

1 Peter 3:1-6, Part II | “Women Who Hope in God”  
*Preached on May 9, 2021 by Pastor Matt Brown*

This morning, we will be in 1 Peter chapter 3, verses 1 through 6, as I will be doing the second part of my two part message on this passage.

We are continuing in our study of 1 Peter, as it has been extremely practical as of late.

Let's READ THE PASSAGE. *[pause]*

Last week, we looked down at the “trees” of this passage, that is, we really dealt with the specifics of what Peter was saying.

And what we saw was that wives should submit to their husbands and adorn themselves with a gentle and quiet spirit, which was exemplified by holy women of old, especially Sarah.

And a big point of last week was that submission is beautiful to God. *[pause]*

Now this morning being Mother's Day, I want to talk to women in general, but men don't shut off your brain because there will be some general truths that apply to you. *[pauseeee]*

What I want to do is look a little deeper into the “how” of this passage because I believe it holds the key to being a godly wife, mother, or even just a godly woman. *[pause]*

How is it that a woman can live this way?

How can a wife submit to her husband, even submitting to a husband who doesn't believe in Christ?

How can she swim upstream in a culture obsessed with outward appearance?

How can she have a gentle and quiet spirit, when the world around her is harsh and chaotic?

How can she not fear anything that is frightening?

Does she just do it with her sleeves rolled up and work hard?

Does she plow through it with her head down and just get through it all?

Does she resentfully do it?

What's the key? Where should a woman place her hope in doing these things? *[pause]*

Well let me ask you, where's *your* hope for being able to perform your marriage role?

Where's your hope when you deal with your kids and things aren't seeming to go well?

Where's your hope in troubling times?

Where's your hope on a normal day?

What's the key to being able to live out what God requires?

The key is found when Peter gives the example of holy women of the past, and he describes them with a short description that says that they were "women who hoped in God."

The explanation for how they could adorn themselves with godly submission was their hope in God. *[pauseeee]*

You see, where we place our hope shapes how we live our lives.

If your hope is in being the leader of your husband, you will reject your role of submission with everything within you.

If your hope is in your outward beauty, then you will live being consumed with being outwardly attractive.

But when God is your hope, then you're able to live out his calling and do even hard things for His glory. *[pauseeee]*

Before we go any further, I want to define, "hoping in God".

What does it mean?

Well Biblical hope is not something uncertain like we often use it to say, "I hope this will happen."

But instead, it's a confident expectation of something good in the future. *[pause]*

Now this hope isn't some vague hope in nothingness, but it's hope *in* something.

This hope has an object, and it's the great "I AM". *[pause]*

What a blessing to know that our hope is in something, and praise God it's not in us!

*Our hope is in the most reliable and perfect Being in the Universe. [pause]*

Also, praise God our hope isn't in something error-prone!

It's not in us, it's not things, it's not even in spiritual leaders.

Don't put your hope in another Christian, no matter how spiritually mature they seem because they will fail you. *[pause]*

I think of well-known pastors who have failed miserably and people have been broken over this.

We are certainly saddened by things like this, but our hope isn't shaken because our hope was never in them.

Though all others fall away and ruin their lives, my hope is not even moved one millimeter!

Though the world crumbles around me, though chaos fills the streets, my hope is not moved because it's in something immovable. *[pause]*

Hoping in God is basically putting your trust and confidence in the Lord.

You trust Him so much that you place the future in His hands.

You trust Him so much that you can obey Him knowing that He will come through.

It's such a powerful thing because it's simply resting in the character of God.

It's saying, "I am confident that God will do what He said." *[pause]*

Hope in God is very much linked to faith in God.

Just listen to Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." *[pause]*

We are told that these women of the past hoped in God.

They weren't just women who did this - they were women who hoped in God - that's what made the difference. *[pause]*

And it was the women of the past's hope in God that made them holy women.

It wasn't that they were holy in themselves, but they were declared holy because they simply took God at His Word.

Like Abraham believed God and he counted it to him as righteousness<sup>1</sup>, so these women believed God and it was counted as righteousness. *[pauseeee]*

This is where I want to start first because it is foundational to the whole sermon: do you hope in God?

Do you put your trust in Him so much that you are confident that His ways are best?

