

Our Hope

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[0:00] Just picture it if you can, that the doctor is standing at the foot of the bed and he looks! down at the clipboard and with an ashen face he declares this is a hopeless case.

This is a hopeless case. We have lost all hope of saving him. Hope, hope is something that we lost without it. We're sunk without it. We're sunk without hope. Imagine a thing in a doctor's surgery or in a hospital situation like that where they say this is a hopeless case. Ephesians 2 verse 12 tells us about a people like that. It's described some people as being in such a hopeless condition. It tells of them as having no hope and without God in the world. Having no hope and without God in the world. And it seems like the world that we're living in is ever more hopeless, isn't it? You've read the news reports, the headlines lately. It seems like we're living in a world that's more and more hopeless.

Truly it's a bleak world for many. It's a world where it's like the moral compass is broken. It's a world without hope. And some have called the time that we live the information age or the space age or the post-Christian age. Yet more and more it seems like it's an age of despair, of heartache, of heartbreak. And many are overwhelmed by this feeling of utter hopelessness.

You know there's a story told about a man who felt so much despair that he climbed up a bridge and wanted to commit suicide. And a policeman climbed along and tried to coax him to come down. But he would not. And finally in desperation the policeman said to him, OK, let's take ten minutes now. You take five minutes and tell me what's wrong with the world and why you want to kill yourself. Then I'll take five minutes and I'll tell you what's right with the world and why you should go on living. And after each had taken five minutes they joined hands and jumped off the bridge together. Oh no. Having no hope and without God in the world.

That's what people like these days, isn't it? And for many people, sadly, they've lost hope. They've lost all sense of hope. In this age of despair. This age of hopelessness. But really and truly people tonight, suicide is no joke. It's a reality. A sad reality. There's around two and a half thousand Australians die by suicide every year. That's staggering, isn't it? Two and a half thousand every year.

[2:52] Someone's reckoned it. Seven Aussies will take their own life today. Isn't that sad? Seven of our Aussies will take their own life today. It's about twice the number who die from car accidents, commit suicide.

And it's a reflection of the age of hopelessness and the state of hopelessness that sadly many people live in. And they're consumed with this soul destroying, depressing hopelessness. By definition, depression is a sense of hopelessness.

Yet the Lord can bring a way through. Out of that darkness of despair and depression, God can make a way to shine a radiant light of hope.

When people are depressed, it can bring despair. What about you tonight? When you look ahead, down life's road, what lies ahead for you in your future?

Does it seem despair lies ahead? Or hope? We can look with hope down the road ahead. Many have lost hope sadly. They've lost hope, they've given up hope. They're like these, having no hope and without God in the world.

[4:05] And some, they pursue vain hope and they end up having their hopes dashed. Some people are hopeless sinners. Some have a hope but it's empty. When they're relying on something other than God. When the chips are down, it doesn't stand that test of time.

Some place their hope in wealth or fame or fortune or some other thing. Some try to find hope at the bottom of a bottle of booze. Some at the point of a needle or with a puff of a joint. I think the hope is

there. Some try drugs and anti-depressants and yet still find that they lack that hope. That's tangible, that hope that will stand the test. And some people just get more and more deluded and even more miserable as they search in these vain ways of finding hope. Finding reality. Finding life with meaning. And as their hope, there's no lasting quality to it. There's no substance. There's no substance to their hope.

And the Bible says that the wicked have a vain hope. The vain hope of the wicked. For the lost truly have lost hope. They've lost hope. They're truly hopeless.

[5:22] And the Bible speaks about a refuge of lies. It says that some people, they'll take refuge, they'll try to find a place of stopping point of rest in a refuge of lies.

And we know that lies are not going to help us. We need the truth. And in Jeremiah 18 verse 12 it says, And they said, There is no hope, but we will walk after our own devices. And we will, everyone, do the imagination of his evil heart.

So we see in this modern age that we live, there's this sense that they're crying out, there's no hope. There's no hope. There's people crying out, there is no hope in Elizabeth.

