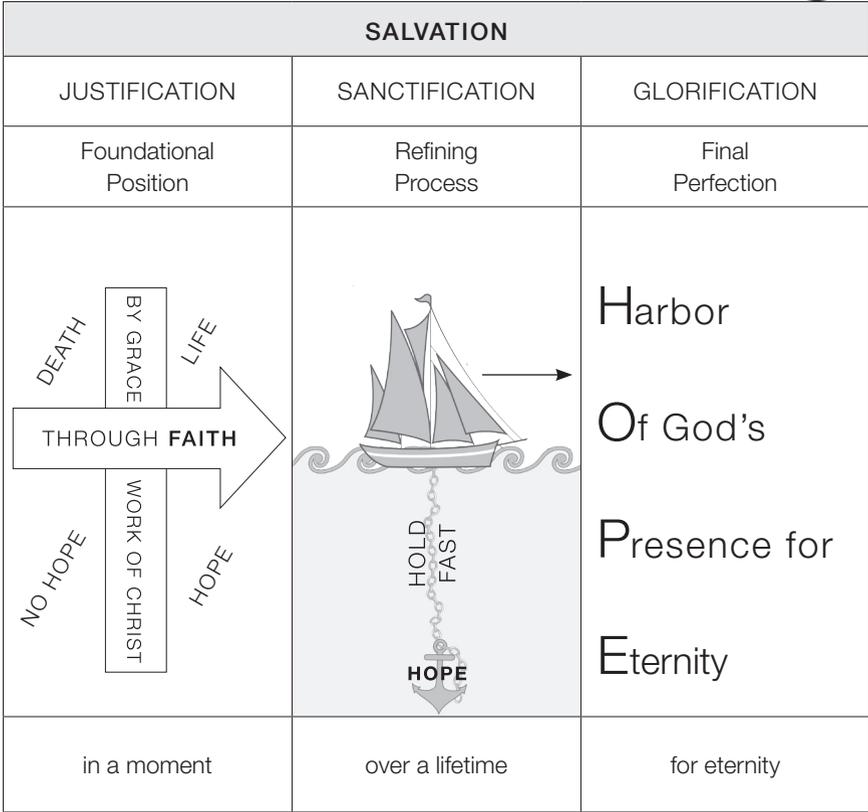
3. Next, look up 1 Peter 1:3 and list below what it teaches about our hope.

4. Move on to Romans 15:4 and make your notes about hope.

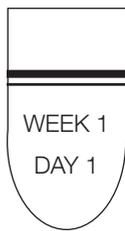


5. Lastly, let's dive into Colossians 1:3–5, from another Letter of Paul to a group of believers. Look for our word *hope* as you read, and then note what you learn about hope to add to our growing list.

Salvation is often thought of as a one-time action. Certainly, we each come to a point—a beginning place—where we make the choice to place our faith in Christ as our only hope for a relationship with God. It's then we become “saved.” However, this specific step we take to enter into God's work of salvation is only one piece of a much larger puzzle. Our salvation does not start and finish with a prayer of surrender. In fact, God has been working to save us before this earth was even created (Titus 1:2). This initial moment, where we recognize our need for Jesus and by faith accept the great and glorious grace God gives us, is only the beginning of our journey toward experiencing God's full and complete plan that He set into motion long ago.



The Bible portrays three distinct parts of our salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification, as depicted above in our diagram. These three fancy words are crucial to our understanding of gospel hope. Justification occurs when we come to a saving faith in Jesus and is a legal act in which God declares sinners righteous on the basis of Christ's righteousness. This "legal act" gives us a new place to stand before God, a platform of mercy and acceptance from which we can never be moved, and it is from this position of forgiveness and grace we walk forward in newness of life (Romans 6:4). Though sufficient in itself to bring us into relationship with our holy God, justification is simply the beginning of

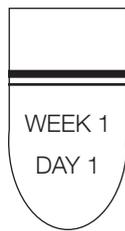


our salvation. From this moment of salvation, we enter the road of sanctification—the continual refining process of becoming more and more like Jesus. This sanctifying journey was initiated, is sustained, and will one day be completed by God (Philippians 1:6), yet our spiritual growth is either hindered or accelerated by our everyday actions. This sanctification process, in part, is why we are given so many commands throughout Scripture. As we abide in Christ (John 15:4), keep in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:16–25), cling to the Word of God (Joshua 1:8), and become doers of all we learn (James 1:22), we are slowly transformed into the image of our Savior (Romans 8:29). Until one day we reach our final destination in heaven where our salvation will be complete and glorification will occur—our final perfection into the image of Jesus.

