

It's Your Time
WALKING IN HOPE
Pastor Mike Kai HCWO 2/4-5/12

Everyone needs hope. Without hope people question whether they should even go on living. Without hope, why pray? If you hope, you will pray. If you lack hope you become hopeless.

If you say “perhaps,” “ maybe,” “possibly,” “if,” you have options.

Hope is absolutely important, whether you're facing illness, or competing in athletics. Hope is our greatest ally against fear. “Hopefully” leads to great expectations. Your hope coupled with God's plans, your possibilities coupled with God's plans can achieve great things.

We need to cling to hope. We need to fight for hope.

“IF” is one of the most interesting words in the English language. “If” means there are options, because of the THEN. Out of the word “IF” comes possibilities both positive and negative. “PERHAPS” the Lord will help us.

Imagine a world without hope. That's pretty much the situation found in 1 Samuel 13-14. Israel had seasons of hope and seasons without hope, even when God ruled his people directly, a form of government called **theocracy**—the rule or reign of God. (Our form of Government is **democracy**—rule of the citizens. Most countries in history have had a **monarchy**, rule of a king or queen.) During the time of Joshua and the Judges, God was the ultimate ruler of Israel, and he would raise up a military leader called a judge from time to time to lead them in battle against their enemies. But Israel decided to cast off restraint and to live the way they wanted to.

They saw that all the nations around them had a king, but they didn't. They wanted to be just like all the other nations, so they asked God for a king. God gave them a King –

– Saul. He was taller than anyone else and very handsome, but he was also very insecure. God warned the people about the burden that the monarchy would place upon them. Saul began to turn his back on God. Eventually, God rejected Saul, because he chose to take things into his own hands instead of obeying God. God withdrew his favor and his mantle of leadership from Saul and gave his anointing to a young shepherd boy named David. Israel's army began to desert Saul, and the Army went from 300,000 down to just 600 men. It was so small that they could camp around one tree (see 14:2). The Philistines denied them access to blacksmiths and iron for weapons. Thus the Philistines always had the upper hand with horses and iron chariots, iron weapons and a large infantry.

1 Samuel 13: **19**There were no blacksmiths in the land of Israel in those days. The Philistines wouldn't allow them for fear they would make swords and spears for the Hebrews. **20**So whenever the Israelites needed to sharpen their plowshares, picks, axes, or sickles, they had to take them to a Philistine blacksmith. **21**(The charges were as follows: a quarter of an ounce of silver for sharpening a plowshare or a pick, and an eighth of an ounce for sharpening an ax, a sickle, or an ox goad.) **22**So on the day of the battle none of the people of Israel had a sword or spear, except for Saul and Jonathan. **23**The pass at Micmash had meanwhile been secured by a contingent of the Philistine army. 1 Samuel 13:19-23 NLT

Unless you decide you're going to do something you've never done before, you can't move forward. You have to make a change. Things cannot stay the same. Jonathan realized that if they didn't make a move, they would die anyway. So he dared to take action.

1 Samuel 14:**1**One day Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come on, let's go over to where the Philistines have their outpost." But Jonathan did not tell his father what he was doing. **[His father would've thought he was crazy]**

2Meanwhile, Saul and his 600 men were camped on the outskirts of Gibeah, around the pomegranate tree^a at Migron. **3**Among Saul's men was Ahijah the priest, who was wearing the ephod, the priestly vest. Ahijah was the son of Ichabod's brother Ahitub, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the Lord who had served at Shiloh.

No one realized that Jonathan had left the Israelite camp. **4**To reach the Philistine outpost, Jonathan had to go down between two rocky cliffs that were called Bozez and Seneh. **5**The cliff on the north was in front of Micmash, and the one on the south was in front of Geba. 1 Samuel 14:1-5 NLT

1. PUT “PERHAPS” BACK INTO YOUR VOCABULARY. Put hope back into your life and let it give birth to “perhaps.”

Engaging hope:6 "Let's go across to the outpost of those pagans," Jonathan said to his armor bearer. "Perhaps the LORD will help us, for nothing can hinder the LORD. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!" 7 "Do what you think is best," the armor bearer replied. "I'm with you completely, whatever you decide." 1 Samuel 14:6-7 the NLT

Perhaps =

- Maybe...
- Possibly...
- If get chance ...
- Maybe get chance ...
- SYNONYMS- conceivably, feasibly, for all one knows, imaginably, it may be, maybe, perchance, reasonably

HOPE gives birth to “perhaps.” We live for the PERHAPS.