Do you put your confidence in Him so much that you are assured that the future will pan out the way God promised?

It is only hoping in God that allows you to willingly, joyfully, and persistently follow God's calling, even in the face of hardship. *[pause]*

So as we get into this passage, do you hope in God?

Where is your hope? *[pause]*

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<sup>1</sup> See Genesis 15:6.

According to this text, I want to bring out four distinctives of women who hope in God.

And I get this from the fact that the holy women who hoped in God adorned themselves with the things in this text.

It was because they hoped in God that they could do what God called them to do. *[pauseeee]*

Keep in mind that you won't do these things perfectly, but your life can be characterized by these things as you hope in God through the Spirit's power. *[pause]*

*First...*

### **I. Women who hope in God obey Him above all.**

This passage calls wives to submit to their husbands, even if they have an unbelieving husband.

Sarah is an example of this as she submitted to Abraham and showed respect for him.

Ultimately, this submission in marriage is obedience to God and his Divine design.

And the reason why women can do this and Sarah could do this is hope in God. *[pause]*

This is important because it goes right to the foundation of obedience in whatever role we are called to do...

Sarah didn't submit because Abraham was this amazing, intellectual person.

She didn't submit because Abraham was perfect.

She submitted to Abraham because she believed that God would reward those who place their faith in Him. *[pause]*

Do you really think that a woman who was hopeless would be able to live this way?

Do you really think that a woman whose hope was in other things could live this way?

It is our hope in God that shapes our obedience.

If God is better than everything, then that means that anything that disobedience promises me is worthless in comparison. *[pause]*

Let me give an example.

When it comes to submission in marriage, sin will tempt you by saying something like this...

"You shouldn't have this low position of submission to your husband. Come on, you are smarter than him. You deserve to be in charge around here."

But if your hope is in God, then you say back to that temptation, “God is good. God designed marriage to be this way...

...His ways are better than a higher position of authority. I will obey Him because He knows best.”

And when you think this way, you are showing that your hope is in God, not in a higher position.  
*[pause]*

You see, sometimes women will submit to their husbands, but do it with no joy.

Or they will submit, and think, “OK, I’ll do this, but God is depriving me of something and this is such a lesser role.”

But that’s not hoping in God, that’s thinking that God is out to be a killjoy!

You don’t hope in God by reluctantly obeying Him, but by joyfully obeying Him. *[pauseeee]*

This hoping in God by submitting can also be done in a marriage with an unbelieving husband.

How? Because your hope is in God, not your husband.

Your hope is in Him, who has structured marriage according to his great wisdom.

Your hope is in Him, who has made godly conduct in marriage have the potential to lead an unbelieving husband to salvation.

Your hope is in God, not in your ability to convince your husband with your words to be saved.  
*[pause]*

Even if your husband isn’t a good husband, you can submit because your hope isn’t in your husband, it’s in the Lord. *[pauseeee]*

Now let’s broaden this out a little bit, as we apply it.

We could say this: whatever role God has you in, you can put your hope in Him, and therefore, you can obey him above all in whatever situation you are in.

Are you a mother? Put your hope in God!

Are you a father? Hope in God!

Are you a single person? Trust Him.

Are you a child or teen in the home? Place your faith in Him!

He’s better than anything that sin can promise you!

He is perfect. He is good. He never fails. He never lies.

And he can be trusted with every single moment you go through. *[pauseeeee]*

When you hope in God, then obedience to Him is always worth it. *[pause]*

Let's say that you are a student who is taking a test.

You may be tempted to cheat on your test to get a higher grade, and if you cheated on your test, what you are implying is this...

"My hope is in my grades. If I don't get a good grade, it's all over for me, so I'm willing to cheat to get a good grade." *[pause]*

But let's say the student's hope was in God, how would they respond then?

Certainly, the student would study, but let's say test day came, what then?

Well if their hope is in God, they wouldn't cheat, but obey God by not cheating because their hope isn't in their grades.

Their hope is in God, and they give it up to the Lord, saying, "Even if I fail this test, Lord, you are still good, you are still with me, and your promises will come true."

What a difference hope in God makes on a person! *[pauseeee]*

In what ways have you been disobeying God?

Can it be linked back to a lack of trust in God, and instead, a trust in other things? *[pause]*

You don't stand up for the truth because your hope is in the approval of others.

