



Our Resolute Hope

GOD'S
PROMISES ARE
GUARANTEED.

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Is Your Hope Rooted in Confidence?

HOPE IS the one thing that humanity cannot live without.

The word hope as we use it in English is nothing more than wishful thinking – “I hope I win the lottery” or “I hope I get the day off tomorrow.” The world *hopes* for something that *could* happen, but might *not* happen. However, in the Bible, the Greek word for hope is *elpidos*, and it means *confidence*.

Isn't that incredible?!? So incredible, in fact, that the name of this ministry, and of this book, is rooted in this definition.

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Our Resolute Hope.

You see beloved, our hope is not merely wishful thinking – our hope is firmly rooted in confidence. Our God will do everything He promised because, as Titus 1:2 tells us, God cannot lie – His promises are *guaranteed*.

This world is a dark and desperate place; people are often wounded and alone. They are left feeling like no one cares, or even knows what they are facing. But there is One place they can turn – and they can turn there confidently.

Something to Hold on To

AS I have counseled many people over the years, I have been exposed to a lot of the hurt that they go through in this life. And it has brought me to the realization that there is so much more pain out there than people even realize.

Genesis 3 tells the story of Adam and Eve. What was the very first thing Adam and Eve did after they ate from the tree God told them not to? A lot of people think it was that they hid from God, but that actually came later. The first thing they did was put on fig leaves and hide from *each other*. I think we have been hiding ever since.

We ask questions like, “Is there anyone out there who cares?”

Is there anyone out there who will help me?” We need to be rescued, we need something to hold onto. We long to believe and act on all the things we have heard about God, but we just don’t know how. And this is why confident hope – resolute hope – is so important. The word *Grace* has become almost a buzzword to the Christian community and the meaning of it is losing some of its intensity. *Hope*, on the other hand, can never lose its intensity.

There Is No Shadow Without Light

WE KNOW that God has made us perfect in Christ, that He’s made us righteous. But, as I’m sure you’ve come to experience, we still live in a sin-cursed world that’s fallen and dark. In this fallen world, we desperately need a light to shine into the darkness. My heart’s ultimate desire is for those who are in the darkness, those who are walking through the “valley of the shadow of death” (Psalm 23:4), to know that there can be no shadow without a light. Beloved, no matter your circumstances and pain, there is a light – there is a Lighthouse, and its light

pierces through the dark night to find you. There is a place you can go where you're going to find truth, and that truth will bring you freedom. Whatever you are going through, it is not the end of your story.

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You Will Dance Again

WHEN MY youngest daughter Avery was born, her first few months of life were a rollercoaster. We were told so many negative things by so many doctors as we painfully watched our new-born daughter struggle to survive. But there was one doctor who told us not to let anyone tell us, “No.” He saw a fire in Avery’s eyes and told us to fight for her. When I wrote her story, *[A Sure Grip for a Wild Ride](#)*, I concluded it by saying that *we don’t know what tomorrow holds, but we know Who holds tomorrow. And the One who holds tomorrow is holding us, and we will dance again.* You will dance again, beloved. I won’t deny your pain, I won’t try to explain your pain away, I won’t ask you to put on a facade. No. Fully embrace it, beloved, but in doing

so, also fully embrace that it is not the end of your story. You are going to dance again.

Now, I know what you may be thinking... “That’s great, Pastor Frank, but how? I’m hurting so bad. The pain is too raw. Yes, I know that Jesus promised joy, peace, abundant life, rest, and freedom, but I’m not experiencing those promises.”

That is why I wrote this book, my friend. As you continue to read, I pray you will discover everything that *Our Resolute Hope* stands for – Jesus, plus nothing else. Through the words on these pages may you come to believe and act on the purity of the New Covenant so that your life will be transformed.

Incredible Riches in Christ

I WANT to tell you a story about a man named Ira Yates.

Ira Yates owned a dry goods store in west Texas in 1915. He traded that store to Thomas Hickox for a large cattle ranch

in Pecos County. Despite Ira's experience raising cattle, Yates Ranch struggled to be profitable. On a hunch, he invited the Transcontinental Oil Company to explore his land for oil.

