

## Offering Hope to a Hopeless, Helpless World

I Peter 3:15 Honor Christ and let him be the Lord of your life. Always be ready to give an answer when someone asks you about your hope.

Intro: It has been said that the greatest enemy of man is not disease but despair. Despair is defined simply as a loss of hope. What is hope?

Hope is the expectation that everything is going to be all right.

Hope is that divine part of us that keeps our eyes focused on the horizons ahead and helps us look toward tomorrow.

Hope is the life-cord that sustains us through the storms we encounter.

Hope is the fizz that keeps life from going flat.

Thomas Fuller "If it were not for hope the heart would break"

The world that has so little to offer of anything good in the way of filling the really deep needs of the soul. Thinking about what Fuller said I conclude that we live in a land and word of heartbreak because we live in a Hopeless, Helpless World

Lets notice four things we need if we are to help for ourselves and encourage the hopeless and the lost.

**A. We need a hope that is properly focused and understood.** I Peter 3:15

When we share our **faith**, we're **looking back** on critical events such as. By faith Jesus saved me when I invited him into my life.

When we share our **hope** we're **looking ahead**. We're saying "Here's why I'm confident and optimistic in a world who's future looks so bleak.".

The world's definition of hope is just an **optimistic outlook**. But for Christians, our hope is an optimistic outlook based on God's powerful promises.

Romans 8:28,29 tells us that *we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn, with many brothers and sisters.*

I'm optimistic because once I am saved I have the promise of all things working together to make me like my Saviour.

Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us *For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.* Therefore, I'm optimistic because God has only good plans for me.

*Jn 14:1-6 says "Don't be worried! Have faith in God and have faith in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house. I wouldn't tell you this, unless it was true. I am going there to prepare a place for each of you. After I have done this, I will come back and take you with me. Then we will be together. You know the way to where I am going." Thomas said, "Lord, we don't even know where you are going! How can we know the way?" "I am the way, the truth, and the life!" Jesus answered. "Without me, no one can go to the Father.*

You see, Christians can be optimistic because we have been promised that the Saviour will come back to get us. That's why we hope in Him. That's why we can honestly be hopeful and optimistic. Our hope is very different from the hope and optimism the world has. Peter says "In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord." Make him the only focus and then you can share it, to provide the only real hope for a hopeless world.

#### **B. We need to be individually prepared.**

Peter says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. Here are some suggestions about how to do that.

Remember the Chr. definition of hope. It is an optimistic outlook based on powerful promises.

Remember the source of your hope, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 13:8 reminds us *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.* Based on this verse we find that our hope never changes.

When you share, you are not preaching to them but just sharing what you believe God is going to do for you and why you believe it.

#### **C. Hope is nothing more than gentleness being sincerely expressed.**

I can share my hope in a way that's soft spoken and meek, not pushy and know it all. I can be respectful. I can put aside my agenda for a time and listen to another person's hurts, listen to their feelings, identify with them offering hope and optimism to those who don't have any because **our hope is in the Lord not in ourselves.**

There are two things that happen when we have a properly focused hope built on solid promises and we share this gently. people are actually drawn to God. Not to you or your personality, but to the Lord through your gentleness.

#### **D. We need a confidence that is courageously maintained.**

No matter how easy you make it sound there's always going to be some people that say "Ya, but. Even though God waited patiently all the days that Noah built his ship, only a few were saved, eight to be exact. For 120 years Noah had to be able to give a reason for his hope and optimism yet in the end there were only all of Noah's family, that was saved.

This is encouraging for three reasons: It reminds us

- a) If Noah had Christ with him, so do we. And if I remember right, hope and optimism is based on the unchanging ever present Christ anyway, isn't it?
- b) If Noah didn't have to produce results, neither do we. As Christians, it's our job to speak hope to a hopeless and helpless world, it's God's job to save and produce it. **It's my job to do the possible, it's God's job to do the impossible.**
- c) If Noah could handle the insults and the persecution, so can we. Even though we live in a hopeless and helpless world there will be those who mock, ridicule, and abuse those who want them to have hope. Sadly they do not even realize the spot they are in

Peter says V 16 that if you're eager to do good and offer hope, then basically the world's real idiots will oppose you but most people will appreciate it. They may not accept it, but at least they'll appreciate you're trying to do good. You're going to go out into a world this week, that's hopeless and totally helpless.

They need hope, they need help, and they need it bad. People are looking for anything that we can give them. Many people have got their hopes set on all kinds of crazy things that can't deliver. They are taking on a lot of things as their source of hope.

As a Christian, you're as ready as you need to be to offer that hope to a hopeless world. Just remember

**Be focused** on Christ as the source of your hope and the answer to their search.

**Be prepared** to present the reasons your hope is in Christ

**Be gentle** in your presentation and people will listen more carefully

**Maintain that good confidence** and hope there is work yet to do.

Why not each of us try and be the Noah of our day?

In closing you may be reading this and you realize your hope has been on things that cannot produce. Why not read a few more lines and do what it says and meet the only **one** (NOT THINGS) in the whole universe who can give you the hope and help you need and long for?

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God. Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at [lapeerchurch@gmail.com](mailto:lapeerchurch@gmail.com) Subject line: (Salvation)