

# *Hope* & Resilience

*There's More to Your Story*

Trees with deep roots are the most resilient. Their roots keep them firmly grounded during storms and allow them to find water underground during drought conditions. In the same way, when we are deeply rooted in God, we are the most resilient and able to withstand life's trials and losses.

The video and exercises in this session will help you find strength and hope again. You'll discover:

- **Biblical hope is more than "wishful thinking."**
- **How resilience helps you press on after loss.**
- **Resilience grows the more you ground yourself in God's truth.**



# Video outline

Use this outline to write down important concepts, encouraging words, or questions you may have while viewing the video.

## **The importance of hope**

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## **Redefining hope**

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## **Nurturing hope**

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## Building resilience

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“Bouncing back” after tragedy

Assessing its 5 components

- **Internal assets:** knowing who you are
- **External resources:** help from the community
- **Relationships:** people you can turn to
- **Family:** love & structure
- **Faith:** God, meaning & hope

# Step by Step

Daily comfort & encouragement



## Jerry's story

"I fell into a deep depression. ... I had a hard time getting out of bed in the morning and sleeping at night. The depression was like being in an ocean where no matter which direction you look, there is nothing. You are sailing in a sea of nothingness. And there's nothing on the horizon that would give you hope. It is just blank."

*Without hope, it can be easy to slip into a cycle of despair that could result in unwelcome outcomes. But as you'll discover in this week's exercises, there is a source of true hope. Read on to discover how to find this true hope and how this leads to resilience—the ability to press on.*



## 1 True and stable hope

When the weight of grief is crushing your spirit, you need hope. Not the "wishful thinking" that our culture often promotes, but a *confident expectation for the future that is grounded and secure*. This is the hope found in God.

### God's message to you

"So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us. This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls." (Hebrews 6:18–19a NLT)

1. **How would you define the word *hope*?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. **Hebrews 6:18–19 uses words like *promise*, *unchangeable*, and *trustworthy anchor* in connection to the idea of hope. What do these words tell you about the Bible's definition of hope?**

3. **Do you have the kind of hope described in Hebrews 6? If so, how is that helping you deal with your sadness? If not, how do you think learning more about God's character can help you develop hope?**

## Remember

- Biblical hope is a confident expectation rooted in the character of God.
- Hope does not come from getting better, but from getting to know God better and learning what His plan is for eternity.

## 2 Filled with hope

Sometimes we paint a picture in our own mind of a bleak and hopeless future. God's Word can help you start to change that picture, adding strokes of warm color and light to the dark places. He will give you the ability to press forward with hope, one small step at a time, even in the midst of deep suffering.

### God's message to you

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

"We know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame [won't disappoint us], because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." (Romans 5:3b-5)

1. **Paul, the writer of Romans, emphasizes that hope comes from putting our trust in God,\* because God is the very *source* of hope. How does it make you feel to know that hope doesn't come from your own self-effort but from God, who loves you?**

\* To learn more about what it means to trust in God, see page x.

2. Carl and Juan both lost a loved one. Carl has no hope for his future, but Juan believes that, while his loss was horrific, God will turn his suffering into something good. How will Carl's and Juan's perspectives affect their ability to press on day by day through grief?

## Remember

- Grief can make you bitter or better. If you're open to learning from it, grief can teach you good lessons about yourself, your relationships (with other people and God), and God's purposes.
- If you're having trouble relating to today's verses, you can say, "God, this isn't how I feel now, but I want to feel this way."

## 3 Pressing on after tragedy, pt. 1



The journey of grief recovery isn't an easy one. But as you root yourself in God's Word and truth, with God's help you will find yourself getting stronger and more resilient. Resilience is the ability to become strong and healthy again after something bad happens.

