

## THE CONQUEST OF HOPE

**Text: Romans 5:1-5**

**Key Word:** Hope

**Key Thought:** The Churches Conquest of Hope

According to George Barna a leading Canadian Christian sociologist, America has spent 500 billion dollars and has seen very little growth. David Barrett believes that the world ought to have been evangelized 2,000 times over. The grim fact is that 85 percent of churches are declining in number. We are at a point where we will either have a **revival** or face **social anarchy**.

There have been plenty of reasons given for the increasing disillusionment found in most churches. They range anywhere from fatigue and exhaustion to a feeling that the church has no longer been preaching the viable message. According to Phillip Yancey in his book titled , **“Disappointment with God”** he cites one of the main reasons is that the church has been willing to accept the status quo. Our cutting edge message has been disappearing.

Ray Baacy has listed ten major barriers that have come against the church. He says that nine of them are found within the church. **The greatest barrier that he has found is that of hopelessness.** Hope is the soul of the church. It is unfortunate to say that most churches require a triple heart bypass.

J. I. Packer has said, **“The Bible is the Book of Hope.”** The Bible contains more than 7500 promises from God to his people. They are “YES” to those who believe. **The church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be a church that is founded upon a hope that will not waiver in spite of the troublesome sometimes it faces.**

Emmanuel Kant once asked three questions that are very pertinent to the church today.

**I. What Should I Know?**

**ii. What Ought I to Do?**

**iii. What May I Hope?**

“Faith goes up the stairs in which love has made,  
and looks out the window that hope has opened.”

Since the Bible contains God’s words of hope for a lost and sinful world, we can study it to see how we may obtain hope in the midst of unstable times.

**What Is the Four Part Progression Which Leads to Hope?**

**I. STALWART SUFFERING**  
**II. STEADFAST PERSEVERANCE**  
**III. STRIKING CHARACTER**  
**IV. STARTLING HOPE**

**I. STALWART SUFFERING**

If anyone was capable of addressing the matter of suffering for the cause of Christ, it was the apostle Paul.

*“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair;  
9. Persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”*

*II Corinthians 4:8,9*

*“Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses;  
5. in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger;  
6. in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love;  
7. In truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left;  
8. through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine yet regarded as imposters;  
9. known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed;  
10. sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.”*

*II Corinthians 6:4–10*

*“That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*

*II Corinthians 12:10*

## I. STALWART SUFFERING (Contd.)

In our conquest of hope, we often wonder why a God who is able to perform miraculous deeds does not always deliver His people from all of their suffering. Yet the Scriptures always leave us with a balanced thought. The apostle Paul not only boasted in hope of the future glory (vs. 2) but he also was able to boast during the trials and tribulations that brought much suffering to him. We as believers should not only glory in the hope God has given us in the future but also glory in the trials of today that bring us to the culmination of that hope. Martyrs throughout the centuries have sung in the flames. Affliction can be a divinely appointed test that is designed to prove and mature the recipient.

\*\*\* A letter that came out from northern Siberia signed by Mary said, *"The best thing to report is, that I feel so happy here. It would be so easy to grow bitter if one lost the spiritual viewpoint and began to look at circumstances. I am learning to thank God for literally everything that comes. I experienced so many things that looked terrible, but which finally brought me closer to Him.*

*Each time circumstances became lighter, I was tempted to break fellowship with the Lord. How can I do otherwise than thank Him for additional hardships? They only help me to what I always longed for – a continuous, unbroken abiding in Him. Every so-called hard experience is just another step higher and closer to Him."*

\*\*\*

William R. Newel  
"Romans Verse by Verse"  
pp. 167,168

"There is no pit so deep that He is not deeper still."

Corrie Ten Boom  
"The Hiding Place"  
Charles R. Swindoll  
"The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart"  
pp. 547-548

## I. STALWART SUFFERING (Contd.)

### IN THE MORNING

Today, Lord  
I have an unshakable conviction  
A positive resolute assurance  
That what You have spoken  
Is unalterably true

But today, Lord  
My sick body feels stronger  
And the stomping pain quietly subsides.  
Tomorrow . . .