You cut corners at your job in order to look better to your boss because your hope is in that promotion.

That's what happens when we place our hope in things other than God. *[pause]*

But Scripture teaches us that when your hope is in God, obedience is *always* worth it because of who you are obeying.

No matter how hard it is, your trust in the Lord motivates you to follow His Word. *[pause]*

I think of Hebrews 11, which tells us of all these men and women of faith, but what does it say?

It says things like, "By faith Abel *offered* to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain."<sup>2</sup>

"By faith Noah...*constructed* an ark for the saving of his household."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 11:4.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 11:7.

“By faith Abraham *obeyed*...he went out, not knowing where he was going.”<sup>4</sup>

And, “By faith Abraham...*offered up Isaac*.”<sup>5</sup>

It was their hope and trust in God that led them to obey, even hard-to-do, impossible-looking commands.

Why? Because they knew that God would come through. *[pauseeee]*

Hope in God is so powerful that even if everyone else disagrees with your decision, you can obey God with joy! *[pause]*

**So moms this morning, do you hope in God?**

If so, remember that obeying Him is always worth it.

For as Moses “considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt,”<sup>6</sup> so you can consider obedience for the sake of God greater wealth than the treasures of this world.

It’s worth it because God is worth it, the hope of the nations! *[pause]*

*Women who hope in God obey Him above all, but secondly...*

## **II. Women who hope in God focus on what matters to God - the heart.**

In our society, outward beauty in women is promoted, exalted, and idolized.

Through different means, it pushes the need to look a certain way.

And so some women go all out with an obsession on hair, makeup, accessories, and clothing.

And what can so easily happen is your hope becomes your outward appearance, where you start to think, ‘If I can look a certain way, then I will feel fulfilled.’

‘If I can look a certain way, I can feel better about myself.’

‘If I can look a certain way, I will gain the approval of the other women or men.’

But your hope has just been placed in something not only superficial, but in something that can fade away, or even be taken away in an instant.

Is that where you want to put your hope in? In something changing and not lasting? *[pause]*

So how can women throw down the idol of outward appearance, even amidst the flaming arrows of the culture, sinful tendencies, and pressure from others?

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<sup>4</sup> Hebrews 11:8.

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 11:17.

<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 11:26.

By hoping in God. *[pause]*

Once again we go back to the holy women of the past hoping in God by not adorning themselves with outward things, but with the internal things of the heart.

They could reject the desire for adorning the external, by focusing on what God desired above all. *[pause]*

The key once again is hope in God.

If your hope is in God, then your hope isn't in your outward beauty.

If your hope is in God, then you will focus on what matters most to Him, and verse 4 tells us that what's most precious in God's sight is the hidden person of the heart. *[pause]*

More specifically, he sees a gentle and quiet spirit to be very precious.

That's what he cares about most! *[pauseeee]*

Think about the difference this could make in your life!

If your hope is in God, then how others deem your looks doesn't affect your joy.

If your hope is in God, then how others deem your outfit doesn't affect your serenity because your approval is in God, not what others say about your outfit. *[pause]*

God cares about your heart, so put your focus there.

Your looks will change over time, clothing fads definitely change over time, but what God cares about never changes. *[pauseeeee]*

Women, you can break free from the bondage to having to look a certain way!

It is truly bondage!

Don't you find it hard to keep up with the ever-changing clothing fads?

Don't you find it hard to please everyone with how you look?

Don't you find it hard to win against what age does to your outward appearance?

Don't you find it hard to quell the desire for more clothes, more accessories, and new styles?

Turn to Christ!

Put your hope in God!

He can free you from this slavery to appearance!



You can get to the point where you start to say, “My hope is in God, not in how I look.”

You can get to the point where you say, “My youthful beauty is fading, and I don’t look how I used to look, but that’s OK because what matters most is how God views me and what he cares about.” *[pause]*

**When you put your hope in God, then you find stability for your soul, not in what others think.**

You see, hope in God is so powerful that even if your face was marred beyond recognition because of an accident, you’re still at peace because your hope isn’t in your appearance, but in God. *[pauseeee]*

**Hope in God changes your priorities because it helps you to see what truly matters in light of what God says.**

So put your trust in God and start watching your priorities slowly move to different spots in your priority list. *[pauseeee]*

**Mother’s, is your hope in God?**

If so, you will care about what matters most to God - the heart.

