

Bible Study for times of disaster

THE OPPOSITE OF FEAR IS HOPE

As Christians, when we speak of hope, we don't just mean wishful thinking. Christian hope is something much broader, deeper and stronger. In Scripture, hope is not just a vague desire that something good in the future will turn up somewhere. Rather, the biblical understanding of hope is a confident expectation that good in the future will come. It's an assurance based on our existing experience of God's goodness, God's love and the faithfulness that God already has shown towards us.

Scripture also contains the idea that, while hope is something that comes primarily from God, it is also something in which human beings have a part to play and a contribution to make. In the letter to the Hebrews, we find the following words: "For God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do. And we want each one of you to show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope to the very end" (Hebrews 6:10-11).

As Christians, we are graciously called by God to join in the work in which God will succeed in bringing hope into the world. Our work, our love and our diligence matter. The contribution we make is important in bringing into being the future that God wants for us and for which we trust and pray.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do you understand the term "hope"?
2. How do you respond to the idea that hope is something in which both God and we have a part to play?

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Adapted from *La foi en temps d'Ebola* by Dr. Isaac Muyonga and Rt. Rev. Michael Beasley