

3 Psalm 25 Keys to Cultivating a Heart of Hope

One of my favorite Psalms is Psalm 25. Did you know that it is an acrostic psalm? The first word of each verse begins with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Pretty cool, huh? But beyond the poetry of the psalm, tucked within, are keys to living life with a heart of hope.

We all need a little hope, don't we? The political environment and the news are more caustic than ever. People seem to be growing in snarkiness and sarcasm on social media. We just need a little hope, and Psalm 25 is a great place to find some. The Hebrew word for "hope" used in this psalm implies waiting and trusting God to turn things around for good. It speaks to "binding us together with God." I love that! I want to be bound tightly to God. Don't you?

Often in your life and mine there are situations and circumstances that we are begging God to turn around for good. Hope implies that we are waiting expectantly for God to bring good out of even dark circumstances. How is this even possible? I'm so glad you asked!

Here Are 3 Keys to Keeping Hope Alive:

Foster an Attitude of Praise. Let's face it: some mornings we don't feel as though there's anything to give thanks for. We hardly feel like singing, "Hallelujah!" But if we choose to praise God by faith—that He is good, gracious, holy and sovereign—hope will rise. David, the writer of Psalm 25, writes, "my hope is in you" (v. 5, NIV) and "Good and upright is the Lord" (v. 8). Even secular psychologists agree that an attitude of gratitude fills a person with hope. Don't you love it when science confirms what God has already said?

Cultivate a Continual Awareness of God's Presence. At times

when the burdens pile up and our worries are many, our temptation is to feel alone. The truth is that we are never alone! God's presence is with us 24/7. If you want hope to return, foster an awareness of God's presence. Remind yourself throughout the day, "God is with me!" The ancient monk Brother Lawrence taught us to practice the presence of God through the simple tasks of the day. Whether you're driving to work, studying for an exam, washing dishes or clothes, or chasing a toddler, remind yourself that God is with you. One practical way to do this is to whisper a prayer throughout the day, "Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you are with me." David wrote, "My eyes are ever on the Lord" (v. 15). He was living with a continual awareness of God's presence.

Nurture a Willingness to Respond to His Promptings. If you feel in your spirit that God is prompting you to give money to the homeless man holding a sign on the freeway, give him money. If you feel in your spirit that God is prompting you to pray with a friend, pray. If you feel in your spirit that God is prompting you to share Jesus with your neighbor, do it. Practice living a life of instant obedience to whatever God calls you to do. As you live with a responsive attitude towards His promptings, your heart will be filled with hope because life becomes one grand adventure. David writes that the Lord "confides" in those who fear Him (v. 14). In other words, God shares the secret things of His heart with those He knows will respond in obedience. I want to be someone the Lord confides in, and that means I need to respond by faith to every prompting of His Spirit. Will I get it wrong sometimes? Absolutely. But as Bill Bright once said, I'd rather be wrong than disobedient. So respond by faith to what you sense He's calling you to do, and you will see hope rise. {eoa}

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