

Hope is coming message Dec 6, 2020

Introduction

Hope. What does this word mean to you and I? It is always good to have hope in our lives. When we don't have it, it seems really bad. Inherently in the understanding of hope is the fact that we don't know the future and there is a constant need to be able to hang on to something or someone who can make us secure in those moments and provide a way thru.

God made us and knows we need hope. He has made arrangements for us to find hope throughout our lives through Him. God wants us to always have it. It all starts with Him. Let's look into this.

Romans 8:35-39 New International Version (NIV)

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Delayed delivery story from James Dobson (focus on the family) (read on video)

This lady was hoping for friends, for the loneliness to go away and for the terrible ache in her heart from losing her soul mate.

During this COVID-19 time, we are in a crisis and need help. Many are lonely and are hoping for that area of their life to be filled somehow. Many don't even know what they want so that the hurt or trouble will go away. They can't ignore the ache, pain, distress or loneliness. They just don't want to feel that loneliness or ache anymore.

Isaiah 9:6-7 New International Version (NIV)

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

Hope in Jesus' Day

In Jesus day the people of Israel were all hoping for the Messiah (Saviour) to come. They were hoping for relief from the Romans, but Jesus had already announced through the prophets that He was coming to meet the needs of mankind physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Not be a physical military leader. Jesus' answer would be far more valuable and lasting- forever. You don't need a Saviour unless you are in a crisis which means it is beyond your control. The Romans were too much for Israel and COVID-19 and other things are too much for us today.

People today hope for many things. That the virus will go, that they will have a job, that they will have friends, not be lonely, not get sick, that family will come for Christmas, that they can pay their bills, that their kids will get good grades, that their kids won't make a bad decision, etc.

What are people's hopes based on?

For many it is just a fleeting feeling with no foundation or backing. Jesus came to give us a real foundation on which to put our hope. We as Christians can fall into the same trap as the world does if we rely on personal efforts to accomplish life goals or to handle difficulties. We have a huge advantage over the world in that, when we are hoping for something,

we can go to Jesus and pray about it and He will hear us. Those who don't know Jesus as their Saviour don't see that as an option. VERY SAD.

What can you do to build your hope?

- Bring concerns to God in prayer and lay them at His feet.
- Ask God if there is something, He wants you to do as part of the solution
- Rehearse God's answers to prayer that have happened before, both yours and ones, others have had

1 Corinthians 10:11-13 New International Version (NIV)

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Psalm 25:3

No one who **hopes** in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.

What can you do to protect your hope?

- HOPE AND RELY ON GOD
- Begin reading about people's difficulties in the bible and how God answered them
- Allow the believing family of God to be a strength to you

Things that can damage your hope

- Focusing on people's doubting
- Focusing on how difficult it is to accomplish
- Focusing on how bad the problem is
- Stop trusting God to do it for you

What a lack of hope does

- Hopelessness is mentally damaging
- It is spiritually damaging
- It can be physically damaging

Journal of Neurology and Neuroscience

“Hopelessness has become the common reason behind suicide. People who are disturbed and have commonly been seen with the presence of suicidal ideation or continuous experiences of self-harming have hopelessness in the background. This is very essential to understand the mechanism of stress and its connection with hopelessness because of ineffective coping or lack of strong understanding in coping skills. Common presence of hopelessness is harmful and provides difficult situations in individuals and families where results are ending lives or self-harming. At the end families have to join hands with health care providers to work on how to improve positive behavior and ignite hope among these people. Such kind of strategic endeavors can save lives, build a hopeful society and bring a positive mental health change.”

“A survey was conducted in Pakistan between years of 2015-2016, showed that more than 300 people per year experience hopelessness due to unemployment, family conflicts, extreme poverty and health problems [7]. This situation creates a lot of burden in individuals’ lives and coping with stress becomes impossible for them. Ultimately their results are depression or hopelessness leading to self-harm or suicide in the majority of the cases [8].”

