

# Hope Is Necessary To Endure To The End

## Feast of Tabernacles

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The near term picture is pretty grim. It seems like Satan is lurking around trying to get God's people discouraged and depressed because of the world around us and how it marches worse and worse as we get closer to the culmination of God's six thousand year plan. Because of that, of all the problems in the world and our society, there is one attribute that we are going to need in order to endure to the end. That attribute is hope. If we don't have hope we're not going to make it.

Hope is mentioned 122 times in the Bible, 47 times in the Old Testament and 75 times in the New Testament. I believe that disparity between the old and the new is that we're going to need hope more in the New Testament especially as we get closer to the end than they needed it back then.

As we know, hope is called "one of the big three". Let's go to 1 Corinthians 13:13 and see where Paul mentions the "big three". I'm going to read it from the NLT. I think it says it in a more profound way. Sometimes the NLT does that.

**1 Corinthians 13:13.** *Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love. (NLT)*

In my almost fifty years in the church, I've heard many sermons on love. I've heard a lot of sermons on faith, but I haven't heard many on hope. Just thinking back, you just don't hear many on hope.

The Greek word for "hope" is Strong's 1680 and it basically has two meanings. It means *expectation* and it can mean *confidence*. Zodhiates says this about that word and it's a very good definition:

*"The desire of some good thing with the expectation of receiving it."*

So a good working definition for us for hope would be *confident expectation*. So let's remember that as we go.

Being a student of WWII history, I've heard many accounts over the years of men who have gone into battle and who have been in POW camps. Dorothy and I had a business acquaintance, a fellow from Seattle, who was flying his F4 over Hanoi and took a missile. He and his backseat operator, GIBs (guy in back) were both punched out. This friend of ours spent seven years in a North Vietnamese prison camp. We talked about it from time to time and he said, "Hope was the only thing that got the men through." Hope to go home some day, hope to leave the world they were in and go to a

better world, back home. He said that once you lost hope it was a matter, in some cases of days or weeks that the individual would die. They had no reason to live.

We are going to see that hope is absolutely essential to endure what lies ahead for us. That's basically the title of the sermon.

### Hope is Essential to Endure to the End

What we're going to do in the first part of the sermon is look at the troubled times we are in. We're going to look at it from the aspect of what we're going to face between now and Christ's return as it applies to hope. We're going to see, hopefully, by the end of this first section why we are going to need hope.

We'll start off with problems in the greater Church of God. I was talking to a minister in another group. He's probably in the first or second largest group. He's a very fine minister. He said, "My greatest fear in our group is that they're falling asleep." He said, "There are little bright spots around the country, but most of them, in my opinion are falling asleep, they're drifting back into the world, they're looking at the church primarily as a social outlet." That was his greatest fear.

We see brethren being deceived and led astray, following all manner of strange doctrines, and frankly following all manner of strange men.

Then we see brethren judging and condemning each other with self-righteous attitudes. That's what's going on in the greater church today.

Now let's look at the problems in the world. There are far too many to mention. We're just going to hit the highlights. Who would have thought a year ago when we were here we would see the rise of radical Islam that would take over great sections of Syria and Iraq? We wouldn't have comprehended that last year, but look what's happened.

The fact is President George Bush never should have invaded Iraq. The Secretary of Defense at that time was Donald Rumsfeld and by his own admission we invaded Iraq on the cheap. We didn't have enough men or equipment and, as a result, there was chaos. Remember the riots and looting because we didn't have enough police force to keep people under control.

Since that time, President Obama has never seriously tried to get the Sunni's, Shiites, and the Kurds together. Those are the three big divisions of the country and if you can't get them together, you're going to have a divided country. He has not spent the effort to do that. We never should have withdrawn the troops as quickly as he did. His advisors told him not to in unison, but he did it anyway. It was a political move. He created a vacuum that was filled by the radical Sunni's and they have taken over the territory that was paid by the blood of U.S. soldiers. I know some U.S. soldiers and, believe me, they

are not happy, because their blood was spilled and then we just give it right back. ISIS commits unspeakable atrocities in the name of religion as we all know.

