

A GUIDEPOSTS OUTREACH PUBLICATION

H O P E

OPENS THE WAY WHEN THERE SEEMS NO WAY

BY NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

GUIDEPOSTS OUTREACH

Guideposts, founded by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and his wife Ruth Stafford Peale in 1945, is a nonprofit interfaith ministry dedicated to helping people from all walks of life achieve their maximum personal and spiritual potential. Its inspirational products and programs spring from two major beliefs: that true stories are a powerful way to motivate people to lead better lives and that faith in God can be strengthened by applying spiritual truths to daily life.

Guideposts Outreach Ministries strives to fulfill our mission by providing inspirational publications free of charge to hospitals, nursing homes, churches, military personnel, correctional facilities and other organizations that serve the public. In addition, we invite our readers to send their prayer requests—by mail, by phone, by e-mail (the contact information is in the back of this booklet). Every working day, Guideposts' staff and volunteers pray for these requests by name and need.

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INTRODUCTION

A word about this booklet

WHAT IS IT ABOUT HOPE THAT MAKES IT so important? Why did Jesus put it up there alongside faith and love? Maybe it is as simple as this: Even when it is fragile and desperately clung to, hope is the expectation that what is wanted can be had. Hope believes that events will turn out for the best, that there is a secure future, that good will prevail.

As you will soon discover, Norman Vincent Peale put the same emphasis on hope that Jesus did, and the chapter topics that we have selected for this booklet are what he believed to be hope's vital components. In just a few moments you will hear Dr. Peale urge you to turn the old saying "where there is life there is hope" around. He preferred: "Where there is hope there is life." How right he was. For, as the Bible tells us, "We are saved by hope." Never more than now do we need to be hopeful.

Hope rises above hard economic times,
the perception that our society's values are
eroding and the specter of war. If *you* hope,
you will inspire another to hope, and then
others will follow. Hold fast to hope and
make it marvelously contagious!
Confide your deepest hopes to God,
believe that he will hear them and deliver
back what is best for you.

Nothing defeats hope.

God bless you.

DETERMINATION



We were saved, and we have this hope.

(ROMANS 8:24)



You know the old saying that where there is life there is hope. But I know a better one. Just turn it around: Where there is hope there is life. You're never defeated, you're never beaten down as long as you have hope.

And true hope, hope that saves, is hope in God. It isn't blind hope, or egotistic hope, but hope in God. It is God who gives power. God is the great renewing force. Get God in your heart. If he comes in, hope comes in. Keep this thought in mind as difficulties and sorrows and sickness and trouble come upon you. Keep in mind that, like spring, hope always comes back.

Hope! What a word it is! Say it to yourself the last thing before you go to bed; say it the first thing in the morning. Let it permeate your subconscious. Hope will solve all your problems. It will solve world



problems. Hope will guarantee that you stay alive all your life. Go out and spread hope all up and down the streets as you walk them—hope for the world, hope in God, hope in the future.



EXPECTATION



*Forgetting the past and straining toward what is ahead,
I keep trying to reach the goal and get the prize for
which God called me.*

(PHILIPPIANS 3:13-4)



A friend remarked to me the other day,
“You’ve got to take people as they are.”

“I don’t believe that at all,” I said. “I don’t believe in taking people as they are. Take them as they *can* be, as they *ought* to be.”

Don’t ever say to yourself, “This is it. This is what I am. I have to settle for that.” Instead, settle for your potential. If you expect potential, if you hope potential, you will bring it out. Expectation and hope will release the potential that is within you. *Hope* and *expect* to open yourself up to a creative, productive life.



RENEWAL



I am the light of the world. The person who follows me will never live in darkness, but will have the light that gives life.

(JOHN 8:12)



Make an inventory of your joys. Sit down with pencil and paper and write them down, not forgetting the commonplace—a comfortable chair, the house or apartment that shelters you, faces that are dear to you.

Step outside and take five deep breaths of good, fresh air. Note every beautiful thing around you: Sunlight dappling through trees onto a well-kept green lawn, a lighted train rushing through the night, moonlight's silvery radiance lighting up a church steeple, the crunch of snow under your foot on a crisp winter day.

