

Not Just Wishful Thinking: Hope

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Preacher: Pastor Scott Johnson

[0 : 0 0] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Good morning and welcome on this beautiful but chilly Sunday.

Whether you're here worshiping in person or in line, we are so very happy to see you. We have a few announcements today. So if you are part of Confirmation, a mentor, or one of the confirmands we are meeting in the art room after service today, there are the All Saints Memorial Cards in your bulletins.

You can fill out. It doesn't have to be someone who's passed in the last year. If it's someone who is special to you or someone you want remembered, you can list their name on here and you can just drop them in the box in the back.

[3 : 0 6] Kathy's Retirement Celebration, Pastor Kathy's Retirement Celebration, is November 12th. If you haven't made your reservations online, you have another week to do it. If you can't figure out or you don't know how to do it online, you can either see me or you can just call the office and let them know that you're coming.

We will have a great time that evening, so we hope that you will all be here. The rummage and bake sale is next week, October 29th from 10 to 2.

They need people to help. They need items. They need some bake sale items. So there are sign-up sheets in the back for you. And then finally, Dee has an announcement she would like to make, so come on up.

Good morning.

Good morning. My name is Dee Mann. I'm looking for pillowcases. Oh. They don't have to be fed. They can come back. They can be used to pay. Good morning again.

[4 : 1 7] My name is Dee Mann, and I'm looking for pillowcases. You ask why. Well, last year I brought some in that I had made for Nicaragua that never got there to our school.

And Miss Anna liked them so well, we put them in the Samaritan's Purse's Christmas boxes. So she asked to make more dresses out of pillowcases for this year.

So I'm on a hunt for the pillowcases. I do have some sewers, and so that's not a problem.

But I want to show you what happens with a plain old pillowcase. It can be any color.

They don't have to have any kind of embellishment. If they do, that's fine, too. Miss Becky gave me some pillowcases that were very fancy, and they got endowed with some other stuff.

[5 : 2 2] But basically, what you see is what transpires on the sewing machine. Out of a plain old white, yellow, pink, green, blue pillowcase.

So please bring them in by the 30th, and I'll pick them up and start sewing. Hand them out to my other sewers, and we'll get them in the shoeboxes for Christmas.

Thank you. And now as we prepare our hearts to enter into a time of worship, may the grace and peace of love and love of God be with you today and always.

Amen. Amen. Welcome to everyone here, and welcome to everyone online.

The service today is about hope, hope in the risen Lord. And the songs that we're going to sing together this morning, one will be very familiar to you.

[6 : 45] So we're going to start with My Hope is Built. But I want to let you know about Yet Not I, But Through Christ and Me. We introduced it a while back at communion. So you've heard it before.

But if you're not with us at the beginning, I know you will be by the end. And hopefully you'll love it as much as we do, because it tells a beautiful story about hope. I'm going to invite you to stand for our first two songs.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest spray, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking sand.

[7 : 59] When darkness fails His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace. In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking sand.

What gift of grace is Jesus, my Redeemer?

There is no more for heaven now to give. He is my joy, my righteousness and freedom.

My steadfast love, my deep and all the peace. To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus.

[9 : 45] For my life is only bound to Him. Oh, how strange and divine I can see.

All is mine, yet not I, but through Christ in me. The night is dark, but I am not forsaken.

For by my side the Savior will stay. I labor on in weakness and rejoicing.

For in my need His power is the slain. To His strife, my shepherd will defend me.

Through the deepest valley He will be. For the night has been one, and I shall overcome.

[11 : 04] Yes, not I, but through Christ in me. By the seront of God.

God, In the RYAN, I shall come back Our land and home. I know I am forgiveness and peace. For the night of my Indeed, I shall come back For the night of my name. A cover spirit will be. Theye on the northern Baltimorebaam. I know I am forgiven. The future's sure the price it has been paid, For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon And he was raised to overcome the grave To this I hold my sin has been defeated Jesus now and ever is my queen Oh, the chains are released, I can see I am free, yet not I, but through Christ in me With every breath I want to follow Jesus

For he has said that he will bring me home And day by day I know he will renew me Until I stand with glory for the throne To this I hold my own is only Jesus For the Lord be evermore to live When the race is complete Till my lips shall repeat Yet not I, but through Christ in me When the race is complete Till my lips shall repeat Yet not I, but through Christ in me

Yet not I, but through Christ in me You may be seated You may be seated Good morning church We are continuing our walk through our sermon series Called Leading Causes of Life Today And as you heard Nancy say During the greeting time We're going to be focused on hope We've talked about hope for a few weeks But hope is a way of giving ourselves life As opposed to the things that take life away