**The inward beauty of your heart will begin to be the priority in your life, not your outward beauty.**

But also, your kids inward beauty will matter most to you, not their outward appearance.

**You will start to want to instill in them a hope in God and focus on their hearts, not merely in how they look to others.** *[pauseeee]*

*Women who hope in God focus on what matters to God - the heart, but also...*

### **III. Women who hope in God do good.**

Verse 6 tells women that they are Sarah’s children if they do good.

**And we know that Sarah hoped in God and this hope led her to do good.** *[pauseeee]*

But how is it that hope in God is connected to doing good?

**It’s because your actions align with your hope.**

If someone’s hope is in their money, they will do everything in order to get more money.

**If someone’s hope is in their job, they will do everything in order to keep their job.**

So if our hope is in God, we begin to more and more follow His Word and His ways.

We start reflecting His character and His priorities because we know that His path is best.  
*[pause]*

Why would we live for ourselves when our hope is in the Lord?

Why would we live with a mindset towards other idols in our heart if God is our only hope?  
*[pause]*

So women, is your hope in God?

If so, why would you live for other things other than God? *[pauseeee]*

You can do good, no matter what you face because you know that although in the view of others, you aren't doing right, but in the view of God, you are right where you belong.

And someday the good that you do for His sake will be rewarded, and you will be vindicated.  
*[pauseeee]*

I'll once again give an example...

Let's say that you are blessed with money.

One way of "doing good" is to be generous with it by giving a portion of it away to others.

How could someone do that when there is always something to buy or save for?

Well the world says to hoard it for yourself, spend it on yourself, or save it all for your future plans.

Why? Because their hope is in money.

But if someone's hope is in the Lord, then they are freed up to give with open hands because they trust that the Lord will take care of them. *[pause]*

Hope can lead to a godly life of doing good. *[pauseeee]*

When your hope is in God, then you do good even if it means you lose your job.

When your hope is in God, then you do good even if it means you lose a friend or you lose your reputation among others.

Because you know that doing good pleases God, and He's your focus above all.

Do you do good? *[pauseeee]*

*The fourth distinctive of women who hope in God is...*

#### **IV. Women who hope in God are fearless!**

A law firm called, “Farah and Farah,” conducted a study with over 1,000 people by which it concluded that women fear everyday life scenarios more than men.<sup>7</sup>

And according to the government’s Office on Women’s Health, “women are more than twice as likely as men to get an anxiety disorder in their lifetime.”<sup>8</sup>

This is not to say that men don’t struggle with fear, but to demonstrate that fear is a big issue in the life of the average woman.

And to be honest, as our text shows us, there are things that are genuinely “frightening”.

But interestingly, verse 6 tells women that they don’t have to fear the things that are frightening.  
[pause]

How is that possible?!

Life is scary and there are so many things to be afraid of! [pauseeee]

So what’s the key? How can a woman be fearless?

Hope in God. [pause]

Women, don’t you want to be *fearless*?

Don’t you want to break free from the endless battle with fear that you face every single day?  
Then hope in God. [pauseeee]

You see, when you fear something, you reveal where your hope is.

You fear the loss of a job? Your hope is in the job.

You fear the loss of other women’s approval? Your hope is in their approval. [pause]

Let’s get a little more frightening, shall we?

You fear the loss of your own life? Could it be that your hope isn’t in the God who guards your soul all the way into Heaven? [pause]

Here’s the plain truth: if we fully hoped in God, all fear would dissipate.

Because it would mean that whatever happens, I am safe in God’s arms, even if it means the loss of my physical life.

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<sup>7</sup> “Sexes Sense of Safety.” *Florida & Georgia Personal Injury Attorneys*, farahandfarah.com/studies/sexes-sense-of-safety/.

<sup>8</sup> “Anxiety Disorders.” *Womenshealth.gov*, 30 Jan. 2019, www.womenshealth.gov/mental-health/mental-health-conditions/anxiety-disorders/#.

