



THE GIFT



THE GIFT OF HOPE

HOPE: [verb]

:: to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence.

:: to believe, desire, or trust

WAITING is the space that holds a place for hope.

Hebrews 11:1 [NIRV]

Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see.

Hope is birthed in **FAITH**, not circumstances.

Luke 2:25-32

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel."

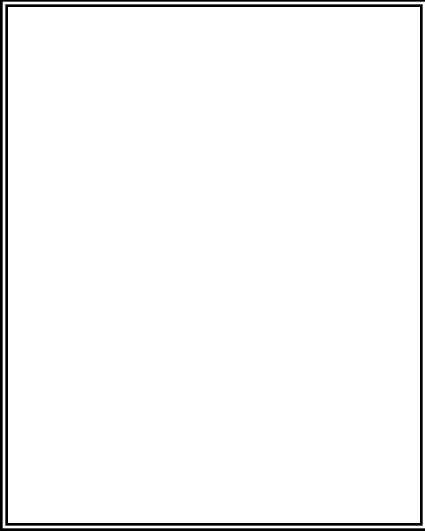
Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Hope flourishes when our **PERSPECTIVE** is bigger than our circumstances.

Luke 2:36-38

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.



Romans 5:3b-5

³ ...we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Where there is faith, there is HOPE.

Romans 15:13a (NLV)
Our hope comes from God.

Hope is tested in circumstances, but anchored in TRUST.

Romans 15:13

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 12:12

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

SO WHAT?

Hopeful waiting is the CATALYST of divine provision.

Psalm 147:11

The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

NOTES:

*Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.*
[excerpt from O Holy Night]

***"Faith never knows where it is being lead,
but it loves and knows the One who is leading."***
- Oswald Chambers



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How to start a relationship with God:

- 1) Admitting that you, like everyone else, are in need of rescue.
- 2) Asking God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

**Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness.
I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I recognize
you as my Savior; and I offer all that I am to you as my LORD.
Help me to faithfully follow you all the days of my life.
In Your name, Amen.**



For Further Reflection:

:: Share a favorite Christmas tradition that you look forward to every year. What makes it special? How do you feel each year as you wait for that opportunity?

:: Revisit the biblical definition of faith. [ref. Hebrews 11:1]

:: What is most helpful/challenging about that definition?

:: What are practical implications for how we have hope in light of that?

:: When was the last time you experienced faith leading to hope?

:: Reread Luke 2:25-38

:: What initially stands out to you in this passage?

:: What does this teach/show us about hope and waiting?

:: What do you see in how Simeon & Anna lived in a “waiting space”?

:: Where have you waited well, or not so well, in your own journey?

:: What were the key factors that contributed to that?

:: Pastor Shawn said, “Hopeful waiting is the catalyst of divine provision.”

:: What are some practical implications of that reality?

:: What is one area God is inviting you to engage in hopeful waiting before he brings divine provision?

:: What is one thing you need/can do this week to make that happen?

:: Identify 1 person you can invite to pray for you and help you do that this week.



Unless otherwise noted, today's Scripture is from the New International Version [NIV].
Shawn Cossin (@shawncossin) – December 1 & 2, 2018

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