

"Virtues to Live by"

Before You Begin – An overview for teachers

Hope Definition and Biblical Sources

Hope

"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Isaiah 40:31

Definition

You know that when life gets hard you don't give up but carry on hoping that things will get better. You dream of a better world or something better that will come in the future. You live for something greater than yourself. Your hope drives out selfishness and boredom and encourages you to engage with your community and do good works. You trust that God is at work moving the world towards what is good.

Biblical sources

"Oh, that I might have my request, that God would grant what I hope for..." (Job 6:8)

"Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." (Hebrews 10:23)

"being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6)

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

"For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently." (Romans 8:24-25)

"Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times." (Romans 12:12)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Peter 3)

"but set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts, being ready always to give account of the hope within you..." (1 Peter 3:15)

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again ... through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.... Therefore encourage one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, 18)

Church teaching

"The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of everyone; it takes up the hopes that inspire our activities and purifies them so as to order them to the Kingdom of heaven; it keeps man from discouragement; it sustains us during times of abandonment; it

opens up our heart in expectation of eternal beatitude. Buoyed up by hope, we are preserved from selfishness and led to the happiness that flows from charity." (para.1818, CCC)

By hope we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. (para. 118 CCC)

"Christian hope lends great energy to commitment in the social field, because it generates confidence in the possibility of building a better world, even if there will never exist "a paradise of earth." (The Social Doctrine of the Church, 579)

Catholic sources

"The only reason for the importance we give to the field of education is the hope for a new humanity, for another possible world." (Pope Francis)

"Hope is not a spiritual consolation, a distraction from the serious tasks that require our attention, but a dynamic force liberating us from all determinism and every obstacle in order to build a community of men and women finally free from the usual chains of selfishness, inaction and injustice." (Pope Francis)

"Live, love, believe, and with God's grace, never despair." (Pope Francis)

Why Practice Hope?

When you are hopeful, you know that God will change all things for good. We know that God will give us the strength to make changes in our world. We know that through our relationship with God we will be given new ways to live and the energy to grow and spread God's Kingdom here on earth.

How do we Practice Hope?

You practice hopefulness when you dream about how things could be better in our world. When you show belief in mankind even when we are disappointed by the actions of others and ourselves. We keep God's vision of the Kingdom of God at the heart of our own visions for the future. We speak positively to others.

Key Words:

Expectation, confidence, goal, promise, dream.

Signs you are Hopeful:

- I believe and trust that God will not give up on me
- I am positive about the future
- I don't give up on myself
- I have hopes and dreams that we can all work for a better world
- I pray to God placing my life in his hands
- I know God has a plan for me

Other ideas:

Our Hopes and Dreams wall – children draw their own hope for the future.

God's Promises – children look up bible verses of God's Promises and illustrate them

Reflection Questions:

Who helps to make you feel hopeful?

What are you hopeful for?

When is it hardest for you to be hopeful?

Think of a time when your hope for something was realised – how did you feel?

Quotes:

It's always something, to know you've done the most you could. But, don't leave off hoping, or it's of no use doing anything. Hope, hope to the last! (Nicholas Nickleby, Charles Dickens)

"Despite everything, life is full of beauty and meaning." (Etty Hillesum)

"It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart." (Anne Frank)

"I have a dream ..." (Martin Luther King)

"We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope." (Martin Luther King)

"Christians remain people of hope even amidst recurrent disappointments." (Al Kresta)