There's people crying out, there is no hope in the northern suburbs. And for some people, they have no hope beyond death. And yet they're speeding their way there like a runaway train.

They're speeding their way to their death like a runaway train. They have no hope beyond death.

And there's many Bible references to people and the sense of hope or hopelessness. We see this in the lives of different Bible characters.

[6:40] For example, we see of David. David found hope. We read of David in 1 Samuel 13 verse 6. There was this time that he was feeling depressed. He was feeling distressed.

There was people after him to try to take his life. And it says that he sought after God and he found hope. In 1 Samuel 13 verse 6 it says, And David was greatly distressed, for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was green, and every man for his sons and for his daughters, but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

David found hope. Even in that time of distress, when it seemed like everything was against him, when the people were talking about stoning him to death, it says that David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. And he found hope.

David found hope. But one of the people at that same time, King Saul was the direct opposite of that. King Saul, instead of seeking after God, King Saul went to a witch. King Saul went to the witch of Endor.

And instead of seeking God, and he ended up killing himself. He was looking for hope in the wrong place. And it's like that today, people, isn't it? In Elizabeth, in where we live, that like many today, they're vainly searching for this vain hope.

[8:06] They're looking for hope in the new age gurus. They're looking for hope maybe in the tarot cards, or in the crystals, or the Ouija boards, and such things as that.

They're searching for hope. They're searching for meaning. They're searching for something that is going to be lasting for them, but it's all in vain. Yet David encouraged himself in the Lord.

Another case is Solomon. Solomon commented how the godless view life as vanity of vanities, all is vanity. That's Ecclesiastes 1 verse 2. Solomon commented how the godless view life as vain, as a vanity of vanities.

And yet, brothers and sisters, here tonight, there's a ray of hope that can shine through for you. For you and for me. A ray of hope that can shine through. And friends, we have a reason for hope.

We've got a reason for hope. And our sure hope is founded on that faith that carries us through to that brighter day.

That good news of the gospel, that good news for you tonight, is that you can have hope. You can have hope. Hope that goes beyond the grave. Hope that's eternal. Hope that's forever.

[9:16] And the hope that you can know has that tremendous healing power. The hope that you can know is God's hope. And it overcomes the hurts of depression, of despair.

It overcomes the hurts of pain. It overcomes the hurts of pain. And this hope that we can know will carry you through. It's the hope that comes from God. You know, what does it mean to have hope?

Some people have hope that they're going to get a job. Some people have hope that their footy team is going to win.

Or that they're going to get a promotion or a pay rise. Or they're going to get that course that they want to get into. Or whatever it be. But, you know, there's lots of hopes that we can have. This is not the hope that we're talking about here.

Bible hope is a confident expectation. It's not a hope so kind of thing. You know, some people have a salvation like that. They think, you know, you ask them the question, what if you were to die tonight? They would say something like, I hope so.

I hope so. I hope that I'll get to heaven. I hope that my good will outweigh the bad. It's a hope so kind of salvation. But we know that that's not the real kind of salvation. You know, and some people have a think so kind of salvation.

[10:31] I think I'm saved. I feel like I'm saved. Or, you know, they depend on all these kind of things. But yet the Bible says we can have a know-so salvation. We can know that we're saved.

It says that this is written that you can know that you have eternal life. So we can have that confident hope. And it's substantial. It's vital. And it's a confident expectation.

Yet many struggle when troubles come. And they don't know that hope that will hold them steady through that time. The hope that we know that we have, the hope that we have in Christ, will carry you through.

It will carry you through whatever life throws across your path. And it's a hope to the hopeless. Our hope is not baseless. It's not founded on wishful thinking. It has a reason. A reason for that hope. So where is that sure hope found? Where is that sure hope found? The Word of God give us this hope. In Romans 15 verse 4 it says, For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning.

[11:36] That we through comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. We have Biblical hope. The hope that we have is founded on God's promises. And the Bible says that God's promises are yea and amen.