Today what we want to talk about Is making sure our hope is certain and sure And not fleeting And not just sort of empty words that we offer We want to make sure that we move through life With the hope of people who are certain in their Lord So with that said I invite you to this time of prayer Open your heart And let's go to God together Father God Your extravagant love has called us together Long before we even knew You were already in the last And had chosen us to be part of your own man Sisters and brothers Of the Lord Jesus Christ himself What amazing love you have shown for us And so we come before you With praise and thanksgiving Offering you the worship of our hearts and lives And opening ourselves to the prompting And leading of your Holy Spirit

[15 : 37] We see in our worship Our praise and prayers and offerings Through the intercession of your Son Jesus Christ Our Savior and the Lord May the time you stand here with our presence We bring honor and glory to your name Amen Good morning Good morning I'm Kathy Stengel One of the pastors And it's great to see you This morning I would like to invite Adrienne Demmon to come up And join me I want her I'm going to torture her a little bit By having her stand next to me While I share some things In the annual conference Our annual conference

And all annual conferences In the United Methodist Church Now mind you Our annual conference Is all the churches In upstate All the United Methodist churches In upstate New York There is an award given Every year at annual conference Called the Harry Denmon Evangelism Award It is an award given to one clergy And one lay person Each year at annual conference Because the annual conference Was virtual this year The award is being presented here In person And the one and only recipient Is Adrienne Demmon I want to share with you

Some of the words That were shared In recommendations On Adrienne's behalf From Aidan Tavenier Miss Adrienne is the best youth leader The church has to offer Believe me Because she has helped me And all of the youth ministry With learning God's word She has helped me grow in my faith And taught me how to be a leader Last year at Vacation Bible School I was able to be a leader Thanks to what I've learned from her Miss Adrienne deserves the award Because she is gentle And has a big heart She cares for us And does things That we never asked for But that we need It's kind of like She can read our minds She can be firm sometimes But deep down She's trying to keep us On the right track Welcoming Understanding There have been times When I may not have been At my best But she's always there To welcome me With open arms And a smile From Pam Tavenier

Adrienne doesn't just Spoon feed the gospel To our youth She provides a syllabus And written requirements Which include Bible study questions Answers And homework Her expectations are clear And her activities Are well organized She has a great love For God And a natural ability To connect With children She's an extraordinary And selfless leader With skills That enable her To bring people together In supporting her ministry We are blessed I strongly recommend her For the Harry Dunman Evangelism Award And the quotes And the letters Just go on and on And she will be able To see these For the first time When I give them to her And she can just see How much she is loved And appreciated I want to share That the Harry Dunman Evangelism Award This award honors United Methodists Selected by the annual Conference for their Exceptional ministry

Of evangelism Expressed in word Which is the what Sign Which is why And deed Which is how That brings people Into a life Transforming relationship With Jesus Christ A Harry Dunman Evangelism Award Recipient Consistently Introduces those They serve To the good news Of Jesus Christ Their ministry Is outstanding For the number Of new Christ followers Who credit Encounters With this person As critical In helping To start Or reignite Their faith I want to Just share That what is Contained In these letters Is Some from Our youth And some From parents Some from Youth who are Now young adults That have said I was seen I was heard And I was offered The good news Of Jesus Christ Is there any

[20 : 49] Greater gift I was seen I was heard I was offered The good news Of Jesus Christ Part of what I wrote In my recommendation That never In my 40 plus Years of ministry Have I seen Someone Who can Bring together Well over A hundred Children And youth For events Like VBS Vacation Bible School And recently A hundred and forty Kids were registered For hot chocolate With God And some wars Something that Stopped Started as a girls Small group meeting That turned into Girls and boys And young women And young men Who could be Introduced to the Love of God In Jesus Christ And trained For leadership There isn't a lot Of leadership training For youth And Adrienne Does that Consistently And with love And discipline You know She's young

And very sweet And soft spoken But She keeps them In line And so it is That As I said There's a lot More that's said Here And if I didn't Quote your letter I apologize I spend the whole Service Doing this So On behalf Of the entire Upper New York Annual conference I present To you The Foundation For Evangelism Harry Denman Evangelism Award For the year 2022 To Adrienne Denman In recognition And appreciation Of an exceptional Personal ministry Impacting the faith Journey Of generations Of Christ followers Thanks be to God You did notice

How quickly She ran away I didn't even Get to hug her Another time As we have been Traveling Through these Weeks For the last Several months We have Had a number Of people Speak about Their faith And how it Connects With giving And our church And ministry And this morning I'd like to invite Mr. Louis Bobzine To come up And share Good morning Good morning So I'm Louis Bobzine And I'm here to talk About tithing This is the last In our series Before I get started I'd like to Say a quick prayer I'm kind of wondering What's going on Over there It's going to be A little bit Before you get To do that So sit tight So if you'd

