

ABSOLUTE POWER

UNLOCK POTENTIAL

FULFILL YOUR DESTINY



JOHN HAGEE

**ABSOLUTE
POWER**

Absolute Power

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ABSOLUTE POWER

UNLOCK POTENTIAL – FULFILL YOUR DESTINY

JOHN HAGEE



*Dedicated to my mother,
Vada Swick Hagee*

*Never doubt that the power
of a committed prayer life
can change the world.*

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INTRODUCTION

It's dark out there.

If you had any doubt that our world is broken and fallen, a glance around should relieve you of all uncertainty.

Thus, it's no surprise that many of God's people are overwhelmed, pessimistic, and despondent. Some have lost hope and given in to despair. But I have written this book to assure you, that is not the appropriate mindset for a child of God. Believers have been given the power to turn things around — for ourselves, for our families, for our communities, and for America.

I'm talking about heavenly power. Divine power. Supernatural power that changes circumstances and

destinies. Power that turns the fate of nations. This book, *Absolute Power*, reveals the various forms this extraordinary force takes. I'll also help you learn to harness and release that power. As you do, supernatural things will happen. That's what this book is all about: discovering and releasing the supernatural power of God in your life.

Two-thousand years ago, there lived on Earth a man named Jesus who was the literal Son of the living God. He raised the dead, He healed the blind, the lame, and the deaf; He touched the rotting flesh of lepers and healed them. Jesus calmed the violent winds and waves and walked on the waters of the sea of Galilee.

He ordered demons to come out with a word. He did not interview them or scream at them all night. He spoke a Word and they obeyed. He fed multitudes with a boy's sack lunch and there was enough left over to start a Jewish delicatessen. He turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana. Jesus spoke with such authority that the politically correct crowd was stunned with silence. The last day of His life, He willingly climbed on His blood-soaked cross on the hills of Calvary and conquered death, hell, and the grave.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel of Power. Saint Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:20, "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (KJV). David said in Psalm 62:11, "Power belongs to God."

There is power in His Word. There is power in His blood. There is power in His name. There is power in His presence and in His presence is fullness of joy (see Psalm 16:11). Where is Jesus now? He is seated at the right hand of the Father, which is the position of power in heaven. How is He coming back? With power and great glory in the clouds of heaven.

Jesus said in Matthew 28:18, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” (KJV). Because He possessed the power, Jesus also had the authority to bestow that power onto others: “Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases” (Luke 9:1). Jesus looked at his followers and said, “greater works than these he [those who believe] will do” (John 14:12).

The early Church laid hands on the sick and they recovered — That’s power! If the pastor of an average mainline American church today were to call for a deliverance service to cast out demon spirits next Sunday, his church board would have him committed.

Ananias and Sapphira, lied about how much money they gave to God, and they were struck dead at the Wednesday night prayer meeting — That’s power!

People were attracted to the New Testament Church because of its power. The church experienced daily revivals. They were healing the sick. They were casting out demons. They were winning the lost. They were going

from house to house having fellowship and favor with God and man. They were also being persecuted, fed to lions, burned at the stake, and crucified, and through it all . . . they praised God.

If we had that kind of spiritual purity and power in America's churches, there wouldn't be enough funeral homes to handle the dead people next week. If you lived in the New Testament standard of holiness, and you joined the average American church, you would have to backslide to be in fellowship with a majority of the membership.

The early Church thrived under persecution. Peter and John were forbidden to preach in Jesus' name. But unlike some of today's leaders, instead of praying for diplomacy, instead of having seminars on diversity and inclusion, instead of trying to placate hell's legions with political correctness, Peter and John prayed for more boldness.

I assure you; the New Testament church did not deny the inerrancy of the Word of God. They did not deny the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. They did not stop preaching Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. They did not replace the power of the Gospel with some watered down, think-positive message that will never remove the stench of sin from the human soul. When Paul was in jail, beaten for preaching the Gospel, he prayed, not for a more subtle, subdued way to present the Gospel, but for more boldness.

The early Church met demon powers in Philippi and Ephesus head on. They were not afraid to take authority

through the power of the Spoken Word of God. If you think the pews of America's churches are not filled with demonized congregations, I have some beachfront property in the Mojave Desert I'll sell you.