In other words, they're absolutely guaranteed. They've got God's guarantee. They stand with God's authority. We through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

So we've got a Biblical hope. The comfort of the Scriptures. And it's not based on what we know, but on who we know. Now Bible hope, Biblical hope is a sure hope. It's a sure thing.

You know, in the Word of God it's likened to an anchor. This hope that we can have is like an anchor. And if you go out on the stormy seas and the storm comes your way, you'll want to have a good anchor.

You'll want to have an anchor that can throw overboard and hold your ship steady. And the Bible says that we have a hope that's like an anchor for our soul. It'll hold us steady and sure in those stormy times that come our way.

[12:45] Our hope is sure and it's unshakable. The Bible says that nothing can separate us from the love of God. There's many other promises that we can read in God's Word.

That's reason for hope. We've got a whole book of promises right here. Your Bible is a book jam packed, overflowing with God's promises. And promises of hope that sustain us.

That carry us through the hard times. You know, if you're feeling low, if you're feeling down, there's promises here that will lift you up and encourage your heart.

There's promises from God that He is your sure refuge and strength. He's your high tower. He's your fortress. He is the one whose name you can run into and be safe.

There's so many promises. You know, read the Psalms if you're feeling like you're going through some tough things. Read the Psalms. Read God's Word and encourage yourself in the Lord. This is the hope that will carry us through all the things that come against us.

[13:49] Against all the odds we can have that confidence in God. And so Hebrews 6 tells us of this anchor. Hebrews 6 from verse 18. It tells us that we might have a strong consolation and encouragement who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth in that within the veil.

So it's saying here, this is sure and steadfast. It's God's power behind it. It's God's guarantee. And it's sure and steadfast. It's like an anchor for your soul.

So when you're going through those stormy times of life, when you're going through the storms, be sure you've got that anchor. The anchor that is the anchor for your soul. That faith, that hope that will endure.

That will be unshakable. It's God's sure word that guarantees that hope. And your hope, if it's biblical hope, if it's that hope that is based on faith in God, it will hold you true and strong.

And it will give you confidence in the storm. Now, I read that years ago in the catacombs of Rome, where the Christians at times would hide in times of persecution, that they've had a look down in those catacombs, those kind of caves and tunnels under the city of Rome, and they found there 66 drawings of anchors.

[15:23] The early Christians drew anchors as a picture of the hope that they had. Hope was their anchor in that time of persecution. Hope was their anchor in that time of trouble.

And like that too, the anchor for our soul will grab a hold of what is out of sight. Now, the anchor that we have is not founded on this world, which is passing, but that which is to come.

There was a preacher of old who said, The cable of faith casts out the anchor of hope and lays hold on the steadfast rock of God's promises.

Now, the Lord Jesus says to his disciples, He says, Let not your heart be troubled. Let not your heart be troubled. There's reason for hope there.

When Jesus says to you, Let not your heart be troubled. Even in that hopeless time, it seemed for them, Jesus says, You can have hope. And let not your heart be troubled.

[16:33] Faith brings hope. Faith brings hope. There was many years ago, there was a submarine that was rammed by another ship off the coast of New England.

And it quickly sank. And a rescue team was sent there, but it was impossible to save them. The diver was dispatched and went down, down, down, down in the depths to the sides of the submarine.

And he heard this fake tapping sound. You know, it was force code tapping out in the sides of the ship, where the man in the submarine was tapping out dots and dashes.

And the diver decoded what was said. It was a question. Is there any hope? Is there any hope?

And with great remorse, the diver signaled back, Hope in God alone. Hope in God alone. Now you and I are not lying on the bottom of the ocean in a sunken vessel today.

[17:41] But many of you are engulfed in the despair of this world. You know, it engulfs all of us from time to time. The despairs of life.

And sometimes we feel like we like that man trapped in the depths of the submarine. Tapping out on the sides of the ship of our life. Is there any hope?

And I say to you tonight, yes there is. Hope in God alone. Hope in God. Put your faith in God alone. Put your faith in Christ today.

