

## Hope in Uncertain Times by Nigel Coles Part 7: Hope is grown one seed at a time

Hello again – it's Friday and week seven of Hope in Uncertain Times.

If you've missed what we've looked into previously, you'll find them under my name in The Fuelcast library.

So far I've focused on **where** we find Hope, and for those of us who are already Christians this is always going to be in Jesus Christ. His person, work, death and resurrection.

Starting today for our second half, I've been praying for six words which can bring hope to us all, especially during these uncertain times, but also help provide momentum into the future as we are called to be carriers of the Hope of God.

The first word I want to share is simply just one word: Listen.

It feels to me, I'm back in week one, which seems such a long time ago now, doesn't it, with Psalm 46 and 'Be Still and Know that I am God'.

For me, then, it was an antidote to the temptation to panic, to react unthinkingly, or to bury my head in the sand.

I've spoken to people, over the weeks since lockdown began, who've found the very simple, practical, but helpful technique of breathing deeply useful:

'Be still', as you breathe in ... 1,2

'And Know', as you hold your breath ... 3,4,5

'That I Am God', as you breathe out ... 6,7,8,9.

I don't know about you, but I needed to know that God was still God. That the love of Jesus could never be prised away from my life. That my Father is still the gardener, even though it's looking like a harsh winter ahead.

If you and I are to be those who offer hope to others in uncertain times, and one of the things the virus has revealed, is how very little has ever been 'certain', then we need to be people **who live in hope**.

We need to be those who don't simply send a message:  
I have found hope, BUT also, I am a carrier of it.

My sense is Hope is like the virus, it's caught rather than taught.

The particular place I want to root the word 'listen' in today, from around the six hundred times you can find it in the Bible, is from Isaiah 55:2:

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,  
and you will delight in the richest of fare

Some of you who are using the Bible passage for the week we're posting on our Seventy-two website, will see this week it's been the whole of chapter 55. If not, can I encourage you to read that whole chapter yourself, slowly, asking the Lord to highlight some of the words for you, more than the rest.

After you've done that, I encourage you to write whichever those words are; and treat them as a seed, which needs to be planted.

Simply ask the Lord 'if these words are a seed of your word for me today, show me where they need to be planted' ... it may be in your own heart, it may be somewhere, or for someone else.

How do we **survive** through times of crisis like this? ... that's not the question I'm asking, or want you to ask. I want you to ask '**how do I thrive?**'

You see in Psalm 46 the Lord does not say Be still and I'll get you through, does he? He says Be still and know I am God'.

Here the Lord says, 'Listen, listen to me' (filter out the myriad of other voices offering advice) and eat ... not ration portions, or the leftovers, but 'what is good' ... and ... '**you will delight in the richest of fare**'. For me that conjures up images of stilton cheese, pickled walnuts, marmite, seafood ... other foods are available!

Do you realise every single morsel of fruit or vegetable that we eat today and throughout our lifetime and everyone else's lifetime, started life unseen, under the ground, it all comes from tiny, tiny seeds.

That seed of God's word for you today from this passage will not come ready-packaged, fully grown, but if you plant it rightly, if you nurture its growth, if you allow the Lord to cultivate the soil of your heart, **it will bear fruit**.

Listen ... can you hear the birds singing? Some people have commented during the pandemic, they've heard the birds singing, as if they've all come just out to sing. They've always been singing, but most of us have just never stopped long enough to hear.

So how do you know He is God when you're still? By listening.

How do we have confidence to more than simply survive what feels like an arduous part of our life's journey right now? By listening.

A seed a day and 'you will delight in the richest of fare'.

That way, your friends, family, colleagues, whoever with the ears to hear, will hear a song of hope rising up in their very presence.

To watch the video, go to: <https://www.thefuelcast.com/>

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