This is exactly why when Paul talked to the Philippians, he wasn't fearful of death, but went so far as to say, "To die is gain!"<sup>9</sup> *[pause]*

*If you lose the fear of death, what else is there to fear? [pause]*

What could you do to Paul that would shake him from this hope?

*You beat him? He continued preaching Christ.*

You put him in jail? He sang to the Lord and converted the jailer.

*It was like he was a fearless man, serving God in the freedom of hope-induced fearlessness.*

And you can be there, too! *[pauseeee]*

*In order to illustrate this point, all I did was look briefly through Romans 8, and I will show you how hope dispels fear.*

Think about it in these ways...

*What's there to fear when we have already heard the declaration from God, "No condemnation!"<sup>10</sup>*

What's there to fear when the sufferings of this world are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us?<sup>11</sup>

*What's there to fear when we are told that "all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose"<sup>12</sup>*

What's there to fear when God is for us?<sup>13</sup>

*What's there to fear when not even tribulations, persecution, famine, or danger separates us from the love of Christ?<sup>14</sup> [pause]*

What these promises reveal is that a child of God has nothing to fear because we are secure and blessed in Christ Jesus eternally.

*And these promises constitute a part of our hope in God. [pauseeee]*

So mothers, what are you fearful of?

*Is it in the way that your husband sometimes reacts when you talk to him?*

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<sup>9</sup> See Philippians 1:21.

<sup>10</sup> See Romans 8:1.

<sup>11</sup> See Romans 8:18.

<sup>12</sup> See Romans 8:28.

<sup>13</sup> See Romans 8:31.

<sup>14</sup> See Romans 8:35.

Is it in the way your kids will turn out?

Is it in the loss of a job, friend, or family member?

What's your hope in?

Your comfort? Your parenting abilities? Your kids? Your ability to be successful at life?

What's it in?!

Look to Christ!

Put your hope in God so that you can get to the point of saying, "My hope is in God, so I'm not afraid of anything."

Feel the freedom of hope-inducing fearlessness!

Not because you are looking inward, or because you are looking all around at other people and other things, but you're simply *looking up*.

And when you look up, you can then look around at all the things that are frightening and think, "I don't fear you because of who my God is and what my God has promised." *[pause]*

No matter what is going on around you, your hope can be in the Lord.

And hope in God is so powerful that even in the face of the most frightening things, you are fearless. *[pauseeee]*

*The example of holy women of the past shows us in this passage that...*

**There is beauty when a woman hopes in God.**

Holy women hoped in God and it made all the difference, so it can make all the difference in your life.

You can do hard things and obey the Lord, you can focus on what matters to the Lord, you can do good no matter what, and you can face frightening things with fearlessness.

But remember, this isn't in your own will power, but it's simply because you're hoping in God.

You're clinging to His promises, resting in His character, and relying upon His Spirit. *[pauseeee]*

If you really think about it, what is the only reason that we can hope in God?

Because of Christ, who died for us in order to reconcile us to God.

We were sinners with no hope, but then in love, God the Father sent God the Son, Jesus, to come to this earth and die in our stead.

And then he rose again victorious. *[pause]*

Because of his work, we can now have hope, as we are united with Him.

That's why Paul says in Colossians 1:27, "God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, *the hope of glory.*"  
*[pause]*

Christ is our hope.

Have you recognized that you are a sinner and placed your faith in Jesus Christ to save you as your only hope?

If you do that, you no longer have to wander in hopelessness or grasp for places to put your hope, but you can hope in God, who is faithful. *[pause]*

Maybe you're a Christian, but maybe you have lost sight of your hope and have put your hope in something else.

Turn back to the true object of hope!

As the author of Hebrews says, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful."<sup>15</sup>

He's so faithful that we can hope in Him, even when we become downcast.<sup>16</sup>

We can hope in His word,<sup>17</sup> for his word is always true and always comes true.

And the more you put your hope in him, the more this hope brings you joy,<sup>18</sup> and you will never be put to shame.<sup>19</sup> *[pause]*

So will you have steadfast hope in God?

When you do, you can be called a man or woman who hopes in God.

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<sup>15</sup> Hebrews 10:23.

<sup>16</sup> See Psalm 42:11.

<sup>17</sup> See Psalm 130:5.

<sup>18</sup> See Proverbs 10:28.

<sup>19</sup> See Romans 5:5.