If you are in Christ, you have received hope (justification), you are receiving hope (sanctification), and you will receive hope (glorification), and we see all three in the verses we looked up today. I had no hope (Ephesians 2:12); I was given hope when God brought me from spiritual death to a new life (1 Peter 1:3); I can experience hope now through God's Word (Romans 15:4); and I have the ultimate hope of eternal life with God who awaits me in heaven (Colossians 1:5).

As we continue to learn and internalize all that is true about the gospel, and its implications on our everyday moments, we can experience the hope Jesus came to this earth to give. We can better hold fast to hope when we know better what it is we are clinging to.

God, I praise You for the hope You have given me through new life with Christ. I am so thankful for the justification I've experienced through the work of Christ on my behalf. Give me the grace to cling to You as I walk the everyday journey of



*sanctification, as You make me more and more like
Christ. I look forward to the hope I have waiting for me—
Your eternal and glorious presence.*

❖ BONUS STUDY ❖

Spend some time writing one or all of the verses we studied today. As you write, ask God to penetrate your heart with the truths on the page. Consider writing them out on 3x5 cards and posting them around your house as a reminder of the hope you possess.

CHEAT SHEET

2. Start first with Ephesians 2:12. What do you learn about hope from this verse?

Before Christ, I had no hope; I was without God, separated from Christ, alienated from the family of God, strangers to God's covenant of promise.

3. Next look up 1 Peter 1:3 and list what it teaches about our hope.

- My hope is living.
- God caused me to be born again to this living hope.
- This hope was given to me through the Resurrection of Jesus.

4. Move on to Romans 15:4 and make your notes about hope.

- I can have hope.
- This hope is through endurance.
- This hope is through the encouragement of Scripture.

5. Lastly, let's dive into Colossians 1:3–5, from another Letter of Paul to a group of believers. Look for our word *hope* as you read, then note what you learn about hope to add to our growing list.

- Hope is laid up for me in heaven.

Hope Is My Treasure Because It's a Gift

PREPARING TO FOCUS

“This woman knows she’s a sinner,” Jesus told them. “She knows she’ll never be good enough. She knows she needs me to rescue her. That’s why she loves me so much. You look down on this woman because you don’t look up to God. She is sinful on the outside—but you are sinful on the inside.”

—*THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE*

MOST WOULD SAY I was a pretty good kid. I achieved stellar grades and tried really hard to follow all the rules of society. I’m your typical firstborn type-A who desires a certain amount of respectability, so the fear of what my teachers, parents, and peers thought of me kept me out of quite a bit of trouble. I wanted people to look up to me and I think some did.

For a long time, I lived the “good” Christian life. I did the do’s and I didn’t do the don’ts. And because I jumped through those hoops, I figured I was a pretty good person. The reality is this: I was a pretty sheltered person. I’m thankful for the protection of my parent’s choices and the guidance of my private school upbringing. They were God’s provision of grace. However, if I had different parents, grown up in a different environment, even dated different (less-respectable) guys, I’m certain my sin nature would have had more opportunity to make a public appearance.



Truth is, my sin was incredibly evident (selfishness, disrespect, self-righteousness, and much more) but because they weren't the sins others considered "really bad," I thought I was OK. I viewed my life as a family room wall painted a pretty and pleasing shade of white, with a few dirty finger smudges of sin here and there. A few sassy words to my parents, a bit of gossip and envy, and a few moments of anger. Nothing a soapy rag, or a small touch-up of paint couldn't fix. This understanding of sin is far removed from the true depths of my disobedience and the unreachable heights of God's holiness.

God's hand of grace is not merely a hand that delivers. It's a hand that restrains. Some of you have a prodigal salvation story of complete and radical deliverance from sinful patterns; He's rescued you from drug abuse, sexual addictions, and a complete sprint away from anything associated with God. Though I've not walked down those specific sin paths, my soul is just as deeply stained by anger and coveting as the hearts of the addict and convict. The reality is, I'm not the pretty white wall I once thought I was. Before Christ, I lived in a crumbling structure I was attempting to hold up with loads of paint and pretty wallpaper. Underneath it all was a decaying, infested, crumbling soul in desperate need of a new blueprint.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

—MATTHEW 23:27

1. Spend some time thinking about your life before Christ. If you became a Christian as a young child, imagine how your journey would be different without the hope of Christ in your life. Journal a prayer of praise for the gift of

hope through justification (the fact that you stand righteous in the eyes of God today).