Bow your heads With me in prayer Lord thank you For this church Thank you for Adrienne What an amazing Thing that is Your love Just pours Through her And into our church And she is A wonderful example To follow In Jesus name We pray Amen Okay so In your bulletins I hope If you would look In there If you have a bulletin Inside of there There should be A little write up On tithing And I don't know Has anybody seen that In the last few weeks The thing is Alright I got at least one yes So somebody paid attention So the basics Are in there About tithing And we all I think Have understood That tithing Is a request By God For us to give Back to him And tithing Means one tenth And he expects It to be done Consistently So that's about As simple as What tithing is But the real question Is why would we Tithe So I'm going To go through

And I've got A cute little Set of slides And hopefully This will Kind of hit home As you look at this When we get Toward the end Ask yourself Whether you want To be Reuben Who's in the slides Or Joseph Alright Whoops My screen I've got a little Pad here That I've got to get Oh there we go Alright I'll just take a look There we go So Reuben and Joseph It was a hot day A real scorcher Reuben was outside It's hot He said I'm burning up I don't think I can take this In desperation Reuben prayed Lord Please cool me off I'm so hot I don't think I can take this Much longer Please save me Then Reuben Heard a voice From heaven I have heard Your prayer I will send Refreshing water To you By the end of the day You will have Cool refreshing water

[25 : 57] I make this Promise to you Reuben responded God is good All the time And all the time God is good Soon the voice Said Reuben Walk down the road What is this Reuben thought I'm already hot And now I'm supposed To hike somewhere I can't tell Where I'm being sent I might die If I do this The voice responded Reuben I told you I would refresh You with water Trust me But Lord Why can't you Make it rain here Reuben Walk down the road So Reuben Started walking And found shade Under some trees It was a relief This is great Lord I never knew These were here It's nice But what about The water I need some rain To be refreshed Reuben Keep walking Then some clouds Came and Reuben Felt a cool breeze Reuben thought Now we're talking It looks like It might rain

I'll stop And wait Then the voice Said Reuben Don't stop here You cannot tell But these clouds Will not bring What I am offering Keep walking Reuben continued And finally found A stream Joseph was there Joseph yelled To Reuben This has to be The hottest day Of the year Let's go for a swim No thanks Reuben said I'm waiting For the Lord To bring me rain And besides I'm afraid Of going in there I've never done That before Joseph replied I have It's the best Suit yourself The Lord gave us A stream So I'm going in And with that Joseph jumped in Joseph said You have to come in It's even better Than I thought What a relief But Reuben Didn't budge He ignored Joseph Reuben waited All day But no rain came Finally He cried out To God Lord

It never rained Refreshing water You lied to me The Lord replied Reuben I led you To refreshing water But it wasn't What you wanted You missed the joy I offered Because you weren't Open to my Possibilities So what does This have to do With tithing The answer is Everything God only wants To grace us With love The more we Align our lives Under God The more ways He has to bless us The founder Of our church John Wesley Understood the Bible Tells us That tithing That tithing Praying Attending church And reading the Bible Are all things We can do To be more Blessed by God These are all Means By which God Can show us grace They are all Means of grace Tithing is a means

Of grace When we tithe It's returning a portion Of how God Already blesses us By tithing with joy It shows God How important He is to us When we tithe God can then Offer us more Blessings On the other hand If we don't tithe Or pray Or read the Bible We think we're making More time for ourselves And saving money For things We think will make us happy We don't even know How we're robbing Ourselves Of the joy And blessings God has to offer A clear example Of what God Expects of us Can be seen With Cain and Abel In Genesis chapter 4 God looks favorably On Abel For his offerings Of fat portions From the best Of his flock And for Cain God did not accept him Because his offering Was not right Right from the start God makes clear He expects offerings And he can tell from it What he means to you

So ask yourself How much grace And blessings Do you want A little A lot Or overwhelming Get more grace By worshiping together As the body of Christ As we are today God blesses you For praising him In this way Praying is a means Of grace Get in the habit Of talking with him All day long Speak to him And give yourself Time to listen Reading the Bible Is a means of grace Read it often And let God speak to you When you do Give God a chance To help you trust him more And tithe Why choose this When you can join him And have this A river of refreshing water So I've put together A few things Of joyous things That are Unexpected And I think

[31 : 02] You'll probably Appreciate some of these Pictures So Ooh No pictures Wonderful Wonderful So Here's a group Of youth Who Who would believe it Cutting boards To rehab a house What are they learning What are they gaining Even refurbishing A kitchen These are joys That go beyond Anything That anybody Would have expected Here's a house Outside of a house Before it was Even worked on The same house And then When it was done Imagine the joy Of those people Here's a picture

Of happiness Along the way Other things We do We worship At Easter What a blessing That is Christmas time How many children Have been cared for And taught God's love Here at the church Even going on A rafting trip And things like The rummage sale I just want to mention That's the wrong date The rummage sale Was this weekend That was before So Tithings bring Blessings And happiness Don't be a Reuben Be a Joseph And the funny thing About this Is When you tithe It makes God happy But then he can Make you happy So in the end Whoops In the end When you tithe You get happy And most people Don't think of it Like that

Thank you Thank you Thank you Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[34 : 44] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[37 : 26] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. I present to you this newest member of this Christ's Holy Church. Will you welcome him?