To use “perhaps,” one has to have faith.

Unless you decide to do something you've never done before, you will continue to live as you have done before.

2. FIND YOURSELF SOME SUPPORT. We can't go at it alone. We all need accountability partners who can encourage us and speak into our lives and help us to break through barriers to victory.

An armor bearer is an awesome partner in battle much like a caddie is an awesome partner to a golfer on a golf course. Trust is everything. An armor bearer gives the warrior the best tools to use. He covers his flank and his back in battle. He gives him wise counsel. He scouts out the situation and thinks through strategy. The armor bearer has everything to lose (his life) if the battle goes the wrong way. And he has everything to gain (honor, trust and position), if the battle goes in their favor. Because the armor bearer has to go everywhere the prince goes, an armor bearer better not come back from battle alive if his master is dead. He must give his all protecting the life of his master.

If God is for you, you need to risk going forward. You can't stand still.

Whether God gives you much or a few, God is there to help you. No one can thrive in life or ministry by themselves.

- You can't charge up hills alone.
- You shouldn't do things without support.
- You need support and wise counsel.
- Like a caddie on a golf course, Jonathan had an armor bearer whose life was on the line as well. The armor bearer was likely a young lad with a lifetime still to live. Assessing the situation and the leader he was with, it was very probable that Jonathan and his armor bearer knew what was at stake. They had made a true assessment. The odds were definitely stacked against them.
- If I were a betting man, I'd naturally go against their numbers.
- **Jonathan and his armor bearer were completely overmatched and utterly under-resourced.**

THERE WILL BE TIMES LIKE THAT...YOU MAY BE IN ONE RIGHT NOW....

*8***"All right then," Jonathan told him. "We will cross over and let them see us.**

3. YOU'VE GOT TO EXPOSE YOURSELF. You need to show yourself and bring some exposure to your cause. Don't hide out in a cave, when you could be or do much more. Unless you make a move and take a risk, you'll be in a stalemate for the rest of your lives.

1 Samuel 14:9 **If** they say to us, 'Stay where you are or we'll kill you,' then we will stop and not go up to them. *10* **But if** they say, 'Come on up and fight,' then we will go up. **That will be the Lord's sign that he will help us defeat them.**

"WAT" "LIKE BEEF"

- Make yourself available.
- Making your cause or intentions known means taking a risk and putting yourself out there.
- You become even more vulnerable and open to attack, versus playing it safe.
Take a risk!

- There is a real possibility of failure. Your possible victory could also mean possible failure.
- Nothing will happen, if you don't expose your cause.
- What is the cause/call that God has placed inside you?
- Put pressure on God by bringing exposure to your cause. It is God's to fulfill through and with you.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6

Go do something that God has called you to do!

Don't let fear stop you from moving forward. The two main reasons we don't progress, that make people afraid to move forward are:

A. Pain of the past: past failures and hurts/pain and shame. "I'll never do that again." I don't want to get hurt again. I don't want to be a victim. I don't want to hurt anyone else. I feel guilty about moving alone.

Honor the past, but move forward. Be more committed to your future than to your past. Move on with the present. God isn't done with you yet. Leave the past in the past. Leave the past in the rearview mirror. Wave and say "Good-bye!"

B. Opinions of others: fear of criticism or the opinions of others, worry about what others have to say. The opinions of your spouse or support people matter, but don't let criticism hold you back. Ignore when others say to you "Who do you think you are?" "Wat. Who you tink you?"

