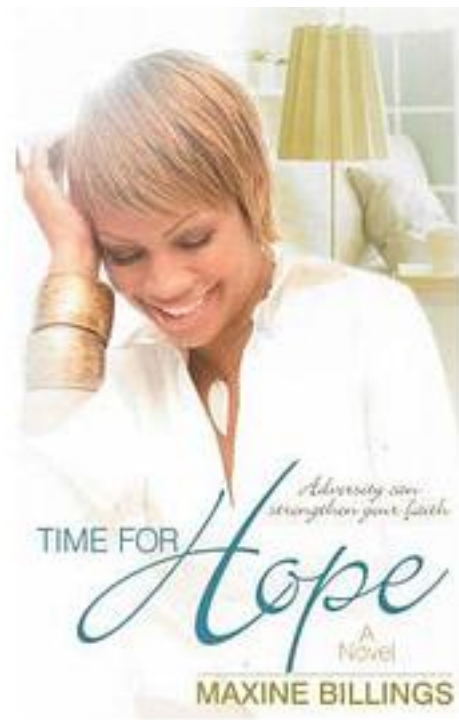


Time for Hope



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This book begins with the premise that there is a crisis of hope today, especially in the modern/postmodern west. For many, including the baby boomer generation that came to adulthood in the 60s and 70s, optimism about the future has been increasingly challenged by historical realities such as global conflicts, ecological crises, economic distress, and political disillusion. Often the religious response to historical despair is to remove hope from history to an afterlife or from ethical action to aesthetic experience. This books seeks instead to re-imagine hope in history and in life by

exploring the narratives of time which shape and determine how human beings understand their lives. Within those narratives, human beings are habituated to think and act in ways that may no longer be fruitful. The book, therefore, proposes new habits that are more life giving and hope producing. It outlines practices meant to cultivate these habits. The book sets up the problem of hope as located in the dominant western narrative of time, which is derived from Jewish and Christian perspectives. In this narrative, God is directing time and history toward the eschaton, which is not only an end, but a culmination and a resolution. The plotline of this narrative of time, which is also the story of redemption, is linear and comedic. In modernity, the linear vector of history was also understood to be progressive. The movement of time and history was toward a better future. "Time for Hope" examines and criticizes this dominant view of time and looks at attempting to revise or correct it. It also explores alternative views of time that attend more to the past, especially a traumatic past that cannot be resolved by any future fulfilment, and to the present moment. Attention is given to views of time that are more cyclical and/or which focus on past/present/future as converging. The most familiar example of such convergence is in ritual or liturgical time that seems to offer an alternative experience that holds promise for learning to tell time differently. The goal of the book is to offer a remedy for hope, not only by proposing alternative narratives, but by suggesting specific practices and habits that will lead to thinking about and living in time differently. The book outlines a theology of hope that is life giving and thus appropriate and adequate for the historical, social, and theological challenges of life today.

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