In the book of Acts, the Bible says of the early Church: "These who have turned the world upside down . . ." (Acts 17:6). When the pagans saw Christians coming, that's how they described them — world-changers.

Today's church has stopped setting the world on fire. We stopped walking in the footsteps of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and traded Him in for a cotton candy theology that is more New Age than New Testament. We stopped living in God's power and started acting like defeated victims.

Listen! It is God's will for believers to walk in power; supernatural power, healing power, delivering power, power to pull down strongholds, power to break the chains of misery and deadly addictions that enslave some of the people who are reading this right now. You have the power to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

It is God's will for his children to know the power of hope, the power of their potential, the power of forgiveness, the power to get wealth, the power of communication, the power of the mind, the power of two, the power of the Word, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the power of the Blood.

ABSOLUTE POWER

It is time that we fill our churches with Spirit-filled congregations who believe in the power of the Gospel. Power is still available to those who will believe it, receive it and release it.

Do you want to see this miracle working power released into your life? Then read on!

- O N E -

THE POWER OF HOPE

“There is something profound about hope, something so meaningful when you cling to what is beyond anything you know and understand. When that happens deep in your head and in your heart, something shifts. Hope heals.” -KATHERINE AND JAY WOLF¹

“As long as there is life there is hope.”
-RABBI LAWRENCE A. HOFFMAN QUOTING THE TALMUD²

Hope. All good things begin with it. Thomas Merton once said, “Supernatural hope is the virtue that strips us of all things in order to give us possession of all things.”³ So, it is appropriate that we begin our journey into a supernatural life with an exploration of the extraordinary power of *hope*.

God released the power of hope on Creation morning when He breathed the breath of life into Adam and man became a living soul. After the fall, the battle between good and evil, war and peace, love and hate, and hope and despair, engulfed humanity until this very day. And the enemy will have you believe that there is no hope for tomorrow.

Remember this truth: The saddest, bleakest places on earth are those in which the flickering candle of hope has been snuffed out.

However, no matter how dim your situation is, God has given us a very special gift to help us through our darkest days . . . it is the power of hope. Each day arrives bearing its own gifts, but you must first undo the ribbon. There comes a moment when you must declare that the season of fear and worry are over and now is the time of hope.

What is the driving force in the core of your being that motivates you to achievement or threatens to destroy you? What are your plans for your future? Do you have hope for tomorrow?

Psychologist William Marston asked three-thousand people, “What do you have to live for?” He was shocked to discover that ninety-four percent were simply enduring the present while waiting for something in the future . . . waiting for something to happen . . . waiting for tomorrow . . . waiting for “next year” . . . unable to see that all anyone ever has is today. Yesterday is gone and tomorrow is not a guarantee.⁴ We should live the abundant life Today! “This is the day the Lord has made; we shall rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118:24).

Have you given up on the key people in your life? Do you live in a prison of bitterness whose bars were created by the vicious words and deeds of others? Have you lost your job, your marriage or a loved one? Are you living without hope?

It’s time to recover your hope! It is the golden key that opens the door to heal your heart, mind and soul. Hope has the power to bring joy to a life saturated with pain and suffering. Ecclesiastes 9:4 declares that, “Anyone who is among the living has hope.” Hope achieves the impossible. It can revive, inspire and empower you. Hope is the companion of power and the mother of success.

I’ve never forgotten the lesson in tenacious hope I learned in the story of a remarkable woman born in Massachusetts in 1836. Rendered nearly blind by a bacterial infection at the age of five, “Little Annie” was orphaned when she was only eight and sent to the

infamous Tewksbury Hospital — a combination of poor-house and an insane asylum.

There, Little Annie was locked up in what was essentially a dark dungeon. This was the only appropriate place, said the doctors, for someone so hopelessly broken. In Little Annie's case, they saw no hope for her, so she was consigned to a living death in a small cage, with little light, and even less reason for hope.

About that time, an elderly nurse nearing retirement took an interest in Annie's case. Compelled by the conviction that there is hope for all God's children, she started taking her lunch into the dungeon and eating it outside the child's cage once each week. She felt perhaps she could communicate love to the little girl.

