

# A Song in the Soul

Need a little hope in your life today? Perhaps we should define the word.

The *American Heritage College Dictionary* states that hope is “a wish or desire accompanied by confident expectation of its fulfillment.”

The *Holman Bible Dictionary* defines the word as “trustful expectation, particularly with reference to the fulfillment of God’s promises. Hope is the anticipation of a favorable outcome under God’s guidance – the confidence that what God has done for us in the past guarantees our participation in what God will do in the future.”

This concept is considered one of the three theological virtues of the Christian religion. Hope is an essential and fundamental element of Christian life, so essential indeed that, like faith and love, it can itself designate the essence of Christianity.

Possessing hope, then, is a very good thing.

John C. Maxwell, minister, author and internationally recognized expert on leadership development, highlights the importance of hope in his book, *Think on These Things: Meditations for Leaders*. What does hope do for mankind? he asks. He answers his own question:

- Hope shines brightest when the hour is darkest.
- Hope motivates when discouragement comes.
- Hope energizes when the body is tired.
- Hope sweetens while bitterness bites.
- Hope sings when all melodies are gone.
- Hope believes when evidence is eliminated.
- Hope listens for answers when no one is talking.
- Hope climbs over obstacles when no one is helping.
- Hope endures hardship when no one is caring.
- Hope smiles confidently when no one is laughing.
- Hope reaches for answers when no one is asking.
- Hope presses toward victory when no one is encouraging.
- Hope dares to give when no one is sharing.
- Hope brings the victory when no one is winning.

Each description is encouraging for me and, perhaps, for you.

I also like how poet Emily Dickinson saw it: “Hope is the thing with feathers ... That perches in the soul ... And sings the tune without the words ... And never stops at all.”

My prayer for you today is for a life filled with hope.

– Beecher Hunter