Look at the recent Russian aggression. Russia annexed Crimea. Guess what? It was ignored. There were no repercussions to speak of. They shot down an airliner with innocent people on board. Guess what? There were no repercussions to speak of. To this day Russia is pouring in soldiers, missiles and equipment into Ukraine and the western nations, primarily the U.S., refuse to level the playing field by sending in equal munitions to help arm the Ukrainians because we say that we don't want to escalate things. It is a timid response to direct provocations, and as a result, Putin makes fun of Obama and the U.S. and thumbs his nose because of our weakness.

You see, we are setting ourselves for some really bad times coming ahead.

In dealing with ISIS, we are kidding ourselves that we can defeat them without U.S. boots on the ground. This is just as an emphasis of the fact that Europe and the United States are weak. ISIS knows it. Putin knows it, and we're only going to get more of the same.

Another problem ahead of us is Europe uses our military might for their ultimate defense. They resent U.S. power, but when the chips are down, they rely on the U.S. military to defend them against Russian aggression or any other aggression, which means they don't have to pay the cost for military either in dollars or lives, but they know the U.S. will back them in that regard. So in that sense we are taken advantage of. Despite that, Europe does not trust us. The NSA spying scandal created problems. President Obama fails to establish close relationships with world leaders, particularly in Europe. Our relations with world leaders today are much worse than they were eight to ten years ago. That will come back to haunt us.

The Middle East countries do not trust the United States. Remember in the 1970s we helped the Afghan rebels. We armed them and trained them and they ousted Russia from Afghanistan in the 1970s. Guess what we did? We left also. We could have stayed and established relationships and help them rebuild, to help them defend themselves and educate them. No, we didn't. As soon as Russia was gone, our interest ceased and we just left them swinging in the wind. We established no long-term relationships and guess what happened? The Taliban filled the vacuum and 9/11 was a result of that. We bring this on ourselves.

When the Arab spring came about, particularly in Egypt with the demonstrations and all of that, we turned our back on President Mubarak in a heartbeat. Within days President Obama and his staff were demanding that Mubarak resign. This man had been a loyal ally in defeating radical Islam and keeping that under control for almost fifty years. Within less than a week, we kicked him to the curb. That event unsettled Middle Eastern leaders all over the area. They said that Mubarak has been an ally of the U.S. for all of these decades and when there's a little trouble, in their view, they kick him to the curb. If they do that with Mubarak what will they do to them, the potentate of some

Middle East country? Will they turn on them just as quickly? So what do the U.S. commitments mean to them? Not much.

Then we supported the Muslim Brotherhood which supports radical Islam, and the Muslim Brotherhood funds Hamas which fights Israel and does not believe that Israel should even exist. Think about that.

Remember President Obama drew the red line in the sand with Syria and said, "If you use chemical weapons, I'm drawing a red line in the sand and that means there's going to be dire consequences." Well, they used chemical weapons and guess what? Nothing happened. All the world leaders looked at Obama and the U.S. and said, "They are weak. They're not going to do anything. We can't count on them no matter what they say."

Then if that wasn't bad enough the relations with Israel right now are at the lowest they have been since the foundation of the nation. This year President Obama and others have openly criticized them for defending themselves. We have made them the Boogie Man. On top of that the United States sends money to Hamas. Guess how much money we have sent to Hamas in the last twelve months? Four hundred million dollars according to the Wall Street Journal. It was allegedly to go for food, clothing and shelter, but guess where most of that money went? It went for steel and concrete to build tunnels to go under the Israeli border, for missiles, bullets and guns to kill Israelis. That was funded mostly by money from the U.S. and Israel knows this. It's no secret. This formerly unshakable bond between the United States and Israel is now severely cracked.

You begin to wonder what ever happened to Teddy Roosevelt's South African proverb that he quoted very often. That was, "Walk softly and carry a big stick and all will go well." He quoted that many times. The problem today is we don't have any Teddy Roosevelts. We have no real leaders today. We have politicians, we have people that like to appease and say good words, but we have no real leaders.

Mr. Armstrong would quote Leviticus 26:19 back in the 50s and 60s.

***Leviticus 26:19. And I will break the pride of your power ...: (KJV)***

We have seen that fulfilled in the last ten years. The whole Mideast, Europe, U.S. and the weakness of all of that, Putin's aggression and the rise of Islam is one giant problem.

