

I have HOPE!



When you think about your future are you hopeful? Or do you struggle with a sense of dread when you think about up-coming days? Is there a huge ball that hits you in the pit of your stomach when you think about the months to come?

Psalms 33:22 tells us :

"May you unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD eve as we put our hope in you."

People that have seen God's faithfulness in the past tend to be hopeful about their future. It is amazing to me how the Lord will take a message and keep bringing to the forefront of your mind by different speakers.

Pastor Tim Gaddy has been speaking to us at New Life Church lately about the power of our words. Our words speak life and death. He also has told us that it is just as easy to speak words of faith as it is to speak words of fear. Usually when you hear messages like this- it is preparing you for upcoming days.

Then this past Sunday Larry Gimmich- the Assistant Pastor talked about the importance of having thick skins in situations. About being rooted and grounded in HIM. When you are secure in Jesus- you have hope- no matter what situations you awake to face.

People who have lost all hope view life from the perspective of dread. Dread, which closely related to fear, steals the ability to enjoy ordinary life and makes people anxious about the future. It keeps them from looking forward to the next day, the next week, the next month or the next decade. Their thoughts about the present are negative and their outlook on the future is filled with fear, pessimism, doubt and worry.

You know the type - the kind of person that when they walk in the room- the lights immediately dim and the sad dreary music begins pouring out of the walls.

Hope is the opposite of dread- and a close relative of faith. When we have hope, our outlook on

life and on the future is positive. We can hope because we trust in God's unfailing love, His power to provide for us, and HIS ABILITY to lead us in every situation.

This has been brought to my mind so much this past week due to situations that have come up with friends, with MKs, and with family members. Hope is what keeps us from worrying and allows us to leave our unanswered questions in God's hands, empowers us to remain at peace and enables us to believe the best about the days to come.

Have you ever met someone who was happy, optimistic, and full of strength and courage? You have met someone that has hope- and speaks those words of hope in their heart daily.

The enemy is the one that does not want us to have hope. He tells us things like:

- You will never get married.
- You are going to fail at that new project so why even try?
- They will never get healed.
- You might as well buy a larger size- you will never lose that weight.
- Your husband is going to lose his job.
- You will never get out of debt.
- Your husband thinks everyone else is prettier than you.
- You don't have any friends.

These words, these daggers come to our mind by self doubt, and by thoughts brought to our minds by the enemy. If you read each of these statements that I listed above you will see that all of them have a common strain- Self-pity!

The devil puts thoughts in our minds to make us feel sorry for ourselves and resent the people who have what we are convinced we will never have.

Self-pity is a destructive and negative emotion. It makes us blind to our blessings and steals our hopes from today and tomorrow. We get so focused on what we don't have- our eyes are closed to the new opportunities that the Lord is trying to bring into our lives.

I have had times of self-pity in my past. When John and I were first married I left my church, my job, my family, my friends, and my security nest to move to North Carolina. I remember that first horrible week when I sat in the house alone. John was working the second shift. I remember calling my former Pastor's wife, Anita Hale, and talking to her. She made the difference in that 11 year North Carolina journey. She told me that I had a choice. I could either embrace the life there- minister to those that God brought into my life, stand beside my husband and give myself fully to that area- or I could grow lonely, isolated, and start to die spiritually. I am sure she doesn't even remember that conversation but it was an eye opener for me. I then got a little plague from her the next week in the mail that simply read- "Bloom where you are planted." I am so glad that I did just that. ~ Or I hope I did!

I encourage you to be determined not to waste one more day of your life in self-pity. When you lose hope and begin to feel sorry for yourself stop that very minute and say, "I refuse to feel

sorry for myself, this is a season of my life and GOD and I are going to get through this together."

The enemy is determined for you to be consumed with hopelessness and will tell you all sorts of lies about yourself, your life, your spouse, your ministry, your calling. Remember that GOD has thoughts and plans for your good, to give you hope for your future- Jeremiah 29:11. If you get a hold of that hope and fight for it, and speak words of faith and not fear- you will see amazing things happen in your life.

I can say this because he has done this for me over and over. On Saturday I had to have this very talk with myself. I was homesick for North Carolina. I wanted nothing else but to my girlfriends at Panera, sit, chat, drink coffee and laugh and laugh. The Lord brought back that very conversation to me so vividly- but then challenged me to share this with you. I don't know where you are at- what battles you might be facing- but I do know this. **YOU DO HAVE HOPE. YOU ARE** going to make it- and **GOD IS** fighting for you!