



### **Storm Clouds**

Proverbs 13:12; Romans 5:2-5; Mark 1:10-15

**Message from Pastor Martin Hawley**

**November 12, 2017**

#### **Bottom Line: When your dreams meet reality, choose hope.**

Today, we're going to focus on a weather system that we're all familiar with – Storm Clouds. We carry them into our relationships – the storm clouds of discouragement, disillusionment, pessimism, and negativity.

When this happens, it's very difficult being on the other side of us. It's draining and frustrating to the people in our lives.

When this reflects our life, there's something vital missing – HOPE.

Hope is the climate-shaper and influencer I want to talk about today.

*“Hope deferred makes the heart sick...(Proverbs 13:12 IV84).”*

When reality collides and crushes our dreams and aspirations, the dark clouds arrive.

#### **When your *dreams* meet *reality*, choose *hope*.**

Today, we're going to learn how to fight for hope. It's not easy, but it's not complicated. When you fight for hope, the good news is that you're never alone.

#### **The Hope-Building Process**

“And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us (Romans 5:3-5 NIV84).”

Notice the pattern here: suffering produces perseverance; perseverance produces character; character produces hope.

The good news is the Bible teaches that God is at work producing hope in us.

The bad news is it involves suffering, perseverance, and character building.

It all begins with **expectations** that are unmet. It is at this point in life that we have a choice. You can become cynical, or you can fight for hope.

*When reality meets expectations, you can choose hope.*

This is how you fight for hope:

Suffering → Perseverance → Character → Hope

This is the pattern you'll find when you look at how God built hope in the lives of Abraham, Moses, David, Esther, and Paul to name a few. He also used this pattern to build hope into the life of His Son, Jesus.

**As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. (Mark 1:10-14)**

Is it possible the seasons of suffering that we all go through are by design?

Is it possible the same God who led His Son into the wilderness for a season of suffering is the same God that might do the same with us?

God is at work producing real hope in us – hope that isn't swayed by changing circumstances, but one that is forged through the wilderness and fire of suffering.

### **Call to Action:**

God is at work building and producing hope in you. When your reality meets God's vision, choose hope. Fight for hope.

## NEXT WEEK –

### Right in the Eye: Why be Ordinary When You can be Extraordinary?

“It’s my life; I can do what I want, when I want, with whom I want ... as long as nobody gets hurt.” The problem is eventually someone does get hurt. When you focus on you, you usually hurt yourself, the people around you, the people who love you, and the people who are coming behind you.

Learn how to escape the pain and hurt that comes from ordinary life.

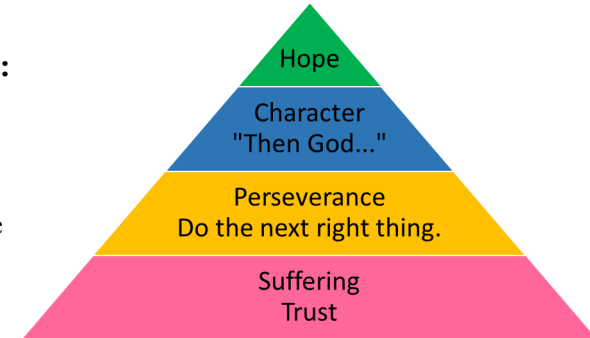
Acknowledge where you are in the process and move one step up:

#### Conclusion:

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clouds determine the climate of your heart and relationships, or you can get off the floor and fight back – fight for hope.



When life knocked down, you two choices. can stay on ground and the dark

Declare your trust in God, and do the next right thing. Then, tomorrow, repeat! This perseverance builds character, and character brings hope.

*When your dreams meet reality, choose hope.*

#### NEXT STEPS:

- Memorize: Romans 5:3-5.
- Fight for Hope.
- In suffering, declare your trust in God. .
- In perseverance, do the next right thing.
- Return next week for the start of Right in the Eye.