The other problem facing us is the Ebola plague. As of the day before yesterday, the death toll is 4,447. Many have been infected, and they're expecting the death rate to double in the next few weeks. It will double every few weeks from now on until they can get it under control, if they can. We are very close, the with Ebola situation, to having an uncontrollable world-wide outbreak. We're right at the tipping point. Most nations

talk the big talk, but when you look at it they're long on talk and short on deeds. Not much is being done on a world-wide basis.

If that's not bad enough, we're now getting to the real scary part. That is the U.S. debt. This could bring things down very quickly. Let's look at the debt for what the U.S. has already spent. This is not what we want to spend, this is what we've already bought. Think about this. Our debt, as of a few days ago, is almost 18 trillion dollars. In individual terms, for every man, woman and child in the United States, that is \$56,000.00 each. For tax payers, those of us footing the bills, it's over \$152,000.00 per tax payer. Guess what the interest alone on that debt is for what we've already spent? Its 325 billion dollars a year just on the debt. What could we do with 325 billion dollars a year in helping and serving people? We're just blowing that off because it's service to a debt. As bad as that is, it is nothing compared to the debt we have already promised to spend and signed in by law that we must spend. It's called unfunded liabilities including Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, V.A. benefits, benefits for Congress and it goes on and on. Guess how much that is; 18 trillion dollars of what we've already spent we have committed in law to spend 116 trillion dollars. That is almost one million dollars per tax payer. That is impossible. It cannot be paid off. Let me put it into an even scarier picture. If you cashed in all of the assets of the United States, all the government assets, all the buildings in Washington, all the military, cashed in and sold at market value all the aircraft carriers, tanks, airplanes, air bases, army basis, naval air stations, bombs, bullets, rifles, everything owned by the military and the federal government, all the assets the United States has, raided Fort Knox and all the money, then sold the business assets like Apple, General Motors, Ford, General Electric including small business, their land and buildings and bank accounts and investments, then you raided all of us personally to include our checking accounts, investments, homes, land, cars, anything of value; everything was sold and turned into cash, how would that compare to the 118 trillion that we've promised to spend? If we did that, we would still owe four trillion dollars. That's how bad it is. It is serious. Guess what? The president and congress do nothing, because they know how bad it is and if they told the people the truth the people wouldn't want to hear about it. They wouldn't want to make sacrifices and, most of all, they wouldn't get reelected. So they kick the can down the road until the house of cards collapses.

In the meantime, the middle class is evaporating. The poor are getting poorer and rich are getting richer.

If that isn't enough, we're talking about stench in God's nose and what is going to bring on the end, there's this homosexuality and same-sex situation. We live in a little town in central Washington. Almost every day there is a positive article about gays or same-sex marriage. It just blows your mind. It's presenting it in the most positive light possible. It's the same on television and the media. I think it's safe to say that once it reaches the Supreme Court, it will be the law of the land. I don't think there's any doubt about that. It's a stench in God's nose.

The one that gets me the most of all the problems the world faces is abortion. In the United States between 1973 and 2011 (I wasn't able to get the statistics for 2012 and 2013) in the last 38 years in this country, we have through legalized abortion clinics, not the back street stuff or the stuff below the radar, legally killed 53 million babies in 38 years. That number is hard to comprehend. That would be equivalent to killing everybody in the top four metropolitan areas in the United States. That means if you killed everyone in New York, New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Los Angeles, Long Beach and Anaheim, Chicago, northern Indiana, southern Wisconsin and you killed everybody in Dallas and Fort Worth. That's about the number of babies killed in the last 38 years. No opportunity for life in this life. Then the world kills every year what we have killed in the last 38 years. It's impossible to know the statistics, particularly in the third world countries, but the world kills somewhere between 40 and 50 million babies a year. That means 125,000 babies lose their lives every day. It means that during this sermon 5,000 babies will have been killed around this earth.

Then on top of that Christians are now persecuted around the world. ISIS is forcing them to recant their beliefs, pay a tax or die. Usually they kill them by crucifixion or beheading. I mentioned in a sermon a while back that there was a teen on the east coast in high school. Someone sneezed and she said, "Bless you." The teacher told her that it was a religious statement and disrupting the class and she sent her to the principal and she was kicked out of school. They said she was causing division for religious reasons. As far as I've heard, she is still suspended from school because she dared say, "Bless you." There is an anti-religious bias coming on in this country led by the very top and on down.