In many ways, Annie was like an animal. On occasion, she would violently attack the person who came within her reach. At other times, she would ignore a visitor completely. When the elderly nurse started visiting her, Annie gave no indication that she was aware of her presence.

One day, the elderly nurse brought some brownies to the dungeon and left them outside the cage. When the nurse returned the next day, the brownies were gone. From that time on, the nurse would bring brownies when she made her weekly visit.

These regular visits ignited in Annie a spark of something utterly vital to the human soul: hope.

Soon thereafter, the doctors in the institution noticed positive changes in Annie's condition. Eventually, they decided they should move Annie upstairs to receive more conventional help. Her progress continued steadily until the day came when the "hopeless case" was told she could be released to live her life as best she could. But Annie did not wish to leave. She chose to stay and join the staff, to help others climb out of the same dark pit of despair she had known.

Ultimately, it was she, Miss Anne Sullivan, who came to care for, teach, and nurture a little blind and deaf girl named Helen Keller.⁵

This is the power of hope. Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible. Yet there are additional dimensions of the power of hope to explore.

HOPE: THE MOTHER OF SUCCESS

Our fallen world is unpredictable. You can be sailing along blissfully on the sea of life, the waters calm, and the sky a beautiful blue. There is a slight breeze and life is good. Then it happens. Pow! Like lightning from a clear blue sky at noonday, trouble strikes. The unthinkable happens.

One day, a marriage can seem rock solid. The next day, one spouse discovers that the other has had a secret lover for months. He or she wants a divorce. Children

will be collateral damage. The elements of a shared life are suddenly scattered like debris in a tornado.

What a difference a day can make!

A trip to the doctor's office is just another routine annual physical check-up until an X-ray reveals something that should not be there. The drive home is filled, not with thoughts of to do lists and projects, but of death and how our loved ones will be impacted.

On a quiet evening, the phone rings and it's the voice of a police officer saying your teenager has been involved in a major car crash. Parents race to the hospital and see the battered body of their precious child surrounded by doctors fighting to save her. Life will never be the same.

After years of faithful service to a corporation, an employee goes to work one beautiful morning and sees a cadre of executives huddled together in the president's office. Later, he's told the firm is downsizing and his position no longer exists. Your financial future is shattered. Your dreams for a comfortable retirement are gone.

What do you do if you find yourself in such a situation? King David gives the answer: “. . . hope thou in God” (Psalm 42:5, KJV).

Hope is the anchor of the soul that holds life together until the storm passes.

The following story of a severely burned Israeli tank commander in the Yom Kippur War of 1973 is told by Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis:

We entered a room in which the light had been dimmed. The patient lay immobile in his bed, wrapped in bandages like a mummy. Rebbetzin greeted the wounded warrior with, “Shalom to you, my name is Esther Jungreis. We came from the States to bring you greetings and blessings.” There was no answer. “What is your name?” Rebbetzin asked. Still the wounded warrior did not respond. The nurse explained that he had been badly burned in a tank battle on the Golan. Rebbetzin greeted the tanker again, stating she had brought a little token, a symbol of blessing, and held up the medallion.

For the first time, the young soldier spoke: “Take your medallion; it’s of no use to me!”

“I understand that you are hurting but I’m going to leave it on the night table anyway. You might just need it one day,” responded Rebbetzin.

“Need it for what?” came the angry answer.

“For an engagement gift,” she responded.

The wounded warrior let out a bitter laugh. “Who would want to marry me? I’m a vegetable. No one will ever marry me.”

“It will happen. You are never allowed to give up hope. You will see that in time you will meet a girl, and when you do you must tell her that a Rebbetzin from the United States visited you and told you that you have a special merit before God, that you are

ready to transmit that merit to her, and this medalion is a symbol of that.”

The warrior responded, “Rebbetzin, if I said that to any girl, she would think I’m crazy.”

“You’re wrong. Some place, somewhere, there is one girl who will understand, and you only need one,” she responded.

A year later the Rebbetzin returned to Israel and her first stop was an army recuperation center near Haifa. It is a tradition in Israel to present guest speakers and artists with a bouquet of flowers. At the conclusion of her program, a soldier in a wheelchair was brought up on stage to make the presentation.