The lack of self worth is a big part of how hopelessness takes root in someone’s life. Circumstances encroach on the self worth of a person, and before long the perception of their future becomes negative to the point that suicide is considered to be an option.

Jesus came to bring hope. Hope for what?

- He came to bring hope from the despair people can have that personal value means little.
- He came to bring hope that the impossible could change.
- He came that evil could be overcome
- He came that people could see a future even after death

Israel, at Jesus time, was enduring a tyrannical Roman Empire where Jewish lives were cheap. They wanted a Messiah for reasons not in view when Isaiah’s prophecy was announced. They wanted a Saviour for purely

humanitarian earthly reasons. They forgot where the real need was and how eternal reasons mean more.

Jesus wanted people to see Him as more than a quick fix for the Roman occupation. He wanted them to see Him as an eternal Messiah who was after their hearts. This is why He sent John the Baptist beforehand to announce what He was going to do.

John 1:29-31 New International Version (NIV)

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

What made this kind of hope valuable was that it was the Lord Jesus bringing it and would provide it to anyone who asks. God Almighty was bringing aid to all mankind for all things. All you have to do is ask and put your trust in Him.

Jesus was the voice that said man is valuable to Him and because He made mankind, He wants them to be restored to the value He initially had given them. Do we understand that God cares about us realizing all the value He places on us?

Jesus was the one who could make miracles and changing the impossible automatic. His power made it seem very normal to have miracles happen. What things do you need changed? What issue do you want God to intervene on?

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Jesus came and demonstrated right in front of everyone how much more powerful He was than the devil by casting out demons, healing diseases, and bringing people back to life from death. Then with His final act on the earth, He died horribly on the cross to destroy the right Satan had to chain up all mankind in death and destruction and then rose from the dead all by

Himself to prove nothing could hold Him back from getting anything He wanted. He was the ultimate king.

Luke 7:21-23 New International Version (NIV)

²¹At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. ²²So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ²³Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

Hope. That is hope. Hope for now, hope for tomorrow, hope for eternity.

John 10:17-18 New International Version (NIV)

The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

The Dobson Story

This lady desired so much to get out of the loneliness and the despair of losing someone to death who was so close. That is real and it is also felt by many today. She knew her husband would never come back on earth. She didn't want to live the way things were and her world had crumbled around her.

What she didn't know was that her husband, before he died, had prepared help thru that puppy to bring relief to her impending pain. It made a big difference even though her husband was gone. This became a great coping help. Coping is huge for people to overcome hopelessness.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 New International Version (NIV)

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. ⁵For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

Hope from God is based on Him not us

- Knowing when we fail, we can still succeed
- Knowing when we hurt, we can be healed
- Knowing when we fall, we can get up
- Knowing when things are wrong, they can be made right

All this comes thru a hope in God not in man.

Psalm 40:1-3 New International Version (NIV)

I waited patiently for the LORD;
he turned to me and heard my cry.
He lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth,
a hymn of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear the LORD
and put their trust in him.

Conclusion

Hope is essential to our lives and God understands that. It was the reason He sent Jesus and why we celebrate Christmas. Hope was necessary as soon as sin happened. The failure of mankind meant a restoration answer was needed if destruction was to be avoided. Hope was founded on God's love for His creation and mankind. He was not prepared to just throw us all away because we failed Him. He wanted us back. He wants us all back. He paid the ultimate price so hope could be realized. Hope for everyone. If you have real hope today, Praise God for it because it is because of what Jesus did that you have it. If you don't have hope, YOU CAN. Hope is available for everything in our lives because of Him. I want to challenge us all at this Christmas time to seek more of what God wants for us and to rely on Him so that we can realize the hope He gives in every situation. NO ONE HAS TO BE HOPELESS. ALL CAN BE HOPEFUL. Let someone know about the hope you have. If someone is hopeless, point them to Jesus who can bring perfect lasting hope to them. Amen.