It is getting harder and harder to avoid pagan holidays everywhere you go. Halloween right now is everywhere. Christmas is already starting, and it's in your face on television, in the media and in schools.

Our Canadian brethren know when we go to Canada and preach a sermon, if they found out what we said, there are parts of the Bible you can go to jail for because it is a hate crime. For example, if you talk about homosexuality. If you just read a scripture about that, it is considered a hate crime. One Christian evangelical leader said here recently: "The litmus test for a true Christian is ..."

Now what do you think it might be in his view? Keeping the Ten Commandments, Sabbath, holy days? No, he said the litmus test for a true Christian is "believing in the trinity."

That could come back to haunt us going forward.

So as a result of all of these problems, Middle East problems, Ebola, abortion, etc., we are going to need hope more than ever as we go forward because the solution of these problems does not lie with mankind. Some church brethren kid themselves thinking, "If we could just get the Republicans in, or if we could just get this guy in, or do this or that." That is not going to solve anything. The world is so perverted and polluted that

all of the political candidates have made so many compromises to get where they are that they will say or do anything to get reelected.

Man has no solution to these problems. It can only come through God and Christ. So with that background, let's ask the question; in these troubled times that we just talked about, what should give us hope? What is there that should give us hope? We're going to talk about four areas that we can cling to for hope to get us through what lies ahead.

**First Reason: We should have hope because of the example that Jesus Christ set for us while He was a human on earth.**

One of the reasons Christ came was to set an example for us that we can follow in His footsteps. This was shortly before He was betrayed and He was trying to impress on the disciples that they better pay attention to His example and remember. He said they would through the help of the holy spirit.

**John 13:15.** *For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. (KJV)*

We understand the context is about foot washing, but in principle it applies to the entirety of Christ's example. It applies to everything that He said and did. We can have hope because Christ is alive at this very minute and He is at the right hand of the Father. That should give us hope.

Sometimes we lose sight of the fact that Christ came as a human being, gave up His divinity, He was a human being filled with the holy spirit and He died for three days and three nights. He ceased to exist for three days and three nights. Then something happened.

**Romans 14:9.** *For to this end Christ both died [1], and rose [2], and revived [3], that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. (KJV)*

The Greek for "revived" is Strong's 326, and it means to *recover life, literally or figuratively, or to be alive again*. He revived from being dead.

The Greek word for "rose" is Strong's 450, and it means to literally or figuratively to *stand up*. He was dead on that slab. He revived and had life come into Him and He stood up. It can mean *stand up or arise*. As a result of that, He is alive today and at the right hand of God the Father.

Paul emphasized over and over the resurrection of Jesus Christ and what it means to us as Christians.

**Romans 8:31.** *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?  
32) He that spared not his own Son ... (KJV)*

Think about that.

*32b) ... but delivered him up ... (KJV)*

Who did He deliver Him up for? He delivered Him up for all of us. He turned over His own Son to those who beat and tortured and killed Him because of all of us.

*32 continued) ... for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

*33) Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies.*

*34) Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes rather, [Here's the key] that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who [Christ] also makes intercession for us. (KJV)*

We can have hope because Christ is alive and at the right hand of His Father on the throne, right now. We can have hope in the process that Christ went through in overcoming the world. He led the example.

Let's go to John 16:33. Christ is saying, "I am going to do something and I want you to follow me and if you do, the result will be the same for me and for you."

**John 16:33.** *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation ... (KJV)*

We just talked about all that is looming on the horizon. It won't take much to have all of this coalesce and come together and have a world that is in chaos and anarchy. If that is God's will. We're not setting times.

*33b) ... but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. (KJV)*

Because Christ has overcome the world, we can too if we just follow in His footsteps and follow the power that motivated Him and can motivate us. Christ showed us what is possible for us, therefore, we can have hope.

**Second Reason: We should have hope is because of the holy spirit.**

That is the power that allowed Christ to do what He did. That is the power that allows us to become like Him in character. It gives us the power to do what we need to do every day.