With Yates facing an uncertain financial future, the drillers hit the richest oil deposit found in the state of Texas up to that time. Ira Yates' financial troubles were solved in a single day, and the Yates Oil Field is still producing oil decades later. The next day, the local newspaper headlines proclaimed the news, "Yates Becomes a Millionaire Overnight."

This is a true story, but is it a true headline? Absolutely not. You see, Mr. Yates became a millionaire the moment he took ownership of that cattle ranch, he just didn't know it. My friend, this is the same phenomenon I see happening in the church today. As

believers, we secured incredible riches in Christ the moment we put our faith in Him. Like Mr. Yates, many of us really do not know the full scope of what we have in Christ.

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Unpacking the Riches: The Five Promises of Jesus

LET'S CONSIDER five promises Jesus made in the New Testament.

1. Jesus promised us joy.

“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.” John 15:11 (NASB)

We were designed for Eden, but this world sure isn't it. We've got death coming at us from all directions; a never-ending stream of criticism, shame, condemnation, and frustration. Jesus promises that in the face of such an assault, we can experience the fullness of joy. Christians are the only people on the planet who can have tears of sorrow streaming down their faces, while at the same time experiencing full and true *joy*.

2. Jesus promised us peace.

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.” John 14:27a (NASB)

Jesus said He would give us a peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). His peace won't make sense considering what's going on in the world around you or in your life.

**PERFECT,
CIRCUMSTANCE-
PROOF PEACE.**

This experience of God is far better than anything the world can offer. Perfect, circumstance-proof peace.

3. Jesus promised us abundant life.

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” John 10:10 (NASB)

Why did Jesus specify *abundant* life? Because Jesus doesn't do anything partway! He doesn't hold back. The gifts we receive from Him are pressed down, shaken together, and running over. He gives us so much, there's no room for seconds. If Jesus is giving us life, He is giving *lots* of it. But, my friend, the promises don't end there...

4. He promised us rest.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28 (NASB)

Note the language here very carefully, my friend. *Who* is this promise for? The super saint? The person who can pull anything off in their own strength? No way! This promise is for those who are tired and weary and simply unable to do life in this fallen world. To them, Jesus says, “I have good news! Come to me, and I will give you rest!” Interestingly, the Greek word for rest can be literally translated as *vacation*. Further, the Greek language is structured in such a way that this verse could be translated, “I will vacation you.” It’s almost like Jesus is saying, “I’ll see to it personally that you enter into some rest.” Isn’t that awesome?!?

5. Jesus promised us freedom.

“...you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John 8:32 (NASB)

Freedom from what? Well, freedom from sin, guilt, shame, and the Law. That’s good news, but it gets better... He offers us freedom from having to perform to be accepted. And He offers us the ultimate freedom – freedom from ourselves. Freedom

from having to take ourselves so seriously and freedom to be able to laugh at ourselves. Let's be honest, we provide a lot of humorous material, right?

My friend, as you reflect on each of these five promises – joy, peace, abundant life, rest, and freedom – take a good, honest look at the Church... How many Christians do you know who are consistently abiding and experiencing these promises? How many experience all five in their lives? Can I meddle a little bit into your life? How many of these promises are you presently experiencing? Are you living with joy, peace, rest, and freedom, and are you experiencing life to its fullest? Or are you feeling lost, lonely, and a bit overwhelmed?

Our Big Problem

IF YOU'RE like the vast majority of Christians I encounter, you may have one or more of these promises active in your life every once in a while, but find yourself lacking the glorious full experience of God that Jesus promised. That, my friend, presents us with a problem. If Jesus promised joy, peace,

abundant life, rest, and freedom, and we are not experiencing those promises, then either Jesus is the biggest liar to ever hit this planet, or the Church is missing part of the Gospel.

Think through this with me. Is Jesus a liar? Does He have a problem delivering on His promises? Absolutely not! Titus 1:2 tells us that God cannot lie.

Do you understand what that verse means? It does not mean God *will not* lie. It means it is an *utter impossibility* for Him to lie because of Who He is.

If He said He's given us these things, then He has already given them to us. If we don't see them present in our lives, the problem must lie with us and our own understanding and appropriation of the Gospel.

