


**HOPE FOR HOPE**

BY BARRY SHAFER

**1 Quick Backdrop**

Sociologists and culture experts have observed that we live in an era of rampant depression and anxiety, particularly among the teen generation. Would you agree with this observation? If so, what do you think is driving this depressed state? Take a minute to jot down a couple ideas.

Of all the causes that could lead to our depressed era, the common denominator is simply hopelessness. We are disconnected from the one thing that can lift us out of anxiety and depression: hope. The psalmist said this in Psalm 16:

*Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.*  
—Psalm 16:9 (NKJV)

**1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)**

God is a big fan of hope. It's a natural byproduct of the promise of eternal life. Take some time to immerse yourself in the message of hope. Meditate and reflect on the passages below (you may want to print them out so that you can mark up the Scripture). Yes, it's quite a few passages. But hope is a big thing. If it helps, start with just a few verses. As you meditate, write down everything you learn about hope. Use these questions as a guide.

**How is hope described?**

**What can it do?**

**What does it enable us to do?**



Romans 5:3-5

Galatians 5:5

Romans 12:9-13

Ephesians 1:18

Romans 15:13

Colossians 1:3-6

1 Corinthians 13:6-7

Colossians 1:27

2 Corinthians 3:12

Hebrews 11:1

Fold or Cut

**2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)**

As you have immersed in these great verses about hope, what is being impressed on your heart? What is God saying to you about hope? Journal your thoughts before responding to the next questions.

**Next questions:**

What specific situations do you have going on in your life that could use a dose of hope? Here are some areas to consider:

**School**

**Family**

**Friends**

**Work**

What situations do your friends have going on that could use a dose of hope?

**3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)**

Consider this: Maybe God is calling you to be an agent of hope to those around you. How can you do this? We've suggested some ideas below, but think of these as a catalyst to allow God's Spirit to stir *your* creativity.

**1. Hope Posts**

Lock on to two or three of the hope verses above that resonated the most with you. Find or create an image that expresses the message in each one and post that image with the verses and your thoughts.

**2. Hope Project**

Adopt a friend in need of hope and make him or her your "hope project," with their permission. Infuse them with hope and with reminders of hope. You may want to start with this devo.

**3. Hope Ambassador**

Launch a "hope initiative" at your school or in your student ministry. Start a blog or a website dedicated to the message of hope. Reach out to other teens who are desperately in need of the message of hope.