Let's look at John 14:23. This is one of my favorite scriptures. This says it all. It says something to those that are considering baptism as well as to all of us who are baptized.

**John 14:23.** *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words ... (KJV)*



Now there's too many out there that aren't keeping His words. They talk about His words, but don't do or keep His words. Christ is saying, "If you say you love me and you really mean it, you will keep my words.

*23b) ... and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (KJV)*

That is one of the most phenomenal things you can think about, that God and Christ will come and live inside us, make their habitation inside a human being. What a miracle and a blessing. This is how it's done. Verse 17:

*17) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees it not, neither knows it: but you know it; for it dwells with you ... (KJV)*

He was talking to them right then. This was before Pentecost. He was saying, "You don't have the holy spirit in you, the holy spirit is dwelling with you. Otherwise they wouldn't be following Christ in the first place. It's the same with us when we were getting literature or starting to read the Bible and it was beginning to make sense to us and we started to make changes in our life. That was the holy spirit working with us prior to baptism. Then He says...

*17b) ... and shall be in you. (KJV)*

For them He was referring to Pentecost. For us He's referring to our baptism. At baptism the holy spirit goes from being with us to being inside us. There is a huge difference.

What does the holy spirit do for us? Let's go to 2 Timothy 1:7. It gives us a power that we have never had before. It gives us the same power that allowed Christ to do what He did.

***2 Timothy 1:7. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear ... (KJV)***

Any time we have fear, it does not come from God. If we feel afraid, you can just stop and say, "This feeling I have, this emotion and anxiety and apprehension I have is not from God." It's either from us in our weakness or it's from our adversary.

*7b) ... but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (KJV)*

The Greek word for "sound mind" means *discipline or self-control*. Before we were converted most of us had little self-control. We just did whatever felt good.

The holy spirit gives us love, power and self-control so we can become like Jesus Christ. The holy spirit gives us power to overcome all opposition, whatever it might be and whatever quarter it comes from and in whatever guise it presents itself. We can

overcome all opposition. The primary one we have to overcome, of course, is our adversary, Satan.

Let's go to James 4:7. This is a promise that will give us hope in times of trouble. The apostle James, the half-brother of Jesus Christ says:

**James 4:7.** *Submit yourselves therefore to God ... (KJV)*

That is our job, to submit.

*7b) ... Resist the devil ... (KJV)*

We do that through the power of the holy spirit. We can't resist the devil on our own because he is far more powerful than we are, but we can resist him totally and completely with the power that we just read about in 2 Timothy 1:7.

Here's the promise.

*7 continued) ... and he will flee from you. (KJV)*

No questions, no doubts, no ands, ifs or buts. If we exercise that power, Satan will flee from us. Thoughts will vanish from our mind, emotions will vanish, urges to do certain things will go away if we submit and call on the power of God and exercise God's holy spirit.

You see, when a demon is cast out, it's not done by any human being. It's done by the power of the holy spirit. We can overcome Satan by this power.

We can also overcome the world, because Satan has totally influenced the world.

Look at 1John 4:4. John is toward the end of his life and he is addressing the brethren in the church much as a father would address his children.

**1John 4:4.** *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them ... (KJV)*

If you look at the context, he is referring to anti-Christ. You have overcome anti-Christ.

*4b) ... because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (KJV)*

Here is a promise saying that we have more power than Satan. We have more power residing in us than he has imbued into the world, if we will exercise it. Therefore, we can overcome Satan and we can overcome the world. In addition to that, and this is one of the biggest, we can overcome ourselves. That's one of the biggest problems, it's what's in us.

Let's go to Romans 6:6 and see that. The power of the holy spirit allows us to kill the old man or old woman that we had when God called us and we came to the point when we were going to be put in the water.

**Romans 6:6.** *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him [Christ] ... (KJV)*

That old man with his deeds are crucified, dead and gone.

*6b) ... that the body of sin might be destroyed ... (KJV)*

When we came out of the water tank and we came up, that man of sin was gone. All of those evil deeds and sins were gone. We were white as snow. Does that mean that our human nature won't rear up again? Of course, not. We know that.

