

Feeling Hopeless? Here's Hope!

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[0:00] I know this message really is somewhat of a follow on from this morning where I talked about! Readiness, get ready because something big is happening. All right, it's telling us in the word! that Christ is coming and we should be prepared. It says be also ready for in such an hour as you think not the son of man cometh. And so there's a need to be ready, a need for preparation. The Boy Scout be prepared. Now we're going to talk about another theme on the same line as to the last days and the hope that we can know in the last days. So this morning we talked about the mounting crisis that's going on around the world, the chaos about getting ready. The trumpet call will sound in the heavens. The last trumpet is going to sound. We're going to hear it. Are we ready for that trumpet blast? For the meantime we can expect perilous times. The Bible talks about times of peril, fierce times, dangerous times, perilous times. What's going on in the world right now? Don't we see it? At least a foretaste, a portend of it. Don't we see something? There's signs already. There's glimpses already of trouble, troubled times. And it seems like many have lost hope in such a time. People are losing hope, feeling despair. It seems like many are content to live godless, shameless, careless lives. God doesn't feature empty lives, Christless lives. I put to you that there is hope. The question is, is there any hope?

Is there any hope? There was a submarine that went down many years ago and people were trapped inside it. And the submariners were knocking on the vessel's shell. Morse code. And what it said, what their message was, to the waiting world above them, is there any hope? Is there any hope? Sadly, hope didn't come quick enough for those men that were in that submarine and they ran out of oxygen. But it's a question for all of us today, and it's a question many pose in such a time that we live. Is there any hope?

I put to you that there is. We'll come to that. 2 Timothy 3 is where we're going to go. And we read in verse 1 through 4, this note also that in the last days, perilous, perilous times shall come for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truth breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

There's a whole list there, perilous times talking about loving themselves. There's a lot of self-love, isn't there? Inflated ego, people covetous, greedy graspers, boasters, pride. It's a big thing, pride. They put it in big letters, big colourful letters, pride.

[3:45] They want to boast about the pride. They're so proud of their sinful ways, pride. Proud. They're blasphemers, cursing this name, just routinely using the name of Christ, of Jesus, of God, God as just a gutter word. Blasphemers, disobedient. It's a lawless generation, isn't it? Then we see without natural affection, truth breakers, you can't trust them. They're liars, they're false accusers.

You know, there's all these qualities that are not good qualities. Despising what's good, high-mindedness, lovers of pleasure, carnality. The word of God speaks of a time coming, perilous time coming, a fearsome time. And it says that these days are going to be marked by all of these things that we just talked about. A lack of love towards God, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, high-mindedness, a loss of truth. Just read the latest headlines and we see that things are looking bleak. You could say hopeless. War in the Middle East. What next? And where's that going

to go? It's not going to finish anytime soon. It's spilling over into Europe. You see people protesting in the streets of Europe.

We see violent ideologies, bloodshed. Just last Thursday, military analysts are saying that the United States must prepare for possible simultaneous wars with Russia and China at the same time.

It's saying USA has got to prepare a war with China, a war with Russia at the one and the same time. These dangers are real. This is what the media is saying could very well happen. These dangers are real and they are imminent. And the threat really is a nuclear war. Let's be plain about it.

Things are desperate. Hopeless, we could say. People are asking, is there any hope? Many around us have no hope. And it's a common theme with suicides apparently is the word hopeless. It's hopeless.

[5:50] They write that on their suicide notes. It's hopeless. The word hopeless comes to their mind when they take their lives. How sad. How sad it is to come to such a place. If you are in such a place or you ever come to such a place, then Christ is the one. He truly is the hope. He is the hope that you need. He's the hope that we all need. And we see that in Ephesians 2. It tells us some, it tells that these ones are without Christ. Of these ones that are without Christ, it says they're having no hope. No hope. And they're without God in the world. Friends, I put to you tonight, there's a whole generation, there's a whole generation and they're walking the streets around us. They're walking the streets, they're the living dead.

