

# FEARLESS: NEVER GIVE UP HOPE

JUNE 6, 2021

## WORSHIP

Let the Praises Ring,  
Here I Am to Worship,  
Blessed Assurance

## WELCOME

What are the seemingly  
impossible things that  
you are hoping for  
today?

## WORD

### 1 PETER 4:16

<sup>16</sup> but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

**(READ 1 PETER 4:1-19  
FOR FULL CONTEXT)**

Do you ever feel like quitting, throwing in the towel and giving up? Whether it be in a relationship, a prayer request, a decision to obey, your marriage, being a Christian, or even in life itself—God through His Word strengthens our heart to never give up hope. In the Bible God told us **His Name is “I AM”**, and with that we can trust that He is the God of the **I-M-POSSIBLE (Ephesians 3:20)**!

With all that’s been going on, have you ever asked the question “How can I suffer and still have hope?” What do you do when you’re put in a position to either compromise or stand for truth? How do you respond when your Christianity is tested and humiliated? Do you just remain silent, or do you speak the truth in love? If today, you find yourself not having to experience any of those mentioned, it can either be of two things: you have not declared your faith to others or you are living a life of compromise and shame. Today we continue our series on **Fearless**, and from **1 Peter 4** learn three principles how we can never give up hope amid suffering:

### 1. REFOCUS YOUR MIND ON JESUS (1 PETER 4:1-6)

Jesus himself suffered opposition (**1 Peter 4:1**). All kinds of humiliation were put on Him on the road to Calvary. This encourages us that because Jesus went through such anguish, He is able to understand and empathize when we go through suffering (**Hebrews 4:15**). But this also reminds us that since Christ has suffered, we who believe and follow Him are not exempt from suffering. We are to arm ourselves because the truth is that we are in a daily battle. The more we say “no” to sin the more we will suffer; however, the more we rely on God, we will sin less and less (**1 Peter 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3**). The more you and I surrender to Him, the greater our victory over sin. Believe it or not, suffering can make us more like Christ! In verse 3, do you see a list that describes your former life? The reality is, it’s much easier to live according to your former sinful nature and indulge in all those sins listed, but what’s hard is being a committed Christian. In **Joshua 2:8-21**, we read of the story of Rahab, a harlot from Jericho. Rahab hid the spies sent by Joshua, signifying how she has put her faith in the God of Israel. The spies promised Rahab that on the day they conquer Jericho, they will spare Rahab and her family, identifying her by a rope of scarlet hung from her window. In this passage, the Hebrew word used for rope is **tikvah**. What’s interesting is that in other verses **tikvah** translates as **hope** as in **Jeremiah 29:11**. Here we see that Biblical hope is something real enough that we can hold on to it. Just as the scarlet cord was Rahab’s hope, our relationship with God is like holding on to a strong rope. **Even when we can’t see what’s ahead, we know Who’s above!** The purpose of suffering is not to harm you, but to help you; it is not to punish you, but to purify you. It is not to tear you down, but to transform you; it’s not to break you up, but to lead you to a breakthrough; it’s not to crush you, but to make you Christ-like. Hope is not based on circumstances, it is based on a person, Jesus Christ! Biblical hope is confidently looking toward God for our future, trusting him in our present and relying on His faithfulness in our past. The apostle Peter reminds us that our suffering here on earth is but **a brief moment** and is nothing compared to the glorious eternity that is waiting for us. **Hope is refocusing our minds on Jesus and eternity.**

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## WORD

### 2. RESPOND IN LOVE FOR OTHERS (1 PETER 4:7-11)

**1 Peter 4:7** says the end of all things is near. We don't know when that is, but the passage encourages us to be of sober judgment and spirit. In other words, keep a clear head for the purpose of prayer. Peter reminds us that in the midst of our suffering, we don't just crawl into a corner and cry, instead we are to think of others, and to respond like Christ with love. In this time of uncertainty and overwhelming challenges, sometimes we can only wonder how we can reach out, especially to those who may be in different parts of the globe. We can begin by praying for them and sending them a message that God loves them, and that we are praying for them. **1 Peter 4:8** continues to say, "Above all keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins." This means that our love is to be so passionate that it enables us to forgive those that have offended us. This doesn't mean we tolerate sin, but we still lovingly point out to them what is morally right. Peter also encourages us to be hospitable (**v.9**), and though it may not be possible to host people in our homes today, we can meet their needs in other ways! When was the last time that you went out of your way to help others? We are to serve one another with the gifts that were given to us (**v.10**). It could be as simple as sharing God's truth with someone or showing mercy by listening to other people's burdens and praying with them. God has commissioned us to be His hands and mouthpiece that we may serve others. We are reminded that we must respond in love for others in prayer, fervent love, and service, as we are representatives of Jesus in this broken and fallen world. Our words make a difference especially when they express the words of God (**v.11**). **Hope is responding to others in love.**

### 3. REJOICE (1 PETER 4:12-19)

Peter reminds us in **verse 12** that our faith will be tested through suffering, and this shouldn't shock us. Our faith in Christ is like a parachute, and just like a real parachute, it may not seem comfortable. A parachute is bulky and cumbersome, but it gives us peace. It is comparable with the hope we have in our salvation; it gives us peace that leads to rejoicing. **1 Peter 4:14** reminds us that as we follow Christ, we may be reviled and hated, and in **John 15:18-19** we read that the world would reject us as it has rejected Christ that we follow. We can take comfort that when we are hated and reviled for doing what is right, this is a sign that we are doing what God wants us to do. We may be tempted to think that it's easier to live as everyone does so that we can escape being ridiculed, but God is looking for men and women who aren't afraid to identify themselves publicly as followers of Christ (**1 Peter 4:16**). When life around us seems to be crashing, the only way you will survive is by holding on to the God of hope through our parachute of faith (**1 Peter 4:19**). Don't give up your faith. Rahab and her family were saved as the spies kept their word and Rahab kept her faith in what was promised to her through the scarlet rope. **Hebrews 11:31** lists Rahab as one of the heroes of faith, while in **Matthew 1:5**, Rahab was listed in Christ's genealogy as one of His ancestors! You and I may have a colorful past, but God can change our past with a Christ-filled present and future. Jesus' bloodline is our lifeline (**Hebrews 9:22**). God today is throwing us a lifeline of hope. He's offering you hope of forgiveness and eternity in His presence through the sacrificial death of Jesus for you. Our hope in God consists of God's person, God's plan, God's power, God's promises, God's past faithfulness and God's preeminence. If today you need hope, never give up. **Hold on to God because He is the rope of your salvation!**

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

#### 1. Self-Check.

In what ways have you experienced suffering as a Christian and how has it turned out to be a blessing?

#### 2. Setting It Right

During this time of crisis, what have you done (or still plan to do) to share your faith with others?

#### 3. Living It Out

How will you encourage someone who is considering to give up all hope in life?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray that God will reveal people whom you can encourage and point to the hope that can only be found in Jesus. Share about the "scarlet thread" of the gospel—how Jesus shed His blood on the cross to save us from hopelessness and eternal destruction.

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation
- Wisdom and timely, effective response to the pandemic

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends



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