2. Read Titus 3:4–7 and fill out the chart below with the actions and character of God you see in this passage.

THE ACTIONS OF GOD	THE CHARACTER OF GOD

3. Take another look at Ephesians 2:12, which we looked at yesterday, and fill in the chart below with the truths about us before God intervened in our life.

TRUTHS ABOUT ME BEFORE CHRIST



The Bible has even more to say about the condition of our hearts without the grace and mercy of God. We are wretched, wicked sinners, you and I (Romans 3:23), and it's all too easy to get caught up in believing that behavior modification will affect our eternal destiny. There is no amount of whitewashing that can take away our stains. Our sin runs deep. And though we may try to cover it up with good deeds, our hearts are wicked. And wicked hearts cannot be in the presence of God.

But God, in His great mercy, sent Jesus to make the payment my sin debt owed. He took on my dilapidated, decaying mess and gave me . . . hope. He appeared. He saved. He poured out richly. He justified. He made. The gospel is a work of God. My only part is faith, of drawing near to Him, my only hope.

God, I praise You for saving me! You are good. You are full of love. You are my Savior. Your mercy and grace toward me is a great, great gift. Thank you for pouring out Your Holy Spirit on me. Help me to walk in the newness of life You have provided for me. Help me hold fast to this hope.

❖ BONUS STUDY ❖

If you are familiar with the FOCUSed15 method, or would like to try it out a bit early, continue to FOCUS on Titus 3:4–7. We've already done some "observation" work on it. Feel free to refer back to the study method section.

FOUNDATION—Write out the verse.

OBSERVATION—In addition to the observation work you've already done, make a list of all this passage teaches about hope.

CLARIFICATION—Select a word or two to look up and find the original Greek meaning.

- Decide which English word to study.
- Discover the Greek word in an interlinear Bible.
- Define that Greek word using a Greek lexicon.

UTILIZATION—Follow any cross-references available.

SUMMATION—Journal through the following questions.

- Identify: What do you think the main idea of this passage is, in regard to hope? Consult a commentary to confirm your conclusion.
 - Modify: How do your beliefs line up with the truths you've learned today?
 - Glorify: How can you adjust your attitudes and actions to best glorify God with the truths of this passage?
- 
- 

CHEAT SHEET

2. Read Titus 3:4–7 and fill out the chart below with the actions and character of God you see in this passage.

THE ACTIONS OF GOD	THE CHARACTER OF GOD
Appeared	Goodness
Saved me by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit	Loving kindness
Poured out the Holy Spirit on me richly through Jesus Christ	Our Savior
Justified me	Mercy
Made me an heir of hope of eternal life	Grace

3. Take another look at Ephesians 2:12, which we looked at yesterday, and fill in the chart below with the truths about us before God intervened in our life.

TRUTHS ABOUT ME BEFORE CHRIST
Separated
Alienated
Strangers
Having no hope
Without God

Hope Is My Treasure Because It Changes Me

PREPARING TO FOCUS

IT WAS NEW Year's Eve 2004, and a wave of nausea hit me like a ton of bricks. Technically, it was already January 1, 2005, as it was 2 a.m., and I couldn't keep my eyes open any longer. As a staff member working with Campus Crusade for Christ, late night discussions with college students were typical. However, this particular night left me physically exhausted. The nausea lingered throughout the next day, and I spent the day waiting for (what I thought was) the inevitable wave of vomiting to ensue. But it never came . . . and the nausea stuck around for several months.

Yep, you guessed it, I was pregnant. My husband and I were thrilled by the news, and so began our journey as parents. Pregnancy typically brings about a great excitement for the future, especially for first-time parents. Almost immediately, Chris and I began to imagine life with our little one. Life had forever changed. From the moment of seeing that positive pregnancy test, we lived life expectant.

In Day 1, you and I chatted about the process of our salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification. Through a saving faith in Christ Jesus, we each had a moment when everything changed in the spiritual realm. Once lost, we were found. Though we were orphans, marked by disobedience and sin, we were chosen and adopted by God. A bunch of guilty sinners, now reconciled (brought back) and justified (made right).