They're blinded in their minds and they're dead in their trespasses and sins. There's a whole generation walking all around about us that have no hope. People with no hope, no hope at all. Just hopelessness.

And while there's life, there's hope. While there is life, there's hope. Even if you come to the very bottom of the place of despair, the place of darkest desperation, there's hope for you tonight. While you have breath, you can have hope because Christ is the one. The Lord Jesus Christ, he cares for you and he's paid everything that has to be paid so you can be free from your sins burden and you can know his peace deep down within. There is hope for you. I tell you that Jesus is the blessed hope.

He's the blessed hope. And he is the basis for our hope. Our hope is not in man. It's not in some prophet, some philosophy of man, some ideology. It's Jesus. It's Jesus. Jesus is the one that we need.

[7:34] And if you are saved, then there is a hope for you. I hope that is within you, it says. I hope that is within you. And we read of that in 1 Peter 3, verse 15, where Peter writes, but sanctify. In other words, set apart the Lord God. Set him apart. Sanctify him. Regard him as holy. The Lord God in your hearts, it says. And be ready, it says. Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope, the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

And fear. It's telling us here that we that know the Lord, we've got a hope on the inside of us. It's a hope that we want to share. A hope we can't keep to ourselves. And surely we that believe, we have reason. A reason for hope. When we see our friends, our loved ones, our neighbours, people we work with, people we rub shoulders with, think of it and ask the question for yourself. Do you know anyone who is not a born again Christian? I'm sure that everyone will put his hand up here tonight. Are you prepared to give an answer? It's telling us we should be. The word says be ready, be ready. Now, this being ready, of course we can take classes in evangelism 101 and we can do a bible study course on evangelism.

And we can, you know, learn it back to front and inside out. And all the pet, packaged, pre-packaged formulas that we could use, the sets of scriptures we could turn to. And that's all well and good.

But it's actually just sharing the hope. It's sharing the hope that is within you, isn't it? That's what counts. If you've got Christ in you, it's not about being trained necessarily or having some technique or some pre-packaged method. It's about sharing hope. It's sharing your testimony, sharing what

God has done for me. It's like the woman who cried, I've met the Saviour, he's the Saviour of the world. And she shared how she'd had an encounter with Christ. She wanted to introduce people to him. And it's about that. It's about sharing that hope that you have on the inside of you as a safe person. Because it's been said that you could perhaps be a very well-trained fisherman. And you could go to the fisherman's school and you could get a degree in fishology. And you could learn all the techniques with the fishing rods and the fishing tackle and all the various baits and all the various methods and the very best places to fish. And you might have a nice shiny boat with the latest gadgets and the latest engine and all everything hunky-dory. But unless you go fishing, you're not going to catch any fish. And it's about really, you know, we can have the head knowledge.

[10:24] I know what it is to tell someone the gospel, but we've got to engage mouth. We've got to, we've got to tell people. We've got to open our mouth and share that hope that is in you. You know, don't, don't keep your lip buttoned up when you know God says, give an answer. God says, open your mouth, give an answer, share that hope. And you that believe you have hope. The Bible talks about the hope of eternal life. That's the hope that we have. And this word hope, it's a certain hope. It's a, an assured hope. It's a hope that is real, that's definite. It's a definite hope. It's certain.

It's not a wishing, a wishful kind of hope. It's a certain hope. It's a confident hope. And we've got a glad assurance. We that believe, we have got a glad assurance that he has saved us. And because we're saved, we want others to have that same hope, especially in such a world where hope is scarce and missing. We've got the promises of God. We've got the yay and amen. We've got it in black and white and red in the cover of our Bible. And we can count on every word of it.