And then tomorrow  
If I must struggle again  
With aching exhaustion  
With twisting pain  
Until I am breathless  
Until I am utterly spent  
Until fear eclipses the last vestige of hope

Then, LORD –  
Then grant me the enabling grace  
To believe without feeling  
To know without seeing  
To clasp your invisible hand  
And wait with invincible trust  
For the morning

Ruth Harms Calkin  
*“Tell me again Lord, I Forget”*  
Found in  
Charles R. Swindoll  
*“The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart”*  
pp. 547-548

## II. STEADFAST PERSEVERANCE

A number of Bible versions use the word “*patience*” instead of “*perseverance*.” The word means “*endurance, fortitude, steadfastness.*”

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you face trials of many kinds,*

*3. because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.*

*4. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*

*James 1:2–4*

*“We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God”*

*Acts 14:22*

**It’s interesting that we often try to avoid going through the very problems that will eventually develop the patience that we’ve been asking God for.** Steadfast perseverance is the quality that is definitely needed in our churches. Years ago people used to serve in areas of ministry for their entire lifetime. Today, most churches find it difficult to have people serve for even one year.

There is no doubt that any ministry performed in the name of God will face difficulties. Those who learn to persevere will do themselves a great justice. Other people will witness their strength and benefit from the godly example they set. Jesus persevered with a steadfast hope even though He faced the cross at Calvary.

An address at Harrow School, Oct. 29, 1941:

“Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never – in nothing, great or small, large or petty – never give in except to convictions of honor in good sense. Never give in.” Then he sat down.

Winston Churchill

## II. STEADFAST PERSEVERANCE (Contd.)

\*\*\* I once heard W.A. Chriswell, longtime beloved pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, tell a story about an evangelist who loved to hunt. As best I can recall, the man bought two setter pups that were topnotch bird dogs. He kept them in his backyard, where he trained him.

One morning, an ornery, little, vicious looking bulldog came shuffling and sorting down the alley. He crawled under the fence into the backyard where the setters spent their days. It was easy to see he meant business. The evangelist's first impulse was to take his setters and lock them in the basement so they wouldn't tear up that little bulldog. But he decided he would just let the little creature learn a lesson that he would never forget.

Naturally, they got into a scuffle in the backyard, and those two setters and that bulldog went round and round and round! The little critter finally had enough, so he squeezed under the fence and took off. All the rest of the day he whined and licked his sores. Interestingly, the next day at about the same time, here came that same ornery little bulldog – back under the fence after those setters. Once again those two bird dogs beat the stuffing out of that little bowlegged animal and would have chewed him up if he hadn't retreated down the alley.

Would you believe, the very next day he was back! Same time, same station, same results. Once a gain after the bulldog had all he could take, he crawled back under the fence and found his way home to licked his wounds.

*“Well,” the evangelist said, “I have to leave for revival meetings. I was gone several weeks. And when I came back, I asked my wife what had happened?” She said, “Honey, you just won't believe what's happened. Every day, at the same time every morning, that little bulldog came back into the backyard and fought with our two setters. He didn't miss a day! And I want you to know it has come to the point that when our setters simply hear that bulldog sorting down the alley and spot him squeezing under the fence, they immediately start whining and run down into our basement. That little, old bulldog struts around our backyard now just like he owns it.”*

\*\*\*

Charles R. Swindoll  
“Living Above the Level of Mediocrity”  
Also  
“The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart”  
pp. 439-440

### III. STRIKING CHARACTER

The apostle Paul is the only one who uses the word “*character*” in the New Testament. It is used to speak of someone who has “*the quality of being approved*” as in a “*tested character*” It could be used to describe the process of proving of gold as it is tested or refined in the fire.

Those who are on a **Conquest of Hope** must never try to bypass this important step.

“You should care more about your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are. Your reputation is only what people think about you.

John Wooten  
“*They Call Me Coach*”  
Also  
Charles R. Swindoll  
“*The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart*”  
p. 65

“Character is, in my opinion, the moral, ethical, and spiritual undergirding that rests on truth, that reinforces a life in stressful times, and resists all temptations to compromise.”

Charles R. Swindoll  
“*The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart*”  
p. 66

The Bible is full of men and women whom God used after He developed a character in them that was second to none. God chose **Noah** to build an ark because “*he was a righteous man and blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God.*” (Genesis 6:9). **Joseph** was prepared by God to be the second in command of the world because the Bible says, “*Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the Spirit of God.*” (Genesis 41:38).

**Moses** was sent into wilderness for 40 years to develop a character that could be used by God to lead an entire nation from bondage (Hebrews 11:24-28). God used **Gideon** because he recognized that he was weak and unable to deliver his people by either his strength or his wisdom (Judges 6:15). **David** was the common shepherd boy. He was the youngest of his brothers. Yet he had a heart after God and God used him to kill Goliath (I Samuel 17:45-47).