Yet there is something about this that doesn't quite fit in my day-to-day experience. Instead of feeling found and forgiven, there are many



moments when I feel lost, lonely, and extremely guilty because of my poor choices. I have been delivered from the penalty of sin . . . yet sinful patterns remain. I am righteous before God . . . yet my actions often demonstrate a different reality. There is a big difference between my position before God, and the current reality that faces me in the mirror. Just like when I was pregnant with my firstborn. I was a mother . . . but not yet. I had my little boy with me . . . but not yet. And once it began, the waiting, yearning, ache to be a mother forever changed me.

And so it is with our salvation. We already have right standing with God and though we know all that will be true of us when we see Jesus face-to-face, there is much to yearn for now. Though I know that God sees me through the righteousness of Christ, and that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1), this soul is still incredibly stained. I am righteous . . . but not yet. And the longer I walk with Christ, the more I understand the depths of my sin. I hate my sin and I ache to be rid of it.

Holy. Complete. Forever.

These expectant days we live in are the age of sanctification—the process of becoming more and more like Jesus. And though the sinful flesh inside of me has been dealt a mortal wound by the power of Christ’s death and Resurrection, it is not going down without a fight. It is dead . . . but not yet.

1. As we begin our study today, ask the Spirit of God to open your eyes to the truths in verses you will study today. Ask Him to give you a greater longing for His presence, and a greater disgust for your sin. Declare your need for His strength and power to overcome the sin that thrashes around within you.



2. Let's take a deeper look at Romans 15:4 from Day 1. Read it again, then write it out below. You might also try to outline or diagram the sentence, or even draw a picture to depict the verse. Do whatever helps you slow down and enjoy every word.

3. According to Romans 15:4, how are we able to experience hope?

4. Let's take a deeper look at how we can experience hope through endurance. Read Hebrews 12:1–2 in your Bible, and look for the commands in this verse. What are we told to do?



5. Romans 15:4 also states God's Word was written for our encouragement. I find Philippians 1:6 to be one of the most encouraging verses in the Bible. Read Philippians 1:6, then write it or draw it out below.

Here we see all three "stages" of our salvation. Paul, the writer of Philippians is stating that: (1) Jesus began a good work in us (justification). (2) He will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (glorification). (3) Just like Paul, we are to be "sure of this" (sanctification). Throughout the process of our sanctification, we are to hold fast to the hope that Christ has already done much for us and there is much more to come.

I am already saved by God—righteous before Him because of Jesus' death on the Cross—but I am not yet without sin. I already have hope, but my hope is not completely fulfilled.

Living in the "already . . . but not yet" days can be discouraging. I am a spotless saint, in God's view, because of what Christ has done for me on the Cross. But at present, until heaven, I am a stupendous sinner. Still, the process of sanctification gives me hope—a great and growing confidence in the One who will bring complete healing, full redemption, and His unhindered presence.

I am already saved . . . but not yet.

God, I praise You for Your Holy Scripture, which I can cling to in this great waiting room of life. Jesus, thank You for being my righteousness. Holy Spirit, bring comfort when my soul is weary. Father, be my strength when I am weak. Help me to



*endure well as I wait for the fullness of Your presence
to be revealed.*

❖ BONUS STUDY ❖

Continue to FOCUS on any (or all) of the verses we looked at today. Follow the prompting of the Spirit as He leads and speaks through God's Word.

CHEAT SHEET

3. According to Romans 15:4, how are we able to experience hope?

- Through endurance
- Through the instruction and encouragement of Scripture

4. Let's take a deeper look at how we can experience hope through endurance. Read Hebrews 12:1–2 in your Bible, and look for the commands in this verse. What are we told to do?

- Lay aside any weight that hinders me.
- Lay aside my closely clinging sin.
- Run with endurance.
- Look to Jesus.

Hope Is My Treasure Because It Comes with a Promise

PREPARING TO FOCUS

For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

—ROMANS 8:24-25

I'VE HAD SOME pretty amazing roommates. I went to Auburn University, and each of my four years there can be defined by where I lived. Boyd Hall. Thomaston Park. The Quad. Northpointe. Each name brings back memories of friendships, football, and a newfound faith.

Through my childhood, I gathered a lot of information about God. At first, in private Catholic schools, then later in Protestant Christian schools, Bible was a subject . . . and I had straight A's. Later, as an awkward yet outgoing middle school girl, I began to go to church on my own, and the journey of my faith in God began. I vividly remember the moment I first cried out to God for salvation. I knew all the right answers. I could tell you about the gospel—about the hope you can find in Jesus—but I hadn't really experienced it for myself. Until that late afternoon on my hunter green and burgundy paisley comforter, where I first recognized my true need for Jesus. I wasn't listening to a sermon, or reading my Bible. It was just a normal day. I was piddling around in my room doing a whole lot of nothing, and God showed up. The Holy Spirit convicted me



then and there and in an instant the blinders surrounding my heart were lifted and I could finally see my desperate need for Jesus.