And some would mock and scoff that Christ is coming. We can expect that. Some would mock that he even came. There's people who deny that he even came. Can you believe that? Despite all the historical proof that Christ came. And some would mock and scoff today and say, where is this promise of his coming? Here's a picture of one of them. Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last day, scoffers walking after their own lusts and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. People will mock and scorn and scoff. Do not be deterred. We can expect that. Christ says it will happen. The word of God says there shall come mockers. There shall come these scoffers.

[12:24] And they will ridicule the idea that Christ is coming. They will laugh it off despite all the signs, despite all the evidence that the world is desperately hurtling towards judgment.

They will dismiss the signs. And they sadly have no hope. There's no answers that they have. It seems like our nation is in this spiral, this downward, spiritual, moral, economic, downward spiral. Our nation is prideful, sinful. There's a decline, a collapse of values, a loss of hope.

In contrast to them, we have a source of hope today. We truly have. You that believe, you have a source of hope. And this is a hope it won't disappoint. This is a hope that's sure.

And I want to dwell on that for a few minutes. And some of the promises that we have of that hope. And I'll go to Titus 2 if you want to watch along or follow in your Bible. And there's a great hope that you can know, a great hope that we can have as fellow believers here tonight.

And in a world where hope is scarce, where people feel a hopelessness, we have a hope. We truly have a hope. And it tells us of that in Titus 2, verse 11, it says, For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking. It says, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority.

[14:22] Paul's telling Titus, these are important words. These are words that should be shouted from the mountaintops. These words should be spoken and exhorted with authority, with all authority, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. He's coming. His appearing will come. And it reads for us in verse 13 that this is the blessed hope, the blessed hope. God is

purifying unto himself a peculiar people. So in other words, we're going to be different people from this world. There's going to be something that's different on the inside of us. The blessed hope that we have is the glorious appearing of our Lord. And this word, hope, it means a joyful, confident expectation. A blessed hope is a confident, joyful expectation.

Tonight, folk here tonight, our hope is not in a man, in politics. It's not in anything of man. Our hope is in that trust. His promise. He says, I will come again. I will come again. And life without Christ is a hopeless end. Without Christ, it's a hopeless end. But life in Christ is an endless hope.

It's a contrast, isn't it? Truly. Without Christ, a hopeless end with Christ. It's an endless hope. This hope is forever. It's an eternal hope. And we can and do put our hope in here. The word hope, hope, it means expecting what is sure. Verse 13, that hope is expecting what is sure. It's not saying, I hope it happens. This is a hope that is an event that is sure, that gives us hope.

And friends here tonight, our Lord has given us a book of hope. It's full of hope. It's full of promises. It's full of assurance. It's full of God's certain blessings. It's full of God's guidance for the here and the now and the hereafter.

And this hope that we have is the words of God's comfort for us. We'll go to 1 Thessalonians 4, where we read of this hope again. It tells again of our Lord's rising, of his coming again.

[16:57] 1 Thessalonians 4, verse 13 through 18. It reads, So it's talking about the context of death, of passing from this life, how we need not have the sorrow that the world has, that the world that has no hope. It reads on, So it's telling us those that are buried, they are in that waiting time.

Of course, they're still with the Lord, but their body is in the ground. And then God will reconstitute their body. And they'll be risen. They'll rise again. And God will give them a new body, a resurrected body.

And it's telling us here that it's a promise here, that we can have that hope. That those that have trusted him, that have gone before, that God will reconstitute their body and their spirit, which is with God, will be brought together with their new body, and they'll be risen from the dead.

And that there's a hope there for us of that promise. And then verse 15, it says, For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain, if we're still present, if we're still living, we that are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep.

So we won't hinder them, for those that are resurrected, that will all be together in that time of resurrection, in that time of rapture.

[18:55] And then we see verse 16, For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

So all of these verses, it talks about this hope that we have. It's a hope that goes beyond the grave. It's a hope that goes beyond the judgment time of this desperate time.

It goes to that point of his coming. It says that we shall be lifted up as we read verse 17. It's telling us here, as I mentioned really in my early message, to get ready.