Here's how to intentionally build resilience in your life:

1. **Draw near to God** through activities such as Bible study, prayer, and attending church. You can use the Bible verses in this book and the *Reflections* GriefShare journal (see [griefshare.org/journal](http://griefshare.org/journal)).
2. **Take care of yourself** by drinking plenty of fluids, eating healthy, exercising, and getting enough sleep. Feeling physically healthy gives you the strength to press on through difficulties. (See Session 4 for more self-care tips.)
3. **Look at the future with God's love and promises in view.** You can't know what will happen in the future, but rest assured, God has it all under control. He is working out the promises He has given in the Bible. (See Romans 5:1–5, 8:18–39; Hebrews 6:13–20.)
4. **Be flexible with your plans while resting in God's plan.** Making plans is wise, but you should always be willing to accept that God's wise master plan might be different. (See Proverbs 15:22, 16:3, 9; James 4:13–17.)

## 4 Pressing on after tragedy, pt. 2



Your resilience—your ability to recover after something bad happens—grows as you learn to live your life the way God created you to live it. Here are some practical ways you can seek God and become more resilient:

1. **Reduce unnecessary complications in your life.** You can do this by making choices that please God. In the Bible, God tells us how He wants us to live. Although you will face challenges in life, you can avoid complicating your problems by following God's Word. (See Proverbs 2:6–11, 11:5–6, 17.)
2. **Develop relationships of mutual care and accountability.** Reach out to mature Christian friends who can encourage you, advise you, and lovingly confront you when you need it. And observe these friends to see how to live according to God's Word in day-to-day life. (See Proverbs 13:20, 15:31–32; 1 Thessalonians 5:14–15.)
3. **Live a meaningful life by using your gifts, talents, and skills.** God has given you certain gifts to be used to serve and bless other people. This shows them the love of God, pleases God, and in turn, helps you. Think about ways you can use your gifts, talents, and skills to bless others in your family, neighborhood, or community. (See Proverbs 14:21; Romans 12:1–8; Ephesians 2:8–10; 1 Peter 4:8–11.)
4. **Thank God for His continued blessings.** Even with the changes you've had to go through, God's favor, gifts, and love are still present in your life. You will benefit from reminding yourself of the blessings God has given you and from looking for the blessings yet to come. (See Philippians 4:6; Colossians 2:6–7.)

# 5

## Healing through *Writing*

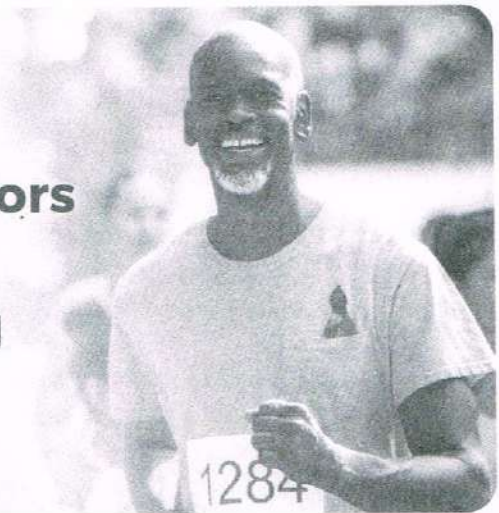
### Building resilience

Pressing on through difficulties takes effort, but God gives us the hope and strength to move forward. The following journaling prompts can help you grow in resilience.

- List the ways your loved one blessed your life. Thank God for these blessings.
- Write about some good things that have happened in your life recently.
- The Bible tells us of how Jesus, the perfect Son of God, died for our sins so that we might enjoy eternal life with Him forever. Out of horrific evil came the ultimate good. What thoughts do you have about this reality?

**Continuing life  
in a way that honors  
your loved one**  
is a sign of healing

*pp. ix & 132*





## Chart your progress

Place a check in the boxes to identify how you are feeling this week: emotionally, physically, etc.  
Or, even better, insert a word to describe how you are doing.

	BAD	OKAY	GOOD	GREAT
<b>Emotionally</b>				
<b>Physically</b>				
<b>Spiritually</b>				
<b>Relationally</b>				
<b>How your life is in general</b>				

## My Healing

### Jerry's story

"The apostle Paul says Christians mourn, but with hope. Now, you can only hope for things you can't see, and they're often at a distance. Sometimes you've just got to stay in the story when [there's] no sense of what God's purpose is. What makes hope reliable is [believing] that God is in the story. That's hope. Hope ultimately has to be based on the character of God."

*See page x to discover how you, too, can experience the hope and peace of Christ.*

#### Next session

How to rebuild in healthy ways.