My journey from there was a slow crawl, as I fumbled through my teen years trying to figure out what God wanted from me. So, I did the “do’s” and I tried my best to stay away from the “don’ts.” Fast-forward to the Boyd Hall era, my freshman year at Auburn, when I began to learn the “how’s” and the “why’s” of my faith in God, and I met girls who talked about Jesus like He was a real person—someone they knew intimately and loved dearly. It was then I knew I was missing out, and God began to lovingly show me that Christianity was not a list to be followed, but a relationship to be pursued. Having faith in God was not something to be achieved, but was a presence to draw near to.

On to my Northpointe days, my senior year. It was 2000; a new century had begun, and a season of intense and deep spiritual growth was coming to a close. My roommate Jill and I sat chatting in her bedroom. I can’t quite recall what we were chatting about, but I do remember one thing: a dear friend (the one who had already walked through cancer at the age of 20) stating, “I can’t wait for heaven!” The look on my face probably betrayed me, but I tried to act as if I shared her longing for all that is to come. But I didn’t. Heaven was (and still is) hard for me to imagine. Earth, along with the people and things I loved on it, were (and still are) something I was not ready to let go of. I hoped for much: a successful career, a loving husband, a beautiful family, and a life spent enjoying all this world had to offer. But I didn’t really hope for heaven.

As I sit here today, 15 years later, I still don’t hope for heaven as I should. My soul is too easily satisfied with the temporary and trivial. Yet looking back, I can see the journey God has provided for me to walk. I have the career, the man, and the kids I wanted, but also a perspective to go with it all. I’ve learned they are gifts, wonderful and precious to

me, but they cannot be my hope. They were never meant to be my hope. Because even the most faithful, godly man can disappoint; the most beautiful children can be ugly; the most successful career can dishearten.

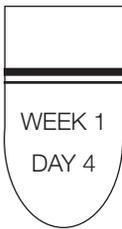
“If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied” (1 Corinthians 15:19).

1. Ask God to reveal the place where you are holding on to something other than Him and the hope He gives through Christ. Journal through these places, and call out to the Holy Spirit for the grace and strength to move your grip from the temporary to the eternal.

2. Read Colossians 1:3–5 and write it out below.

Paul refers here to the gospel, and the hope laid up for us in heaven. Part of my disconnect with not longing for heaven was not understanding all that awaits me there. I am still on the journey toward better knowing all that heaven holds. Maybe you are, too?

Today we’ll try out a new part of our FOCUS method, “utilization.” For our utilization work, we can use cross-references, Bible dictionaries, or Bible concordances to see how certain words or phrases are used in other places in the Bible. I’ve listed several cross-references for you to look up, regarding what is laid up in heaven for those who know Jesus.



3. Read each verse and fill out the chart below with what the Bible has to say about what we can hope for in heaven. (This is not meant to be a comprehensive study of heaven. These are only the highlights!)

REFERENCE	WHAT I CAN HOPE FOR
Romans 6:23	
Romans 8:23	
1 John 3:2	
Revelation 21:3-4	

Hope is indeed a great and glorious treasure. Because of Christ, there is oh-so-much to look forward to in heaven! We have a great inheritance to look forward to. We will have eternal life in perfect bodies. There will be no sadness, pain, or sickness. And because we will have the righteousness of Christ, and in every way be like Him, we will be able to be in the presence of our Holy Heavenly Father, whom we will dwell with forever and ever.

“And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:5).

God, show me where my heart is holding on to the promises of this world. Holy Spirit, enable me to let go of my grip on that which can never fulfill. Hold me by Your grace, as I hold on to the hope of all You have waiting for me. Open my eyes to the truths in Your Word about the hope You've given me through Christ.

❖ BONUS STUDY ❖

Look up these additional verses on all we have to look forward to in heaven.

REFERENCE	WHAT I CAN HOPE FOR
1 Peter 1:4	
Galatians 5:5	
2 Timothy 4:8	

CHEAT SHEET

3. Read each verse and fill out the chart below with what the Bible has to say about what we can hope for in heaven.

REFERENCE	WHAT I CAN HOPE FOR
Romans 6:23	Eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord
Romans 8:23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted into the family of God • The redemption of my body
1 John 3:2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will be like Christ • I will see Christ as He is
Revelation 21:3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God will dwell with me • I will be His people • God Himself will be with me as my God • He will wipe away every tear from my eyes • No death • No mourning • No crying • No pain • Former things have passed away

BONUS STUDY CHEAT SHEET

Look up these additional verses on all we have to look forward to in heaven.