Do an unexpected favor for someone and note the look of happy surprise and gratitude it causes. It will fill you with joy. Commit a favorite hymn to memory and



sing it out in the shower! Compose your soul every night by asking the Lord to forgive you for any wrong you have done. Then thank him for his goodness. A quiet joy will steal into your soul. You will sleep peacefully and rise up the next day renewed.



BELIEF



*And when you search for me with all your heart,
you will find me!*

(JEREMIAH 29:13)



How deeply do you believe? Do you believe superficially, without depth or commitment? The book of Jeremiah assures us that true believers will have a future filled with hope—a bountiful future. I believe that!

Pray big. Think big. Your life is going to be in proportion to how greatly you believe. Jesus said, “Anything is possible for someone who has faith” (MARK 9:23). Which means what? That the person who believes is going to get everything he wants? No. What Jesus meant is that, if you believe big, you move things out of the realm of the impossible into the realm of the possible. Believe little, you get little. So believe big and open yourself up to all the possibilities that God has in mind for you.



If with all your heart you give yourself to your children, to your marriage, to your work, to your future, and to your hopes, you are going to live a big and rewarding life.



ENTHUSIASM



If your faith is as big as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move. All things will be possible for you.

(MATTHEW 17:20)



Begin each day, each week, each year and every task with the anticipation that all will turn out well. Positive ideas produce health and vitality. Today and every day that you feel you need encouragement, focus on the word enthusiasm. *En theos* means "in God." And when you invite God to be in you, you fill yourself with his power.

If you find yourself down and without vitality, drop from your mind all worries and concerns so that you can concentrate on God. Remember that he created you and that he has a plan for you. Remember, if God is with you, who can be against you?



PERSISTENCE



*We have this hope as an anchor for the soul,
sure and strong.*

(HEBREWS 6:19)



A businessman I know told me about an experience that changed his life. He thought he had a great future in a job he loved, but suddenly found himself without that job. He was devastated. He went to the Lord in prayer, saying, "I don't understand why I lost my job, but I know that you have an answer for me. So I'm going to have the attitude that there is something better in store for me, and the only way you could give it to me was to get me out of the situation I was in."

He made a list of a hundred top executives of companies he admired, then wrote each one a letter and enumerated how his experience could be of use. He told them exactly what his record was, revealing as honestly as he could his strengths and weaknesses. He never stopped hoping that



something great would come from his trouble. Eventually, he got seven offers, one of which led him to the very thing in life he could do best.



VISION



We live by what we believe, not by what we can see.

(2 CORINTHIANS 5:7)



The distressed man standing in front of me in a restaurant in Ithaca, New York, could barely stammer an introduction. When I invited him to sit down to talk, he told me that there was only one thing he wanted in life: to have his daughter get a college education. Yet he admitted sadly, “But I never will be able to get one for her because I don’t have the money, and I don’t know where to get it.”

“Do you believe in God?” I asked.

“Yes,” he replied, “I go to church every Sunday.”

“Then,” I inquired, “haven’t you heard that you are a child of God, and that all things are possible for you?”

“Yes,” he said. “I guess I never really listened.”



So I told him, "Listen now: The years have passed. It's springtime. It's commencement at Cornell University. Graduating students are lined up to receive their diplomas. And there, accepting her diploma from the president of the university, is your daughter! Isn't that great?"

"Oh," he exclaimed, "I wish!"

"Instead of wishing for it," I said, "*hope* for it. *Believe* in it."

A few years later, when his daughter graduated from college, I heard back from the formerly distressed Ithacan. He was jubilant. What he had seen and believed in, God had helped make happen.



FAITH



*God is our protection and our strength.
He always helps in times of trouble.*

(PSALM 46:1)



Life, as you well know, is a tough proposition at times. We live in a world where there is pain, suffering, hardship, trouble. Yet you have within yourself a power. When trouble strikes, remind yourself that God is with you, that he will never fail you, that you can count on him. Say these words: "God is with me, helping me."

I believe there is a direct relationship between the principles in the Bible and the laws of the universe. I believe that if you apply faith and hope to a situation, however difficult, you will rise above your trouble. Faith and hope can overcome the greatest odds. When everywhere there seems no hope, fill your mind with faith, put yourself in God's hands, submit yourself completely to God's will as a worthy servant, then the universe will open and the



law of supply will pour everything you need upon you. Hope opens the way when there seems no way.



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