

Living in the Tension

Message Handout

Luke 2:36–38 (NLT) — 36 Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married only seven years. 37 Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer. 38 She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for God to rescue Jerusalem.

Proverbs 13:12 (NIV) — 12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

Six Reasons Christians Should Be Filled with Hope:

1. We Have the PROPHECIES.

1. **2 Peter 1:19–21 (NLT)** — 19 Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place—until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, 21 or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.
2. One of the ways God chose to reveal Himself was to speak through people about the future and then see it come to pass.
3. Prophecies fulfilled:
 1. 55 overtly obvious prophecies about Christ and over 300 that some scholars believe point to Jesus
 2. Like a DNA description that He perfectly fulfilled
4. The prophets and prophecies that predicted He would come are the same that predict His second coming.
 1. Advent means the arrival of a notable person. He's coming again!
5. Are you living in the right tension concerning the prophecies?

2. We Have the PROMISES.

1. **2 Peter 1:4 (NLT)** — 4 And because of his glory and excellence, **he has given us great and precious promises.** These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.
2. Over 7,000 promises
3. When you have a promise from a trustworthy source, it produces hope.

4. Ezekiel 36:25–27 (NLT) — 25 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. Your filth will be washed away, and you will no longer worship idols. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.

3. We Have the PRESENCE.

1. **Ephesians 1:14 (NLT)** — 14 The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.
2. God's very presence within us gives us the HOPE of all He has promised us.
3. Have you ever been through a trial and felt the presence of God? That is reason to be filled with hope!

4. We Have the PAST.

1. **2 Corinthians 1:10 (NLT)** — 10 And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us.
2. Take into account God's faithfulness.
3. We are so quick to forget!

5. We Have the PEOPLE.

1. **1 Corinthians 15:19–20 (NLT)** — 19 And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world. 20 But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the **first of a great harvest of all who have died.**
2. We can look at one another's lives and what the Lord has done for us and be filled with hope.
3. We can encourage each other in our hope. When you forget, I remember!

6. We Have the PERSON.

1. Our hope is not based on circumstances; it is based on a Person!
2. Most natural hope is based on things lining up and looking right. However, our hope is not based on circumstances; it is based on a living person... Jesus!
3. **1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)** — 3 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.
4. It really doesn't matter what is happening in the world.
5. OUR HOPE IS IN JESUS!