It says these things are about to happen. These things are yet future. But it tells us that surely that the Lord is coming. And some of us might see that day, if we're still present and alive at that time. One thing's for sure, whether that's the case for us, or whether we still will actually pass away before the coming of the Lord, it says that we'll all come to rise up on that great, awesome day.

[19:59] One day we shall see Jesus. One day you shall see Jesus. You might have new eyes. You might have your current eyes, if you're still living, that you'll see him with your current eyes.

Or if you're a resurrected body, he'll give you new eyes to see his coming. And so there's great comfort in all these words. It says comfort one another with these words.

We see verse 17, it reads, Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them. So together with those that are resurrected. Or be caught up together with those that are resurrected to meet the Lord in the air.

Caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Now these concepts are hard to get our head around in a paradigm that we're living, of this earthly dimension that we're living.

But surely it's God's promise that he shall descend. He shall descend and we shall be caught up alive to meet the Lord in the air. Some of us won't need the undertaker.

[21:06] We will have the uppertaker. Alright? So we'll be taken up. I think I'd rather have the uppertaker, wouldn't you? Than the undertaker. But either way, one way or the other, we'll be with the Lord.

And so we can comfort one another with these words. Some of us will proceed and we'll be with the Lord awaiting the resurrection time, but we'll be with the Lord. Because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

But it says that we shall, all of us shall, forever be with the Lord. So comfort, it says, comfort one another with these words. These are words of hope, aren't they?

There's a glad hope here. There's glad hope in the Word of God. The words of hope tell us of a hope of forgiveness. There's a promise of God's forgiveness to us. There's a hope of eternal life that talks about what are we to do?

Keep looking. Keep looking. It says that we should be looking for the blessed hope. Looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing.

[22:10] May we be ready for His coming. And it's incumbent on us to be in that mind of looking. To be in that mind of looking. It talks about watching.

It talks about having a watchfulness. We want to be ready. I mean, God forbid that Christ would come and find us doing something that we'd be ashamed of at His coming.

It's something that should strike us. Would I want to be doing this when the Lord comes? If we've got any sense of conviction or shame about whatever it is that we might be minded to do, that it wouldn't be worthy of our Lord, it's best not to do that, isn't it?

To have that mind. I want to live righteously, soberly, godly in this present world. I want to be looking. I want to be ready. So He doesn't catch me doing something that I'm going to be ashamed of at His coming.

That's something we should be very mindful of. May we be ready. May we be ready for His coming. Every day. So I want to honour our Lord with our lives.

[23:21] We want to live lives that honour Him. Think of it, brother, sister today. Do we live with that expectancy, with that blessed hope? With that hope that, yes, Christ can come, and He could come, really, in a time, in a moment that we're not ready.

It could come in a time when we're not expecting. Really, we should live in a continual anticipation and expectancy. And in that context of the world that we live in, which seems somewhat hopeless, I put to you, there is hope for you.

You might say, preacher, I'm not sure that I'm saved tonight. I'm not sure that I know that hope.

There is hope for you. There is hope in Christ for you. Hope when life has struggles.

Hope when your face hurts. Hope when your face is lost. Hope when your faith is weak. You can know this wonderful hope. It's a glad hope. It's a certain, it's an assured hope.

It's a confident hope. It's a blessed, glad hope. And it's a wonderful hope that you can know. And so you can have a reason for the hope that is in you, that you know your sins are forgiven.

[24:30] You know your name's written in heaven. You know that He has taken your life, and He's made you His own, such that you are His, His very possession, His precious possession.

And so you can know this wonderful hope today. And you can have that reason for the hope, that you want to share it. This is too good to keep it to yourself. This glad hope, you want to share it. And so you want to give that hope of eternal life, to share it with others. It's interesting when you think of this world that we're living in, and you think of some of the ideologies that are very prevalent, especially in the Middle East at this time.

we've got ideologies that are hopeless. There's a hopelessness. They're worshipping a God, small g, that's violent, that's vicious and hateful.