4. GET YOURSELF SOME GOD-OPTIONS. God will give you the creativity to come up with some options.

*1 Samuel 14:9 **If** they say to us, 'Stay where you are or we'll kill you,' then we will stop and not go up to them. 10 **But if** they say, 'Come on up and fight,' then we will go up. **That will be the Lord's sign that he will help us defeat them.***

"If they say ..., then we will ..." "If" means you've got options. (When Jonathan states his options he is saying to God "God work with me here!")

***11**When the Philistines saw them coming, they shouted, "Look! The Hebrews are crawling out of their holes!" **12**Then the men from the outpost shouted to Jonathan, "Come on up here, and we'll teach you a lesson!"*

“Come on, climb right behind me,” Jonathan said to his armor bearer, “for the Lord will help us defeat them!”

13**So they climbed up using both hands and feet, and the Philistines fell before Jonathan, and his armor bearer killed those who came behind them. **14*They killed some twenty men in all, and their bodies were scattered over about half an acre.***

That’s two against 20 fighting up hill!

***15**Suddenly, **panic broke out** in the Philistine army, both in the camp and in the field, including even the outposts and raiding parties. **And just then an earthquake struck,** and everyone was terrified. 1 Samuel 14:11-15 NLT*

Jonathan and his armor bearer stepped out in faith. God backed them up and provided them an opportunity in the form of an earthquake.

No one can predict an earthquake. God sent it. God moved heaven and earth for them, when they stepped out in faith and hope.

Nothing happens until you put yourself out there and say “perhaps” and expose yourself and choose to move forward.

***23**So the **Lord saved Israel that day,** and the battle continued to rage even beyond Beth-aven. 1 Samuel 14:13 NLT*

Hoping gives birth to “perhaps” which gives you “ifs.”

Restore “perhaps” back into your vocabulary.

- **Perhaps the Lord... what if...?**
- **I wonder what would happen if...?**
- **God will restore the “perhaps” in your life when you can say “perhaps,” “if,” “maybe.”**

Start hoping again. Start saying “maybe...” Ask God to restore hope to your life.

Questions for discussion and action steps:

1. Has anyone ever been in a situation where you gave up hope? What happened to make you hopeful again? Is anyone in the group in a situation right now that doesn't look very hopeful? What is keeping you hoping? **Take time to encourage anyone who is struggling to keep hoping.**

2. Does anyone in the group feel stuck at work, in a relationship, financially? What can you do to put hope back into your life situation? When was the last time you said "perhaps..."? **As a group, take time to offer some "perhapses" that might help the person(s) who feel stuck to see their options and increase their hope.**

3. Who is your armor bearer? Or are you trying to go it alone? Who can you turn to for support and encouragement? Who's got your back? Are you anyone else's armor bearer? Do you have their back? **If you don't have an accountability partner (an armor bearer), ask God to bring one into your life. As a group, how are you helping each other to advance hope into actions?**

4. What is stopping you from moving forward? Are the pains of the past or fear of the opinions of others holding you back? Has God given you a cause or a call that needs to be brought out into the open and exposed? Are you willing to take that risk? What's at stake? How can you expose your cause? **As a group how can you help them expose their cause?**

5. What are your God-options? What are the possible steps you can take to advance your cause/call forward? What will it take to act on it, to step out in hope and faith? What are you expecting from God (since He is the one who gave you the cause/call)? **As a group, how can you partner with each other to take this step of faith and action?**

Prayer: Take some time to pray for each other and to minister to each other. Identify the challenges you're facing or the goals/vision that God has given you, and then ask Jesus to be Lord over all.

Invite the Holy Spirit to give you wise counsel, and to coach you through the next steps.

Commit your lives anew to God, and ask Him to keep you bold as you “show yourself.”

Pray for God to provide you with support.

As you pray, declare who God is for you, and with you, and through you. Then praise Him for all that he is.

Leave your time this evening with a word of encouragement that the Holy Spirit gives you for each person.

Dedicate one another to the Lord, and hope for your future. Look forward to sharing a praise report of all that God has done.