“Do you recognize me, Rebbetzin?” he asked.

“You look familiar,” she said. “Please help me out.”

He smiled and pointed to the nurse standing behind his wheelchair. “I would like you to meet my wife.” She had the medallion around her neck.⁶

Hope achieves the impossible! In what area of your life is hope fading or gone? Revive it! Hope is the companion of power and the mother of success. “Anyone who is among the living has hope . . .” (Ecclesiastes 9:4, NIV).

HOPE IS GOD'S GIFT TO THE BELIEVER

Saint Paul puts pen to parchment and addresses the people of God — and you — proclaiming that we are to abide in faith, hope, love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

The prophet Jeremiah communicates the heart of God for you when he writes: “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope’” (Jeremiah 29:11, NLT).

God put you on this earth for a specific purpose. The great Architect of the Universe has a plan for you, which He has never assigned to another. You have a heaven-born, divine destiny with unlimited potential. The favor of the Father is at work in your future, above and beyond your wildest dreams.

That favor is better than silver or gold. The favor of God is more to be prized than houses and lands. The favor of God is far superior to the applause of prime ministers and presidents. One day of favor from the throne of God can reverse a lifetime of pain, suffering.

Consider Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob. His coat of many colors, the bold, visible symbol of favoritism from his father, inflamed hatred in his eleven brothers. They so completely hated Joseph that they refused to speak to him. When Jacob sent Joseph to the fields with food for his brothers, they mocked him as he approached. They

threw him into a pit and plotted how they would explain his death to their father, Jacob.

As you probably know, a band of Midianite traders happened by at the critical moment, and instead of being murdered, Joseph was sold into slavery. The Midianites took Joseph to Egypt and sold him a second time into slavery at Potiphar's house. History refers to this exceptional young man as "Beautiful Joseph."

Potiphar's "desperate housewife" tried to seduce Joseph, but he spurned her. In anger, she falsely accused him of sexual assault, and he was sent to prison for years in Egypt. Joseph endured twelve years of living hell, but after every tragic reversal, the Word of God clearly states: "the LORD was with him" (see Genesis 39:2, 23).

God continued to be with Joseph. He was with Joseph when the warden put him in charge of all the prisoners. God was with Joseph when two imprisoned officials needed an interpreter for their dreams. The Lord was with Joseph when no one else could interpret Pharaoh's dreams. The Most High was with Joseph when Pharaoh made him second in command over the palace. And God was with Joseph when his brothers showed up looking for food in a time of famine.

In a single day, Beautiful Joseph went from the living hell of the Egyptian penitentiary to the luxury and power of Pharaoh's penthouse. In a day, he went from

being a prisoner to the most powerful person in Egypt, save Pharaoh himself.

The favor of God on Joseph saved an entire nation of Gentiles from starvation through his prophetic understanding that seven years of severe famine would immediately follow seven years of abundance. Pharaoh gave Joseph and his extended family — which at that time was seventy in number — the fertile farming lands of Goshen. Here, the Jewish people over the course of three-hundred and forty years became a great nation. A nation that would ultimately be led out by Moses to the land of promise. A nation that would produce Jesus Christ of Nazareth, a nation who would write every book of the Bible and bless the world.

What made that extraordinary chain of events possible? It happened because Joseph never gave up on the hope he had in Jehovah, and his God rewarded him with levels of favor the world remembers to this day. What a gift hope is to the child of God!

Are you having a bad day? When you are tempted to mount your pity pot and start rehearsing all the bad things that have happened to you lately, take time to remember Joseph and how his hope in God delivered him from his accusers and made him the prince of the world.

Did someone get your parking place at the church? Was someone sitting in your pew when you arrived? Was the auditorium too cold or the music too loud? Did the

preacher preach too long? Did he look at you too often? Or not enough? This is not the Great Tribulation; press on! See yourself as clean and bright because you are the window through which you will see the world.

Hope produces a joy the world cannot give and cannot take away. Hope produces a song that sings in the midnight hour in the jail at Philippi when Paul and Silas had been beaten bloody by Roman whips for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Hope is faith reaching out in the darkness knowing the God we serve never fails. Saint Paul said in his darkest hour of trial: “. . . we rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2, ESV).