*6 continued) ... that henceforth we should not serve sin. (KJV)*

We have the power of God's holy spirit to give us the strength every day and every minute not to serve sin, to control our mind, our mouth and our deeds. Because of the power of God's holy spirit, we have the capability of actually changing our nature from the old human being to the very nature of Jesus Christ and it is made possible through the power of the holy spirit. That power allows us to follow Christ's example and that power should give us great hope for the future.

### **Third Reason: We should have hope because of our trials.**

That sounds kind of odd at first. We should have hope because of our trials. Not in spite of our trials, but because of our trials.

Let's go to James 1:2-4.

**James 1:2.** *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, (NKJV)*

When we're going through a trial, we snicker and snort and say, "Oh, really?" The fact is that it's true.

*3) knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.*

*4) But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (NKJV)*

He is saying that our trials produce patience and it leads us to being perfect and complete. What does he mean by perfect? We think of perfect as not having any flaw or fault at all. God and Christ are perfect. The Greek word for "perfect" is Strong's 5046 and it means *complete in mental and moral character*. Not that we never sin, but that when we do sin we get rid of it right away. When we have a wrong thought, we banish it

from our minds. When we have a wrong emotion, we don't act on it. It means complete in mental and moral character.

The word translated "complete" in verse 4 is Strong's 3648, and it means *whole, being complete in every part*. We would say a balanced Christian, a well-rounded Christian, not having two or three good characteristics, but two or three horrible ones. So over time, our trials lead to patience and patience leads to us being complete in moral character and being balanced in the way we view things.

Let's go to Romans 5. It tells the purpose of trials and what trials lead to, and what trials lead to are good things, not bad things. James says to be happy in your tribulations and trials, and Paul says the same thing.

**Romans 5:3.** *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also ... (KJV)*

There's a reason we should do that. Why should we glory in tribulation?

*3b) ... knowing that tribulation works patience;*

*4) And patience, experience; and experience, hope [the subject of today] ... (KJV)*

Here is a process. We go from trial to patience, patience to experience, experience to hope.

*5) And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. (NLT)*

Trials bring us patience because the solution generally doesn't come right away. Often when we pray in the middle of a trial, the trial isn't completely wiped away in the next two minutes. It goes on.

I learned that very early in the first year after my baptism when I was an officer in the U.S. Air Force. I obviously knew that being in the Air Force was not right and was sinful in God's eyes. I had been in military school, was a career officer and I came to this realization. So I eagerly applied to get out. I knew without any doubt that when I applied to get out that I was doing God's will. He wanted me to be out, therefore, it would be approved and I would be gone. In the military the wheels of administration and paperwork turned very slowly, so it takes them months to finally get around to an individual. When that finally happened, I think it was four to six months later. It came back and I was rejected. They didn't think I was sincere. I was crushed. I was new in the church. I said, "God, what are you doing? I'm trying to do the right thing and you're doing this to me."

You read scriptures like this and other scriptures that tell us that trials teach us lessons. So finally the light bulb went on and I thought that maybe God is trying to teach me

something here. I had to wait a period of time before I could reapply. The day I could reapply, I did and then another six months later it was approved. I learned that trials bring patience.

Then we read these verses in Romans 5 that patience brings experience, because the more trials we go through, the more experience we have of God delivering us.

Then as we read in Romans 5, experience leads to hope, because we learn to expect deliverance. We learn to expect it. Trials brings patience, patience brings experience, and experience brings hope. That's what we need these days is hope.

Let's go to chapter 15 and verses 4 and 5. This book in our laps is a great source of hope.

**Romans 15:4.** *For whatsoever things were written aforetime [in our Bible] were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (KJV)*

Not only from our experience, but the experience of all of those who have gone before us that are written in these words, that we can have patience and comfort and that leads to hope.

*5) Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: (KJV)*

Trials bring us hope because they bend us and mold us to be more like Jesus Christ. As I said before, pain is a great teacher. When we're in pain, we get bent and shaped and molded like Jesus Christ, because pain gets our attention. The pain gets us back to basics. The more we are like Christ, the more we can see the end result of our life, because we also know the end result of His life and we can confidently hope for the same result. So we can have hope because of our trials.

