

## Finding Hope pt1

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Finding Hope / 1 Peter 5:6–11

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I want to spend the next few weeks talking about hope. We have a hope deficit in our world today. When you start asking people how they think things are going and if they think things are getting better or worse, the answers are more and more negative. In fact, that has so permeated the culture that there is a new field of study that has risen to prominence in the last decade literally called The Science of Hope and one of the chief architects of this field, Dr. Chan Hellman, is right here in Oklahoma at OU as a professor of psychology.

I have gotten to hear Dr. Hellman speak twice and both times walking away, I wondered to myself, why do I not do a good job of talking about the hope we have because of Jesus...for now, for this time. **We talk a lot about the hope of the future- being reunited with loved ones, being with Jesus, no longer being sick or sad, but the Christian faith is a both/and. We have that hope for now to, while we are still here and while we are around so many other people.** And to be able to introduce that hope to others, we need to learn about what we have access to, and how to embody it for others, so they can experience that hope in Jesus.

So turn with me today to ! Peter 5. I want to start there, and I want to spend today addressing head on one of the largest impediments to hope that we face- difficulty.

How do we maintain hope when life, to put it bluntly, sucks?

So go with me to verse 6 and let's read thru verse 11.

**The first thing** to note about being in a tough situation, a season of hardship, is that yes it is humbling. Some more than others. When we are laid low by circumstances beyond our control, that's humbling. We may feel foolish or betrayed or taken advantage of. We may even ask yourselves, Why didn't I see this coming.

1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)

Since God resists the proud and pours his grace upon the humble, “therefore” believers should humble themselves. By humbling themselves they will experience God's grace, for God bestows his favor on those who acknowledge their need of him. **The humbling enjoined probably means that they are to accept the suffering God has ordained as his will instead of resisting and chafing against his will while suffering**

But the other situation is almost worse, we are in this situation of our own accord. We can rack bad decision after poor choice after fools errand right to the door of where we are AND we can probably name everyone who told us this was a bad idea! (And they may unhelpfully be currently telling us “I told you so.”)

But in either instance...while we are humbled...we should take comfort in whose Hand we are under. God has got this.

It may have been a shock to us, to everyone else, but He is not surprised or flustered or caught off guard. He is STEADY because He is mighty. (def of mighty)

1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)

When Peter said they are to humble themselves under God's “mighty hand” (krataian cheira), he used an expression that is associated particularly with God's delivering Israel out of Egypt Just as the Lord delivered his people from Egypt, so he would vindicate his people in Asia Minor who suffered. The image of a mighty hand emphasizes the power of God. Believers humble themselves before a mighty God, the all-powerful one. **Humility should not be seen as the ultimate goal here. Those who humble themselves before the Lord will be exalted**

**And He can handle**, not just this situation, but your response to it. Notice **vs 7**- cast your anxieties. The Bible recognizes anxiety as a legit human issue. I know some people are anti-counseling and therapy, but let me tell you something. God is NOT. He invented it!

And what we need in those moments is someone to go to with all the anxiety we are feeling. This is not saying you should not treat anxiety with all the things God has provided for us in 2024, but **it is acknowledging that there is both a physical and a spiritual dimension to anxiety**. And we need to address ALL of it and God is able and capable to handle our fears, our being overwhelmed, our moments when we are not sure if we can carry on.

### **1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

The participle should be understood as an instrumental participle, and it explains how believers can humble themselves under God's strong hand. Seeing the relationship between the main verb ("humble yourselves," v. 6) and the participle ("casting all your anxiety upon him," NASB) is important because it shows that giving in to worry is an example of pride. **The logical relationship between the two clauses is as follows: believers humble themselves by casting their worries on God. Conversely, if believers continue to worry, then they are caving in to pride**

### **1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

Worry is a form of pride because when believers are filled with anxiety, they are **convinced that they must solve all the problems in their lives in their own strength**. The only god they trust in is themselves. When believers throw their worries upon God, they express their trust in his mighty hand, acknowledging that he is Lord and Sovereign over all of life. As Goppelt says, **"Affliction either drives one into the arms of God or severs one from God"**

Why?

Look at the end of the verse- **because He CARES for us!!**

That literally means the God of the universe is concerned for you- your well being, your mental state, your condition. Even though He knows how it is all going to work out, He still is concerned for how you are.

**1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

Giving our anxiety to God makes eminent sense “because he cares for you.” God is not indifferent, nor is he cruel. He has compassion on his children and will sustain them in every distress

So how do we handle adversity? Distress? The world as we know it being shaken?

Peter says we need to **adopt a posture of vigilance**. Look in **verse 8**- we are to be sober minded- not reacting out of blind emotion or partial information and watchful- paying attention to what is going on around us. (telling ourselves stories in our heads)

We don't need to be numb and closed off. That may be what we WANT to be, but that sets us up to be destroyed.

**1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

**the devil's aim is not to comfort but to terrify believers**. He does not want to deliver them from fear but to devour their faith. Peter warned believers to be vigilant. The roaring of the devil is the crazed anger of a defeated enemy, and **if they do not fear his ferocious bark, they will never be consumed by his bite**

And that is a hard thing to do. When it hurts, we want to pain to go away and being numb is a good way to do that for a season, but the problem is those feelings and hurts are going to be there when we resurface. (The self medication game)

## **1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

Believers must remain vigilant and alert until the very end because the devil seeks to destroy their faith

Instead, Peter tells us to go on the offensive. **Verse 9** gives us a very important 2 part solution to standing firm in the middle of trials- resist the temptation of the Enemy to knuckle under, go numb, toss your faith out the window.

## **1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

Resistance, then, is not passive but represents active engagement against a foe. **Believers will not triumph over the devil if they remain passive**

## **1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

No, resisting the devil means that believers remain firm in their faith, that is, in their trust in God. **Believers triumph over the devil as they continue to trust God, believing that he truly cares for them and will sustain them until the end.** Perseverance until the last day is accomplished from first to last by faith

And realize you are not ALONE! That statement at the end of verse 9 is so vital for finding hope in the middle of suffering- this is not you being singled out. **You are not the only one going thru this! And that is vital b/c the enemy wants you isolated and ashamed and alone.**

## **1, 2 Peter, Jude (2) Closing Exhortations and Assurance (5:6–11)**

As Goppelt says, their sufferings “are not the personal misfortune of individuals, but belong to the essence of faith and are signs of its power against evil. Even more, they are signs that faith is sustained through grace

**Strength comes, healing comes, hope comes from the community God has surrounded you with of fellow sufferers.**

We have to stop suffering in silence. LaTosha crushed it last week-not just because she brought a good word- but because she was vulnerable. When we are going thru it, it is essential that we not be isolated from one another or from Jesus.

**And Peter really slams that home in verse 10- what is God coming to do? To restore hope. To bring you back from the brink. When? In His timing.**

He is going to do 4 things:

**Restore you-** lift up your face and give you hope (knit you back together)

**Confirm you-** reassure you that your faith has not been in vain (mentally settle you)

**Strengthen you-** enable you to live again (give you HIS strength)

**Establish (fortify) you-** build the foundation of a testimony on the suffering you have endured

And you will be a part of His glory and His rule (vs11)

**Church we need to embrace this truth- hope is not lost. It is not lost. And it is not just for eternity. It is for today. Hope is for us in the middle of the pain, the struggle, the storm.**

This hope is for Jesus' people. He wants you to be one of His today. He wants to give you hope for today and for eternity.