These words remind us that Joseph is not our only biblical exemplar of hope in action.

HOPE FOR THE BROKENHEARTED

The Apostle Paul, the midwife to the newborn New Testament Church, a Jewish believer of the Tribe of Benjamin who wrote most of the New Testament, was hopeful despite unspeakable suffering and persecution. Listen to Paul describe his life:

*. . . in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure,
in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From
the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one.
Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned;*

three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness — besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:23–28, NKJV)

Paul was actually understating his trials. He doesn't even mention being bitten by vipers in Malta or led outside the city of Rome to be decapitated. And you and I feel persecuted because someone failed to speak to us last Sunday morning! We feel abused because the secular media has criticized our church or pastor for his Bible preaching?

Today's hot tub, comfort-demanding Christians find it difficult to grasp the agony and the suffering cheerfully endured by our spiritual forefathers. When they gathered for worship, they were thankful some of their members had not been fed to the lions for the amusement of Caesar and his demented legions.

Listen as Saint Paul commands our generation to: “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:2, NKJV) and “Be joyful in hope . . .” (Romans 12:12, NIV).

Paul admonishes our generation to behave like Christians: “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another” (Romans 12:9–10, NKJV).

We have forgotten in our self-centered, cell-phone-addicted society how committed Christians were to each other in the first century. We have forgotten the public display of affection they had toward one another — not just in their greeting to each other, but Paul admonished the Church to, “Greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16, NKJV). That’s off the charts for our churches today.

Have you ever considered the power of a hug to someone with a broken heart? How many times in my sixty plus years of ministry have I walked into a home where the grief was so deep, hearts were so broken, and tears were without measure. There are no words in human speech to heal a broken heart, but I have found simply hugging someone shaken and sobbing in sorrow is a healing force.

Medical science is now saying hugs are healthy. Hugs can boost the immune system, improve your mood, and lower blood pressure.⁷ Hugs are invigorating, rejuvenating, and have no unpleasant side effects. Hugging is being called a miracle drug. Hugging is all natural. It is organic, naturally sweet, with no artificial ingredients,

and is one-hundred percent wholesome. Hugging is the ideal gift! Great for any occasion, fun to give and receive, shows you care, comes with its own wrapping, and is fully returnable. When we open our hearts and our arms, we encourage others to do the same.

Think of the people in your life. When the pain of life is unbearable, when words are too feeble to heal the grief, hugs carry the healing power of hope.

HOPE IS BASED ON SUBSTANCE AND EVIDENCE

“I wish.” We all have wishes for ourselves and other people for the future. These wishes are our perception of what we think would be best for us or believe would satisfy us.

When I was a boy living in the country in southeast Texas, my family called the Sears and Roebuck Catalog “The Wish Book”. As a six-year-old, I poured through the pages of that catalog at least three times a week wishing for a Daisy Air Rifle. That Christmas, my father gave me what I wished for. He gave me that BB gun. My older brother, Bill, tried to take it away from me on Christmas Day. He was twice my size, so I shot him. Don’t worry. I did the Christian thing and merely shot him in the leg.

I can assure you, when my father caught up with me, I was not singing “Joy to the World” but rather

remembering that famous sermon of Jonathan Edwards', "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."

Fast forward to the twenty-first century, and fully understand that millions of Americans are looking in a "wish book" for our future and selecting the poison of socialism. Socialism is a fraud! In history, it has never worked. In the past century, it has killed over one-hundred million people under the leadership of socialists like Hitler, Stalin, and Mao.

The Daily Caller reports that one-in-three millennials in America see socialism as favorable, and seventy percent are prepared to vote for a socialist. Why? When we don't educate our younger generation about the historical truth, we shouldn't be surprised at their willingness to embrace the endless promises of socialism, which will be the absolute destruction of the United States of America.

But hope is not wishful thinking. Saint Paul writes, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Hear these two words: "substance" and "evidence." Our hope is based on the "substance" of what God has done in the past and the "evidence" found in the Bible.