The Bible speaks of the blessed hope. The Bible says there is a blessed hope. This word blessed is the same as happy or glad. There is a glad hope.

There is a blessed hope. There is a happy hope for you. And what is it speaking about? It is talking about the coming of Jesus Christ back to planet earth. His second coming. His return.

[18:39] It says that He is coming. And His coming is a blessed hope. It is something we can have confidence in. And we can feel glad about.

In the word it says too. Of the hope of the resurrection. It says in 1 Peter 1. Of a living hope. Of a lively hope. And it is speaking of how Christ was risen from the dead.

Christ was raised from the dead. This hope that we have. Death cannot destroy. Death cannot destroy your hope in Christ. It says that nothing can separate us.

Neither death nor life. Nor any such thing. Can separate us from His love. We have a living hope. And God's people through the pages of the scriptures have found hope.

Job knew this hope. Job this man. His body was covered in boils. You know it seemed like he had lost everything tangible around about him. Even his family and such tragedy filled his life.

[19:38] Job would have felt so hopeless and helpless at many times. And yet Job himself could declare with that full assurance of faith in Job

19.25.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth. For I know that my Redeemer liveth. And he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. Job knew that there was a hope.

And he knew a Redeemer who was alive. And who lives forever. And people who would have looked at Saul of Tarsus would have thought, Here's a hopeless case.

Saul of Tarsus. Here was this man who was headed down the Damascus road. And was about to slaughter the Christians in Damascus. People would have written off Saul of Tarsus as a hopeless case.

Yet he is for us a testimony of God's converting power. The power of our hope in God. Think about Saul of Tarsus. People would have written him off.

[20:38] And yet God turned his life around. And he did a U-turn as it were on that road to Damascus. The hope that we have is a sure cure for depression, discouragement and depression.

And biblical hope is a reason for gladness tonight. In Proverbs 10.28 it says that the hope of the righteous shall be gladness. But the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

The hope of the righteous shall be gladness. You know friends tonight, you as God's people have reason for gladness. Because you've got hope. Hope that's beyond the happenstance of happiness.

Our gladness is deeper than that. Our gladness is not based on circumstance. But upon that blessed hope that we have in Christ. And biblical reason is reason for gladness.

And another thing, biblical hope is reason for comfort. If your hope is in God, he watches over you. Psalm 33 verse 18 it says, Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him.

[21:47] Upon them that hope in his mercy. Now can't you just take heart in that one passage. The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him. Upon them that hope in his mercy.

Now you can have hope tonight. And you can know God's comfort. And he's watching over you. Biblical hope is reason for blessing. In Jeremiah 17 verse 7 it says, Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord.

And his hope the Lord is. You're blessed if you have that hope. That hope that goes beyond the happenstance of life. That hope that goes beyond earthly situations that you go through.

We all go through tough things. Now I can tell you some stories about some tough things that I've gone through. And we can all share such stories as that. But the hope that we have goes beyond our circumstance.

And it puts our trust in that anchor. That is beyond what we can see. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord. And his hope the Lord is.

[22:53] And biblical hope also is a reason for evangelism. It's a basis for evangelism. As it provokes others to ask you that reason of the hope that is in you.

It says, Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts. And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.

If you're a Christian here tonight.

You've got a hope that is within you. A hope that is within you. A hope that is within you. That hopefully others can see the something that stands out. That hope that is within you. It makes a mark on your life.

And people want to ask you, why do you have that hope? And you'll be able to tell them with meekness and fear. In other words with humility and not with pride, but with love and care for them.

[23:57] Why do you have that hope? And you'll be able to tell them with meekness and fear. In other words, with humility and not with pride, but with love and care for them.

And it's a very serious matter too to explain that hope of salvation that you have. And friends, if your soul's downcast, you can do what the psalmist did in Psalm 43 verse 5.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God! For I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.

You know, it's as if the man here is telling his soul to hope in God. Now sometimes our body doesn't feel like praising God.

Sometimes our mind doesn't feel like praising God. But our soul should tell our being to praise Him. Our soul should tell our spirit, our heart to praise God.