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Some Christians see the discrepancy between what Jesus promised and their failure to experience those promises, and then come to an incorrect conclusion. They conclude that yes, they are saved, but Jesus' promises will remain unfulfilled until we receive "second blessing" or a "second work of grace". This couldn't be further from the truth!

Completely Full

ACCORDING TO Colossians 2:10, Paul tells us that we are complete in Christ. The Greek word for *complete* is *pleroo*. *Pleroo* can also be translated as “filled completely full” or “perfect”. According to Colossians 2:10, you and I are perfect in Christ – right now! We lack nothing and need nothing more, because we already have the fullness of God dwelling within us. Isn’t that amazing?!? I’ve always wanted to say I was perfect, and now I’ve got a biblical basis to do so, and so do you! We stand perfect and finished, meaning we are in need of no other work to be accomplished on our behalf.

Let’s affirm together what Jesus’s final words were on the cross. He said, “*It is finished*” (John 19:30). Do you know what the literal translation of that phrase means in the Greek? It means “it is finished.” Exactly that. Jesus really did do all that was necessary for us to live life in His fullness. Jesus

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has absolutely delivered on what He promised us.

Paul touched on this same idea in Ephesians 1:3, where He tells us that God “has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Note the language carefully. Did Paul say, “*some* spiritual blessings are yours”? Did he write “a few spiritual blessings are yours”? Absolutely not! In fact, the Greek word Paul used here is *pas*, which directly translates to *all, the whole, every kind of*. What do you think of that? Every spiritual blessing Jesus gave you – joy, peace, life, rest, and freedom – is already yours.

When we received the Holy Spirit, we received all of Him and all that He is. You cannot receive a part of God, because He is a person. What happens if you divide a person up in separate parts? That person ceases to be a person. When God gave you His Holy Spirit, you were given the *entirety* of Him. God has not held anything back from you – you’ve been given everything.

My friend, hear what the New Testament is heralding here – there is no need for a second work of grace or a second blessing – we’ve already got everything we need because we

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have *all of God* living inside of us! That is why Peter said we have been given “His divine power” that has provided for us “everything pertaining to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3).

As you grow in your maturity and understanding of Who Jesus is and what He has done, you will begin to experience more and more of Who He is to you. God intended this to be the biblical norm for all of His kids. He desires that we all grow in understanding and appropriation of what He has done and all He longs to do in our lives. But let me be very clear here – you are not receiving anything new from God. When you got Jesus you got all of Him. You’re simply discovering what you already had in Him. How wonderful!

Understanding What We Have

AFTER PAUL proclaimed our spiritual blessings in Ephesians 1, he wrote one incredibly long, run-on sentence in which he seemed almost unable to stop proclaiming what some of those blessings were. He said we were chosen in Him, adopted

into the family of God, and fully accepted in Jesus. We have been redeemed, forgiven of *all* our sins, and have been made to understand the mysteries of God. And we have been given the Holy Spirit of God Himself as a down payment of our inheritance.

Oh my goodness, put the car in park and think about that one for just a minute! We have been given God as a down payment of our inheritance! Though we've completely received God in all His fullness, we also have the promise of *more* of God to come. How can that happen? Well, it can happen because God is infinite; there will always be more of Him to experience than a finite vessel like us can ever experience. Glory! Is it any wonder that throughout this sentence Paul kept saying, "Praise! Praise! Praise!"?

But watch what happened next... After informing us and instructing us on all we have already been given in Christ, Paul instantly prayed, *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe."* Ephesians 1:17–19a (NASB)

Did you see what Paul did? In verses 3-14 he reveals to us what we have, and then in verses 15-19, he prays that we would

understand what it is we have. You see, Paul knew we could easily miss it. We can be just like Mr. Yates – we can live our lives not knowing how rich we truly are! We can live our lives not knowing what we have.

Knowing and Embracing

THE REAL problem lies between what God has done for us and our failure to consistently experience what God has *intended* for us. My conviction, after many years of ministry, is that the Church has missed a major portion of what God intended us to understand. Therefore, what we don't fully know, we cannot fully embrace by faith. This results in a failure to appropriate, which results in a failure to experience. Let me explain what I'm saying...