God's provisions are in His promises, and they are all found in His Word. If God has done it in the past, He will do it today. Therefore, our hope is based on God's performance knowing that He is faithful to His Word, which accomplishes all He has assigned it to accomplish.

And because of this promise, I don't simply *hope* God answers prayer; I *know* God answers prayer because: Moses prayed to God and the Red Sea parted; Daniel prayed, and God muzzled the mouths of hungry lions, lions that later devoured his enemies; Elijah prayed, and God sent cloven tongues of fire from heaven and consumed the sacrifice being offered on Mount Moriah; John 14: 13 records what Jesus prayed and declared to His followers in every generation, "*Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do*" (KJV). Hope is established by the past performance of God: God Almighty answers prayer!

Are you in a major crisis? The Bible promises, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all" (Psalm 34:9, ESV). Be of good courage, be bold, be fearless for the Lord our God is with you (see Psalm 31:24; Joshua 1:9). And remember: "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

God Almighty is your fortress, your high tower, your deliverer, your shield and buckler, your eternal source of hope that never fails. The Bible is the most exciting, optimistic, and hopeful manuscript ever written. Where can you read a book that promises boundless love, joy unspeakable, peace that surpasses understanding, prosperity, health, confidence, security, and eternal life? The Bible not only promises . . . it delivers on every promise!

Do you want a severe case of depression? Just turn to the five leading causes of emotional depression in

America: ABC, NBC, CBS, Facebook, and Instagram. On the other hand, if you want to get so excited about life that you injure yourself getting out of bed in the morning, read the Bible. It is the most hopeful and inspiring manuscript God has ever given to mankind.

Through the pages of Scripture, Jesus offers hope for a better life. John 14:6 declares that He is “the way, the truth, and the life.” Revelation 22:16 says that He is “the blessed hope that never fails.” He is “the Bright and Morning star” that leads us in paths of righteousness that bring unlimited blessings. He is the fairest of ten thousand. He is “the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys” (Song of Solomon 2:1). He is heaven’s hope and hell’s dread. Ezekiel 48:35 proclaims that Jesus is *Jehovah-Shammah*, “THE LORD [WHO] IS THERE.”

He is the Husband to the widow and the Father to the orphan. He is the Lamb of God for sinners slain. He is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Light of the World, and the Lord of Glory. He is the God of all hope . . . “hope thou in God” (Psalm 42:11, KJV).

HOPE BRINGS JOY

The story is told of a Baptist deacon who went to his company’s business party and, being extremely naïve, drank too much spiked punch. He went home quite drunk and woke up the next morning with a fierce headache. He

opened his eyes and saw two aspirin on the nightstand and took them immediately. He went into the bathroom, looked into the mirror, and saw a huge black eye.

There was a note on the mirror from his wife that read, “Sweetheart, your breakfast is on the kitchen table. Two eggs over easy with bacon, toast and jelly. The coffee is hot. I’ve gone shopping for your favorite foods for supper. Be back soon, your loving wife.”

The deacon’s son came into the room and the father asked, “Son, what happened last night?”

The boy responded, “Dad, you came home at three a.m. and broke the coffee table when you fell flat on your face. Mom was helping you into the bedroom and you hit the door, which explains your black eye. As mom was pulling off your pants to put you into bed, you started screaming: ‘Leave me alone; I’m a married man!’”

The son concluded: “Dad, for breaking the coffee table, five-hundred dollars. For two aspirin, thirty-five cents. For saying the right thing at the right time . . . PRICELESS!”

Joy unspeakable!

If you didn’t laugh at that joke, keep reading. This next part is for you.

Saint Paul records in Romans 15:13, “Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (NKJV). Joy is the proof of God’s presence in your life.

Have you lost your joy? That bird singing outside your window — is it a buzzard? Do you feel the only way you can wake up in the morning with a smile on your face is to go to bed at night with a clothes hanger in your mouth? Is someone always raining on your parade?

I think it's important that we make the distinction between happiness and joy. Happiness comes from the Scandinavian root word "Hap" from which we get the word "happenstance." The essence of this word means that your happiness depends on what happens to you. God's joy, on the other hand, is present no matter what happens to you. That's the difference between "happiness" and "joy."