### III. STRIKING CHARACTER (Contd.)

\*\*\* Phil Donahue, the television talk-show host, has something of reputation for giving clergy a hard time, and he has said the reason why he's that way is that he has little respect for them. Most clergy will do anything for media attention, he says.

In his autobiography, however, he tells about an encounter with a pastor who was different. It happened while Donahue was a young television reporter in Ohio, and one day he was sent to West Virginia in the bitter cold winter to cover a mine disaster. He went by himself in a battered little car, carrying a mini camera to film the story.

It was so cold when he got there, however, and the camera wouldn't work. So he put it inside his coat to warm it up enough to run. In the meantime, the families of the trapped miners were gathered around. They were just simple mining people – women, old men, and children. Several of the trapped men were fathers.

Then the local pastor arrived, he was rough-hewn, and he didn't speak well at all. But he gathered all the families around in a circle, and they held one another in their arms while he prayed for them.

As this was going on, Donahue was still trying to get his camera to work, and he was incredibly frustrated because he couldn't film the poignant scene. Finally, after the prayer was over, Donahue managed to get his camera operating. So he told the pastor he had his camera working now and asked if the pastor would please do the prayer over again so he could film it for the evening news.

Donahue says, by the way, and he's been with the world's best known public figures, including preachers, that they're all willing to redo a scene in order to get on the news.

This simple West Virginia preacher, however, told Donahue **"Young man, we don't pray for the news. I'm sorry, but we've already prayed, and I will not pose."**

To this date Donahue remembers that pastor with respect. **You don't forget that kind of character, no matter who we are or what you believe.** \*\*\*

Jay Kesler  
"Being Holy, Being Human"  
Charles R. Swindoll  
"The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart"  
p.66, 67

Some people can only perform when the camera is rolling for all to see.



#### **IV. STARTLING HOPE**

Those who were willing to make the previous three steps can expect to find themselves full of a **Startling Hope**.

1. Do you honestly believe that **Noah** would take 100 years to build an ark if he hadn't had a Startling Hope in God.
2. Would **Abraham** give the green lands to his nephew Lot if he had not the Startling Hope in God?
3. Would **Joseph** take on the overwhelming challenge of feeding the nations of the world without a Startling Hope in God?
4. Would **Moses** ever dream of leading millions of people out of the Egyptian bondage to a land flowing with milk and honey if he had not a Startling Hope in God?
5. Would **David** face a giant with a simple sling shot and five small stones if he did not have a Startling Hope in God?

Someone has said we can live 40 days without food, 8 days without water, 4 minutes without air, but only a few seconds without hope.”

“There are those who cast their bread upon the waters, hoping it will be returned to them toasted and buttered.”

“Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible.”

E. C. McKenzie  
“14,000 quips and quotes”  
p. 242

The Bible says,

*“And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”*

*Romans 5:5*

**Where Are You in this Four-Part Progression Which Leads to Hope?**

- I. STALWART SUFFERING**
- II. STEADFAST PERSEVERENCE**
- III. STRIKING CHARACTER**
- IV. STARTLING HOPE**

C:\My Documents\WPWin(2020)\Sermons.21\Hope\Romans 5\_1.5.wpd

Date: Nov 14/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: I Put all My Trust in You - G

# THE CONQUEST OF HOPE

**Text: Romans 5:1-5**

**Key Word:** Hope

**Key Thought:** The Churches Conquest of Hope

Emmanuel Kant once asked three questions that are very pertinent to the church today.

**I. What Should I Know?**

**ii. What Ought I to Do?**

**iii. What May I Hope?**

## What Is the Four-Part Progression Which Leads to Hope?

**I. STALWART SUFFERING** - *II Corinthians 4:8,9; II Corinthians 6:4-10; II Corinthians 12:10; Romans 5:2*

**II. STEADFAST PERSEVERANCE** - *James 1:2-4; Acts 14:22*

## III. STRIKING CHARACTER

**Noah** - *Genesis 6:9*

**Joseph** - *Genesis 41:38*

**Moses** - *Hebrews 11:24-28*

**Gideon** - *Judges 6:15*

**David** - *I Samuel 17:45-47*

## IV. STARTLING HOPE

**Noah** had a Startling Hope in God!

**Abraham** had a Starling Hope in God!

**Joseph** had a Starling Hope in God!

**Moses** had a Starling Hope in God!

**David** had a Starling Hope in God!

*“And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”*

*Romans 5:5*