[25:02] To put our hope in God. And maybe you can have that voice within you that will cry out, Hope in God! I will yet praise Him!

Another reason for the confidence that you can have is God's Word itself. In Psalm 119 verse 114 it says, Thou art my hiding place and my shield, I hope in thy Word.

Brothers and sisters tonight, hope in God's Word. Let this be that anchor for your soul. Let this be that standing that you have as you stand on God's truth.

As you stand surely and squarely on it. And this hope that we have, this hope that we have changes us. The hope that you have as a believer, it says in 1 John 3, And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

It says this hope that we have changes us. It transforms us. It changes us from the inside out. This hope that we have makes us pure. It makes us want to please God.

[26:11] It makes us want to choose God's life. To choose God's way. And this hope that we have is a part of our armour as well. It's a part of our armour. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 8.

It says, But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. So I think you are friends tonight.

This hope that we have has spoken to us as a hope of salvation. It's like a helmet that we put on our heads. And when you think about it, where do you get those feelings of anxiety?

Those feelings of depression that seem to overwhelm? Where you're feeling downcast? It's often in your thought life, isn't it? It's in your thoughts. In that thought life. And God says, put on the helmet of the hope of salvation.

To protect your mind. To protect your thoughts. And to, instead of having doubt and despair, have faith and confidence in God. And renew your minds daily by the power of God's hope.

[27:17] And our Lord speaks words of hope tonight. He speaks words of hope. Just as He spoke in John 14. And He says, Let not your heart be troubled. That's His voice to you.

That's His word to you tonight. That's a word from the Lord for you tonight. Let not your heart be troubled. It's God's word in black and white. And it's a word that we can take comfort in tonight. The words of hope. Words of hope to a hopeless soul. You know, the doctor stands at the foot of the bed. And he looks down at the clipboard. And with an ashen face he declares, This is a hopeless case.

We've lost all hope of saving Him. But friends, tonight there are no hopeless cases with God. You can't get so hopeless that God cannot save you while you've still got breath to breathe.

The Bible says His hand is not shortened that it can't save. God can reach to the guttermost, to the uttermost. God can reach the most hopeless cases that you can ever imagine in your lives tonight.

[28:21] You might say, But preacher, I'm a hopeless case. I've sinned so much. You wouldn't know the things that I've done. You know, the awful things that I've done in my life.

God could never save a sinner such as me. Friends, tonight there's no hopeless cases with God. There's no hopeless cases. While you've still got breath to breathe, His hand can reach you.

His arm is not shortened. His hand is not shortened. Then it cannot reach you tonight. But even in our distress, we can cry out as David did.

And David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. David encouraged himself in the Lord his God. Maybe that's what you need to do tonight. Maybe you're facing some things in your lives ahead.

There's things in your life that you're feeling weighed down and overwhelmed by. Encourage yourself in the Lord your God. And turn to the pages of Scripture as it says that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

[29:21] Find that faith that will be as an anchor of your soul. That you can throw out, as it were, that anchor which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.

And we can tell our soul to have hope. Why art thou cast down over my soul? Hope in God. Hope in God. I shall yet praise Him.

And this hope that we have will be a reason that will be too precious to keep to ourselves. That we have a reason of the hope that is in us.

What about you tonight? As we come to a close of this time, have you this hope tonight? Have you this hope? This hope that goes beyond?

That goes beyond this life? You know, I think it's been said that you can either have a hopeless life or a life with hope.

[30:24] You know, an endless hope. An endless hope. And that's the kind of hope that we can have. You know, the Bible says in Hebrews 7 that He is able also to say to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him.

He can say to the uttermost, to the uttermost. Now that means absolutely. He can absolutely save. He can say to the uttermost them that come to God by Him.

So friends, we've got words of hope tonight. Words of hope that you can take heart in tonight. And we want to proclaim that hope and pass on that hope to others. There's no hopeless cases with God, if you will, but turn to Him.

Let's pray. Let's pray.