Americans are searching for joy where they will never find it. They are searching for joy in drugs that are killing our young people by the thousands. Sex trafficking, as evidenced in the sexual empire created by the late Jeffery Epstein and his list of blackmailable global playboys, and mass murders, being committed by demonized slaves of evil who slaughter innocent people at churches, synagogues, public schools, and shopping centers, bear witness of America's moral corruption.

These horrific crimes against humanity cannot be stopped by legislation from Washington D.C. These crimes are a symptom of the moral corruption of our society.

The cure will not come from the top down. It must arise from the bottom up. America did not get in this

mess over the weekend, and it will take a national return to righteousness to save this nation.

The American family has disintegrated. Fathers have abandoned their children, and those children have gone into the streets looking for leadership and significance. They are finding it with gangs, drug lords, and anarchists raging in the streets.

We have joyless marriages. Legions of married couples have lost all hope that their marriage can be resurrected from the dead. Every married person reading this book needs to understand that their marriage can be better. There is no such thing as a hopeless marriage. What does a good marriage cost you? Everything you've got! And it's worth it at any cost.

Many marriages are unhappy because neither partner can manage their money. That truth reminds me of the story of Dan. Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit five-hundred million dollars when his eighty-five-year-old sickly father died, Dan decided he needed a wife with which to share his fortune.

One evening at an investment seminar, he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away. He walked across the room, extended his hand and introduced himself, saying, "I may look like an ordinary man, but in a very short time my

father will die, and I will inherit five-hundred million dollars.” The woman was very impressed. She took his business card and three days later became his stepmother.

I have found in my life that women are great financial planners.

In all seriousness, America is saturated with dysfunctional families. Nearly thirty percent of America’s children do not live in a two-parent household.⁸ The divorce rate of our nation is off the charts. Mothers and fathers are at war and their children are casualties of the domestic battleground.

Dear reader, you may have come from a dysfunctional family. You may even be in one presently. Is there any hope? Yes!

Let me tell you about one of the most famous families in the world who were absolutely dysfunctional yet changed the course of history. From Genesis 12–50, God portrays this dysfunctional family. These are the highlights that would never have made FOX News because they are too unbelievable. Truth is often more unbelievable than fiction!

Headline: “Husband Gives His Wife to Another Man to Spend the Night.” This is the story of Abraham giving his wife Sarah to Abimelech, king of Gerar, telling him she was his “sister” (see Genesis 20:2). Rabbinical schools confirm Abraham knew there would be a sexual encounter in the tent. What’s the point? Abraham is called in

Scripture “a friend of God” (James 2:23, NKJV) and “the father of us all [who believe]” (Romans 4:16, ESV). Yes, there is hope for your marriage!

Consider the second dysfunctional family in the book of Genesis. This husband had a wife who was a master manipulator. She helped her favorite son steal the family inheritance from the firstborn son who rightfully should have received it. This is the story of Rebekah instructing Jacob, her favorite son, on how to steal the inheritance of Esau, the older brother. The story ends with Jacob stealing the inheritance and running for his life from his angry brother. He never saw his mother again and the family was fractured forever (see Genesis 27). What’s the point? Jacob became a patriarch in Israel. To this day, God is identified as “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Matthew 22:32, ESV).

Jacob had twelve sons who became the twelve tribes of Israel. Those twelve tribes produced the prophets of the Old Testament and the kings who birthed the nation of Israel, specifically King David. Out of King David, generations later, came Jesus of Nazareth who died on a Roman cross for the redemption from sin for all the world . . . which includes you. Yes, your wayward son can amount to something!

The third illustration of a dysfunctional family in Genesis was the daughter-in-law who disguised herself as a prostitute and seduced her father-in-law in order to

get pregnant (see Genesis 38). This is incest! Talk about “Desperate Housewives”!

How’s that for a serial family chaos? Almighty God takes thirty-eight chapters to tell the story of this dysfunctional family, in detail, to encourage you. Your family has hope for tomorrow! The statistics may seem hopeless, but when you “hope thou in God,” (Psalm 42:11, KJV) the impossible becomes your reality.

