

True Christmas: Hope

 www.pursuegod.org/true-christmas-hope/

★ Faith & Growth

Hope at Christmas is more than an empty wish, because Jesus secured the future for all who trust in him.

SUMMARY:

★ The World Is Desperately Looking for Hope

What hope means to most people is wishful thinking or an emotional longing for something better. This idea of hope depends on the circumstances of life, which could be hopeful or hopeless. But life is unpredictable and uncertain. All of us have seen dreams dashed and hopes die. By contrast, the biblical word for hope doesn't mean just wishing for something. Hope is a confident expectation or assured anticipation of something good not yet experienced.

★ **Hebrews 6:18-19 (NLT)** *Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us. This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls.*

In [Hebrews 11](#), hope is a constant, unmoving anchor. Those who belong to Jesus have reason for great confidence because of what lies before us.

★ The Greatest Reason for Hope Is God

Some people are hopeful because they have good prospects. Others have hope because they are simply unrealistic about life. But biblical hope does not depend on situations or personalities. True hope is rooted in the faithful, unchanging character of God and his promises.

★ **Hebrews 10:23 (NLT)** *Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.*

God didn't promise everything we want – like an easy, comfortable life. But what he did promise – like his presence, care, and comfort – he can be trusted to fulfill. That's where we confidently place our hope. This is why Christians are hopeful people.

★ **2 Thessalonians 2:16-17** *Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say.*

Here we see that hope is a source of great comfort and of strength. God's hope can give us power to endure hard things; wishing, thinking, or dreaming have no such power. In the ups and downs of life, there are no guarantees of hopeful circumstances. However, Christians remain hopeful no matter what life brings, because our life and future is in God's hands.

★ Hope Goes Far Beyond This Life Alone

Our ultimate hope is the certainty of God's promise of salvation for us, in and through Jesus Christ.

★ **1 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV)** *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you.*

Followers of Jesus have a living hope because we have a heavenly inheritance. Unlike the things people place their hope in here on earth, our heavenly hope can never perish. Many things we hope for – material stuff, an easy life, even good health – don't really matter much compared to this inheritance. We don't have it yet, but it is ours. What God has promised and accomplished through Jesus Christ is not just wishful thinking. We await it with eager confidence.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

[Submit questions](#)

1. **Set Up:** Watch the video together or invite someone to [summarize the topic](#).
 2. What do you think most people in your neighborhood hope for out of life?
 3. Do you think most of your neighbors will get what they hope for? Why or why not?
 4. What happens to people when they lose hope?
 5. How is the biblical concept of hope alike and different from the world's definition?
 6. What are some characteristics of God that give his people hope?
 7. What are some promises of God that we can put our hope in?
 8. How does the Christian hope affect how we face the difficult circumstances of life?
 9. **Takeaway:** Write a [personal action step](#) based on this conversation.
-
-