REFERENCE	WHAT I CAN HOPE FOR
1 Peter 1:4	An inheritance that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imperishable • undefiled • Unfading • Kept in heaven for me
Galatians 5:5	The hope of righteousness
2 Timothy 4:8	The crown of righteousness for those who have loved God's appearing



Hope Is My Treasure

PREPARING TO FOCUS

I'M NOT MUCH of an actress, but much to my surprise, I landed a fairly big role in a musical put on by my high school. I assure you, the pickin's were slim. We had several performances, but to this day, one night stands out more than the others, and it isn't because of my stellar performance. During one of my dialogues, I stated a line that was out of place. I didn't even catch it or realize it until the very end of the play when my friend Amy walked up to me, and she didn't look happy.

You see, my misplaced line cued the rest of the cast to skip over several scenes, one of which included her big solo. It also happened to be the one performance the majority of her family had paid to come and see. Amy was sad, disappointed, and I'm sure angry, though I could tell she was trying her best to be gracious. I felt horrible. Yet—in true teenage form—I was too prideful to take full responsibility. I muttered a pathetic apology and attempted to shift blame to the rest of the cast who could have ignored my mistake and kept us on track, but I'm sure she saw right through my counterfeit sorrow.

That is one night I wish I could declare a do over. If I could go back, I would be more careful to speak the correct lines, and I would most certainly be more apologetic and sympathetic to my friend's frustration with me. My life contains numerous days and nights where I wish I could declare a do over. Unfortunately, many of those days hold more significant consequences and guilt than a simple slip of lines. They are filled with choices more hurtful and actions more reprehensible.

Though I can't go back and change the course of that theatric evening, God has given me the ultimate do over. Through Christ, I am given new birth that brought forth a completely new identity and a new ability to choose right. Because God knew that a simple do over wouldn't work. Had I been given another chance to do things right, I would choose pride and selfishness all over again. As I do every day. A new chance to do the right thing is not the answer I need.

Only a right person can make right choices, which is why the gospel is so glorious. It is only through Christ's righteousness, imparted to me through spiritual rebirth, do I now have the ability to choose well. Before Christ, I had no hope but to sin. Now, through faith in the redeeming work of Jesus, I possess a treasure—a hope—greater than anything this world can attempt to promise.

Today, let's take some time to slow down and digest what we've been learning by going through our application steps. Remember, this is when we begin to answer the question, "How should what I've learned affect me?" To do this we will do three things:

1. **IDENTIFY:** Find the main idea of each passage.
2. **MODIFY:** Evaluate my beliefs in light of the main idea.
3. **GLORIFY:** Align my life to reflect the truth of God's Word.

Take a deep breath in and ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart today as you reflect on all you've learned this week. If your soul is anything like mine today, it is tired and in desperate need for a fresh wind of His movement and power.



STEP 1: IDENTIFY

1. Today, begin to process all you've learned by journaling through it. To start, fill out the chart below with the three stages of our salvation. Next, flip back to each day's study to review what you've learned, then add those truths to the appropriate section.

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3

STEP 2: MODIFY

2. How does my view of salvation line up with what I've learned this week?

3. Am I experiencing the treasure of living hope I was reborn to? If not, what is keeping me from truly knowing the hope of the gospel in my life?



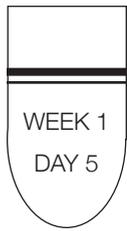
4. How is my understanding of the true depths of my disobedience and the heights of God’s holiness?

5. How does knowing that I live in the “already . . . but not yet” days help me understand my journey of experiencing hope?

STEP 3: GLORIFY

6. What adjustments can I make to glorify God in my attitudes and actions today?

I am not commanded to have hope as though it was an item on my to-do list. Instead, I am to “hold fast” to the hope God has already provided (Hebrews 6:18). In order to obey this command to “hold fast,” I must regularly take a good, hearty look at the hope I have in Christ. It is from this point of view, standing on the foundation of God’s grace and with a firm belief that I am justified before Him, that I can hold fast to my treasured hope.



The gospel is my everything. My only hope.

God, help me to continually cling to Your grace. Through Christ alone I have a living, heavenly hope. For that I am eternally grateful.