AGAINST ALL HOPE

There was a man in ancient Israel who desired above all else to have a son who could carry his name and inherit his wealth. He and his wife tried for years to have a son and could not. Even though the man approached one-hundred years of age and his wife ninety, God promised him he would have a son. That man was Abraham, “the father of us all [who believe].” God promised Abraham that his seed would be as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sands of the seashore. When Sarah heard the angels, who brought the message that at this time next year she would bear a son, she laughed (see Genesis 18). God kept His promise and a year later, Isaac, “the son of laughter,” was born (see Genesis 21). Joy unspeakable!

Saint Paul records Abraham’s miracle son and Isaac’s miraculous birth in Romans 4:18–19, saying:

... who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." And not being weak in faith, Abraham did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. (NKJV)

By all accounts, the situation was hopeless. Yet, against all hope, Abraham continued to hope, because his hope was not in his circumstances. His hope was not in what the world says is possible. His hope was in God. The hope in Abraham gave him the endurance to receive the impossible: a son born to him at age one-hundred and to a wife whose womb was dead.

What is it in your life that you hope for? I ask this question virtually every Sunday morning in the Visitor's Reception at Cornerstone Church. Almost every person, every week, lifts their hand and indicates that there is a deep-seated hope in the depth of their soul that they want from God. Does this describe you? God's hope gives you the endurance to receive His answer for the thing you long for to fulfill your dreams. Hope will give you the endurance to achieve the impossible!

This truth puts me in remembrance of a boy who, against astonishing odds, rode hope and determination to amazing heights of achievement.

THE HOPE OF A CHAMPION

The little country schoolhouse was heated by an old fashioned, pot-bellied coal stove. A little boy had the job of coming to school early each day to start a fire and warm the room before his teacher and classmates arrived.

One morning, they arrived to find the schoolhouse engulfed in flames. They dragged the unconscious little boy out of the flaming building, more dead than alive. He had major burns over the lower half of his body and was taken to the nearby county hospital.

From his bed, the dreadfully burned, semi-conscious little boy faintly heard the doctor talking to his mother. The doctor told his mother that her son would surely die . . . which was for the best. The terrible fire had devastated the lower half of his body.

But the brave boy was a fighter, a warrior! He made up his mind that he would survive. Miraculously, to the amazement of the physician, he did survive. When the mortal danger had passed, he again heard the doctor speaking quietly to his mother stating the fire had destroyed so much flesh in the lower part of his body, it would almost be better if he had died, since he was doomed to be a lifetime cripple with no use of his legs.

Once more, the brave boy made up his mind. He would not give up hope; he would not be a cripple. He would

walk. But unfortunately, from his waist down, he had no motor ability. His thin legs just dangled, all but lifeless.

Ultimately, he was released from the hospital. Every day, his mother would massage his tiny legs, but there was no feeling, no control, nothing. Yet, his determination that he would walk was as strong as ever.

When he wasn't in bed, he was confined to a wheelchair. One sunny day, his mother wheeled him out into the yard to get some fresh air. This day, instead of sitting there, in a burst of hope he threw himself from the chair, pulled himself across the grass, dragging his legs behind him.

He dragged his body to the white picket fence bordering their lot. With great effort, he raised himself up on the fence. Then, stake by stake, he began dragging himself along the fence, determined that he would walk.

Driven by hope, he started to do this every day until he had worn a smooth path all around the yard beside the fence. There was nothing he wanted more than to develop life in those legs.

Ultimately, through daily massages, his hopeful persistence, and his resolute determination, he did develop the ability to stand up, then to walk by himself, and then to run.

He began to walk to school, then run to school, and run for the sheer joy of running. Later, in college, he made the track team as a distance runner, specializing in

the mile. The fire had burned the nerves in his legs, and he felt no pain as his body raced around the track.

In Madison Square Garden this young man, who was not expected to survive, who would surely never walk, who could never hope to run . . . this determined young man, Dr. Glen Cunningham, ran a mile faster than any person ever had.⁹

Never underestimate the power of hope! The power of hope allows you to believe the unbelievable, bear the unbearable, and achieve the impossible. That isn't true only for biblical heroes, it is true for all who believe and place their hope in God.