**Fourth Reason: The biggest reason we should have hope is the resurrection.**

If there is no resurrection, we have no hope. The only solution to the problems we've talked about throughout the feast is the return of Jesus Christ. Don't kid ourselves. There is no other solution. The only solution is Christ's return. The only solution to our struggles in our own individual lives is the return of Jesus Christ and our resurrection.

Christ said in this world you will have trouble and, yes, we do.

**Acts 24:15.** *And have hope toward God, which they themselves [Jews] also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. (KJV)*

That is our hope, the resurrection of the dead. We want to be on the just side of that ledger, not on the unjust side.

The following scripture just clicked with me. It made so much sense and answered so many questions about why the world isn't converted today. We know this scripture by heart, but we sometimes ignore the promise here. Mr. Armstrong used to quote this all the time.

**John 6:44.** *No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him ... (KJV)*

That's why the world is not converted today. It's not a contest between Christ and Satan. If it was, Christ would be losing big. Often we stopped there and didn't go on in this verse. We need to focus on the rest of this verse.

*44b) ... and I will raise him up at the last day. (KJV)*

Verse 54:

*54) Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (KJV)*

These are strong, strong promises. They are absolute promises that we can take to the bank, as they say. We're going to need these strong promises going forward.

Again, we are talking about God and Christ living in us.

**Romans 8:10.** *And if Christ be in you, the body [the old person] is dead because of sin; but the Spirit [in us] is life because of righteousness.*

*11) But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [the Greek means "make alive"] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you. (KJV)*

Again, a strong, strong promise that if Christ is in us, our mortal bodies will be made alive if we're dead by that time, or changed if we're not, by the spirit that is in us through a resurrection.

Finally in this fourth point, let's turn to 1 Corinthians 15. The resurrection is the key to us having hope, because no matter how bad it gets in this life, we have the resurrection to count on and to look forward to. No matter how we die, whether peacefully or in pain, no matter what lies ahead, the resurrection clears it all up.

**1 Corinthians 15:16.** *For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: (KJV)*

Now the Sadducees didn't believe in a resurrection, so he is addressing this.

- 17) *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins.*  
18) *Then they also which are fallen asleep [dead] in Christ are perished. (KJV)*

They're in their graves just rotting away, no changes, and they will just be that way forever if there's no resurrection.

- 19) *If in this life only we have hope in Christ ... (KJV)*

Just in this life. Not in a future life.

- 19b) *... we are of all men most miserable. (KJV)*

Here's the key.

- 20) *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. (KJV)*

Verse 51:

- 51) *Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (KJV)*

Those who are alive at Christ's coming.

- 52) *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible ... (KJV)*

Those who have gone into the grave before this time will be raised incorruptible. That is a promise.

- 52b) *... and we shall be changed.*  
53) *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*  
54) *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (KJV)*

Verse 57:

- 57) *But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (KJV)*

Through His resurrection and ultimately through our resurrection, it is a promise that we must hold onto with all our being and that will give us hope for enduring what lies ahead.

So the answer to the question: Why should we have hope? We talked about four areas.

That leads us to the last point which is the subject of the sermon. Hope will be necessary, absolutely essential for us to endure to the end. Like those prisoners of war, if we lose hope, we can lose out at the very end, and we don't want that.

Let's go to 1 Peter 1. This one verse says it all. It is so logical. It takes it step by step showing how essential hope is for us to endure.

**1 Peter 1:3.** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... (KJV)*

Amen to that.

*3b) ... which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope ... (KJV)*

The Greek means a *living hope*. Not a dead hope. Not a hope that's in cinders or ashes, but a living hope. By what?

*3 continued) ... by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (KJV)*

That gives us a living hope. As we have seen, our hope comes from Christ's resurrection. So what is the basis of our hope? What are we hoping for? It's found in the next verse.

*4) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you, (KJV)*

It is reserved for each one of us. The reservation is there. The seat is reserved. No one else is sitting on it. It's there with our name on it, to an inheritance incorruptible if we endure to the end. The thing that helps us endure to the end is that Christ made it, therefore, I can make it because my seat has my name on it. It's not a seat at the place of safety, not a seat on an airline to get to the place of safety, we're talking about a seat in God's Kingdom.

What can we count on to realize that hope? The next verse tells us.

**1 Peter 1:5.** *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (KJV)*

As we've already seen, our hope comes from the power of the holy spirit just like verse 5 tells us.