An ideology that is empty of salvation. There's no saviour. In contrast, we have a God of hope. That's what He's called. The Bible calls Him the God of hope.

[25:33] Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. It's telling you here, brothers and sisters here tonight, we know the God of hope.

Not the God of the hopeless, but the God of hope. He's also the God of peace, in a world that's torn by this God of war, this God of so-called holy war, that is overtaking the masses in the Middle East. We don't have the God of war, of cruelty, of destruction. We've got the God of hope. He's going to fill us with joy and peace in believing. Elsewhere, it calls Him the God of all comfort.

He's the God of peace. This is the God that we can know, the God of hope. And then we see, just as we come to a finish here, Revelation 22 tells us of this hope.

It tells us that, He which testifieth these things saith. And it's speaking, it's quoting our Lord Jesus. He says, Surely I come quickly.

[26:35] Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus. It's telling us here, really, it's got the sense that, He's going to come suddenly. It's going to come suddenly.

It's going to be so quick, that it's going to be a sudden thing. And it's going to catch some people by surprise. They're not going to be expecting this. They're not going to be prepared. And so, really, we could make the mistake of putting it off to get right with God.

And this is often a thing that we face when we're witnessing at the door. They say, I'll be right, Jack. And, you know, no worries, mate. I'm good.

They think they've got plenty of time. Some people live their lives like that. They think that they can sow their wild oats and get right with God one day in the distant future when they've had enough fun in their sin before they think about eternity.

Christ is going to come quickly, suddenly, out of the blue. It's going to happen like a thief in the night. It's going to happen something that is unexpected.

[27:48] Many are going to be caught unprepared. I heard a news story lately about the recent election and it was kind of funny when I heard it.

The reporter was telling a son that were queuing up in the line to vote and the reporter was asking these people, are you going to vote yes? Are you going to vote no? And numbers of people were standing in the line and yet still undecided.

They're there queuing up to vote. They've got to put a yes or a no on a piece of paper. They still haven't made their mind up. It's a bit like that with salvation, I think, isn't it? I haven't made my mind up yet.

I'm not decided yet. Make a decision for Christ now. Today is the day of salvation. Now is the accepted time.

There's no guarantee of seeing tomorrow. There's no guarantee of days beyond. Now. Now is God's time. Now is the time. Now is the day.

[28:54] The accepted time. Don't make the mistake of standing in the line and you haven't made a decision. We have to make a decision. We have to decide. Have you trusted Christ?

Have you found your hope in Him? You can know Him tonight if you've yet to trust Him. The Master is returning. The Master is returning. And we don't know when but He will come suddenly.

It'll happen quickly. It's going to catch a lot of people on the hop. The question is for everyone do you know Him? He's the God of hope. He's the God who offers hope.

He's the one who is the blessed hope when He comes and He will come suddenly. Friends, I urge you tonight to make peace with God. Let us pray. Lord, we hear the cry of John saying, even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. That's our prayer tonight. Lord, that you would come, that you would take us to yourself. Lord, for the meantime, we know you've given us time to trust you.

[29:58] You've given us time to say yes. Yes to you, Lord. Yes, I trust you as my Saviour. I'll say yes to you, Lord. I'm not going to wait and dilly-dally another day.

We pray each one might have that trust in their heart to say yes, Lord. I trust you. I trust you for now, for time, and for eternity. Lord, we pray each one might have that heart's trust, that blessed hope, that hope that is a reason for the hope that is in us because we've got a hope of eternal life. We know the God of hope in this world that's hopeless. We need never despair that things are hopeless because you have us in your hand and we're in your will. And even if that will takes us to places that are hard to walk, that we can trust you still. We can trust you still. We pray each one might have that trust tonight and be ready. Be ready. In Jesus' name. Amen.