

When Hope Is a Battle

A friend and I were talking last night about the battle for hope. We're both at what could possibly be called a midlife crisis. For me, the crisis comes from dying to the idea that, since God is good, life following Him at some point becomes good too.

Instead, God is good, and that's supposed to sustain me when life is not.

When thinking today about the hope I'm supposed to have, I found this verse: "The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue" (Ps. 33:17, ESV).

Even as a Christian who was raised in the church, I cannot believe how many different "warhorses" I have looked to over the years in hope of rescue. My warhorses are always linked to some type of circumstantial change—but they *never* rescue me the way I expect. They are always a false hope. They let me down every time.

The Bible talks about hope *in* God—"And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you" (Ps. 39:7)—and hope *from* God—"For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him" (Ps. 62:5).

And yet I'm not sure even how to define this hope. I know that the Hebrew word for *hope* is also translated *expectation*. I get the idea of sitting in the middle of my struggle and looking longingly for rescue.

But from where do I expect this rescue to come?

Part of my problem is that I often don't know what rescue is supposed to look like. From past experience, I know that God's choice of rescue is both unpredictable and consistently better

than my visions of rescue, but I have no idea how to predict His mode of rescue for the future.

I am learning that only God can rescue, and I am aware of the futility of setting my expectations on anything or anyone else. I still don't know exactly what rescue looks like.

To summarize, I often don't really know what I'm looking *for*, but I have to hang on to hope in Whom I am looking *to*.

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