*6) Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations [many trials]: (KJV)*



The Greek for “many trials” means *putting to the proof or putting to the test*. God is testing us. As we have seen, our hope increases through our trials by giving us patience and experience and then that leads to hope.

*7) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (KJV)*

When you refine a metal, all the impurities rise to the top. I had a metallurgy class in college and there was a big vat of molten silver. There was black scum at the top. The teacher was a gruff old guy, an iron worker in overalls. He grabbed one of the cadets standing right next to me. I was glad he didn't grab me. He took his hand and grabbed his finger and wiped it through the top of that molten metal and all of the crud just skimmed off and the molten metal dropped off his finger and his finger was fine. This guy was screaming. But all of the scum and bad stuff was gone. *“Though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”*

*8) Whom having not seen ... (KJV)*

None of us have seen Jesus Christ. Paul and the apostles did, but we haven't.

*8b) ... you love ... (KJV)*

We do love Jesus Christ.

*8 continued) ... in whom, though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: (KJV)*

For something we have yet to see.

*9) Receiving the end of your faith ... (KJV)*

I might add, the end of our hope also.

*9b) ... even the salvation of your souls [lives].*

*10) Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: (KJV)*

We are receiving the grace that has been prophesied for thousands of years. What a blessing! We are recipients of that grace. The people back in the Old Testament got it in a fuzzy way and maybe hoped for, but we have it.

11) *Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. (KJV)*

He is now in glory and we have the promise of having the same thing if we endure to the end. You see, our hope is for a much better time, a much better life, a life in God's Kingdom and a life as a spirit being. We have hope not just for us, but for all mankind. We look forward to Revelation 21:4. This is the hope we have for us and all those people we have described today that are suffering, even those that are killing other people. This is not their time. Forgive them for they know not what they do. Their time will come.

**Revelation 21:4.** *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying ... (KJV)*

You see pictures of little kids starving to death out in the middle of the Syrian Desert.

4b) *... neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (KJV)*

The only solution to man's problems is the return of Jesus Christ. The only solution for us ultimately is the resurrection.

So in wrapping up, for men in battle or in prison camps, hope was the only thing that kept them going, hope to leave the world they were in and be at home in peace. Like them, today we are in prison and we are in war with the god of this world. 2 Corinthians 4:4, we are in his prison and we are in a war against him. We are captive in his world by design. God is allowing it. We hope to escape like those POWs did to a better and different world in a different body.

We cannot let all of the problems that we have discussed during the feast cause us to lose hope, cause us to get depressed or discouraged or to get down. If we have hope, hope will remedy all of that because we keep our eye on the goal, the sure and steadfast promises of the Father and the Son.

**Hebrews 6:17.** *Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability [unchangeable] of his counsel ... (KJV)*

His counsel cannot be changed. God does not change.

17b) *... confirmed it by an oath:*

18) *That by two immutable [unchangeable] things, in which it was impossible for God to lie ... (KJV)*

That's the first thing that is unchangeable. It is impossible for God to lie. We have to take that to the bank.

*18b) ... we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (KJV)*

To grab onto that hope because God cannot lie. He has made promises and, therefore, that hope is secure.

*19) Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul [life], both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil; (KJV)*

The second immutability is “*which enters into that within the veil.*” That veil was parted when Christ died and it allows us access. That tells us that our hope goes right to the throne of God. It’s not hope in a man or administration or a name of a church, it is a hope in God and Jesus Christ at their throne directly to them. We can’t forget that. We cannot have hope in men. We must have hope in God and Jesus Christ.

Here’s one final scripture. This is also what we must hope in. God started something with each of us. With you it could be a few days, weeks or months. With others it is decades.

***Philippians 1:3.*** *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,  
4) Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,*

Paul had his mind on the people. He didn’t have his mind on administrations or bank accounts or exaltation. He had his mind on the people.

*5) For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;  
6) Being confident of this very thing ... (KJV)*

As we read in Hebrews 6, being sure and steadfast.

*6b)... that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

Until your resurrection and mine, that is the hope we have. So in this troubled world, let’s look forward and grow in hope that is sure and steadfast for us, brothers and sisters, being in God’s Kingdom.