Let's say I deposit a million dollars into an account in your name, and I put the bank card connected to that account in my office drawer. But I don't tell you about it. Are you a millionaire? Yes, technically you are. But it's not doing you any

good, is it? Why not? Because you do not know what you have.

Now let's suppose I hand you the bank card and say, "Here's a bank card with your name on it – there's a million dollars in the account – I love you so much! I am giving this to you with absolutely no strings attached."

Isn't that exciting? Now the problem has been solved. You now *know* you have a million dollars.

But this creates another problem. You probably won't believe me. Why not?

Well, I'm a pastor, for one thing, so it is unlikely that I have a million dollars. Also, you'd probably suspect that if I *had* a million dollars, I wouldn't be giving it to you, right? So, what's missing? Belief and faith. Despite what I've told you, you're skeptical. It's too good to be true.

Now let's say you're at work. Just as you're leaving at the end of the day, your spouse texts you to pick up some groceries for dinner. No problem. You make a quick pit-stop at the grocery store. Just as you're about to pay the cashier for the food in your shopping cart, you realize you've forgotten your wallet at the office. The store closes in a few minutes, so you don't have time to go back to the office for your wallet. If you go home

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without the groceries, dinner plans are ruined.

You're about to leave dejected when you remember the bank card I gave you. You pull it out of your pocket and turn it over in your hands. You figure it's worth a shot. You hand the card to the cashier, expecting it to be declined.

To your surprise, the machine prints your receipt, the cashier hands your card back, and you leave with your groceries. All the way home you're wondering what happened. Then it hits you – you pull over on the side of the road and call the customer service line listed on the back of the card. In several moments, the automated customer service line informs you that the available balance on the account is \$999,943.42.

When you walked into that grocery store, you didn't believe you were a millionaire, and you certainly didn't *feel* like a millionaire, did you? But after confirming the balance with your bank, it's a different story! Now, you know. You *believe*. You're even starting to *feel* like a millionaire. And, I bet you'll be swiping that card a WHOLE lot more, right?!?

The Formula for Christian Living

MY FRIEND, I've just outlined the only formula the Bible gives us for living the Christian life: Know. Believe. Act. Notice that *feel* isn't in that equation. We have to act, even when we don't feel it, because what God says is true. The feeling comes after what we know and believe gets proven in our lives over time. That's what this book is about. I want you to *know* what God has done and longs to do on your behalf. Further, I want you to believe what you have come to know and act on those beliefs so you can transform how you live and even how you feel.

My brand new book is being released this Spring is called *Stunned By Grace*. In it, I walk step by step through Romans 5:17 – which is perhaps the most concise, beautiful description of the Christian life in the entire Bible. I can't wait to show you how full, and how packed with delicious life-transforming truth this verse is! It has revolutionized my Christian life and the lives of countless others throughout the centuries. I know it will bless you, beloved.

After hearing these truths for the first time at one of my

conferences, a young man came up to me and told me that what he had just received was like taking a drink from a fire hydrant. What a great word picture! The truth of the love and provision of God on his behalf had filled him full to overflowing. He knew before that God loved him, but now he really knew.

The truth is God loves us more than we will ever know – moreover, He *likes* us more than we will ever know. It will take an eternity for us to begin to discover how much God loves and *likes* us, and even an eternity will not exhaust it!

One of Paul's favorite phrases in the New Testament is "much more". I like that. In many ways, you and I are like Mr. Yates. We don't know the abundance of the riches we have. The truth is, when it comes to God and our relationship with Him, there is always "much more" available for us to know and experience. Wow!

Let's continue to explore the wonderful gifts we've received from Father God.



Stunned by Grace

The grace of God should stun us, overwhelm us, and make us leap for joy to proclaim the awe and wonder of the goodness of God. But we don't understand its depths because we've only begun to scratch the surface of its glory.

In his signature candid and relaxed style, Frank Friedmann unpacks the glory of our new covenant and life with Christ.

Read a free excerpt here:

www.ourresolutehope.com/stunned-by-grace-book