Oh, we're going to stand closer. He's going to take our picture. I find it always a good idea for us to not assume that anyone who comes to us to become a member, to be confirmed, to be married, owns a Bible.

[39 : 04] I know that Willie has a Bible, and I know that he has read the Bible, he has accepted Christ as his Savior, he has practiced his faith in the ways that make the most sense for his gifts.

But I'd like to present him with this study Bible and your certificate of membership. Thank you and welcome. I'm all the way up to the front over here.

Will you join your hearts with mine in prayer as we offer any joys, any concerns that we have up to God?

Please pray with me. God, we thank you for the time to worship together, for the beautiful days. God, we offer what's on our hearts today to you, so that for a time you can help us carry the burdens.

We thank you for the life that we live, and for each breath that we take. God, we ask you to help those who are suffering, for those who are concerned with mental illness, for those who are sick, for their loved ones who are caring for them.

[40 : 42] God, we offer all of this to you. We thank you for the money. God, we thank you for the money. God.

God. God. God.

Good morning. Good morning. Today's scripture comes from the book of Psalms and the book of Romans. Romans. In you, Lord, I have taken refuge.

Let me never be put to shame. Deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me. Come quickly to my rescue. Be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me.

Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name, lead and guide me. Keep me free from the trap that is set before me, for you are my refuge.

[41 : 53] How abundant are the good things that you have stored up for those who fear you, that you bestow in the sight of all, and those who take refuge in you.

In the shelter of your presence, you hide them from all human intrigues. You keep them safe in your dwelling from accusing tongues. Praise be to the Lord, for he has shown me the wonders of his love when I was in a city under siege.

In my alarm, I said, I am cut off from your sight. Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help. Love the Lord, all his faithful people.

The Lord preserves those who are true to him, but the proud he pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord. Now from Romans.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

[42 : 56] For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the spirit groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?

But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. In the same way, the spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the spirit, because the spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

[44 : 25] For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. So church, would you join me in a word of prayer?

Come Holy Spirit, fall fresh upon us this morning. Come into each heart in the ways that you know that we need. Let that seed in us that will grow and bear fruit.

For the honor and the glory of your name. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. Amen. So I'm going to start with a question that's going to sound a bit silly.

[45 : 49] How many of you live in the real world? How many of you live in the real world? Some of y'all are holding, some of y'all are hesitating.

That's a bit different. Okay. That sounds like another sermon that needs to happen. Okay. But this thing about living in the real world. It's kind of a funny phrase to use.

The real world. Now when we talk about living in the real world. You know, it can go back to a lot of different things, right? Usually when we say it, we kind of know what we mean.

But let's just make sure we're all on the same page. So when we think about this idea of what we call the real world. Now, you could say it goes back to early 90s.

When on TV there was this show that actually was called The Real World. That came on MTV and it was about these young adults who were leaving the nest.

[46 : 53] And starting to experience all those lovely things that come with your first real try of being an adult. And so they called this The Real World. Now, you might say that's what gave us the joy that we now call reality TV.

And of course, the irony of reality TV is that it really doesn't look like any of our own real world, right? The other thing we talk about when we say The Real World.

Now, you know me, having worked in academia. This used to get under my skin a little bit. Because I would talk to colleagues. I would talk to people who were working professionally. One of the things that would say, well, yeah, that's what happens in school.

But when you get out into the... Then it works like this. Okay? And I get it. Because, you know, on the one hand we have the academic world.

And then we have the professional world. And those things don't always align. And then any of us that's ever had a job has also had this run-in, right? Because when you get to work, when you start, they usually hand you a book of some kind, right?

[48 : 03] And then that's supposed to tell you what you're supposed to do. But as soon as you actually start doing the work, you realize that the book and the work don't seem all that similar.

And you know that it's different in, say it with me, the real world. That's exactly what we're talking about. So this world world thing is with us.

We get it. But the thing about the real world is that the real world is kind of tough. We all know this. So, for example, you may have grown up reading certain kinds of books, watching kind of movies, and gave you this kind of idea of what romantic relationships were supposed to be like.

And then you probably ended up getting married. Like, insert whatever you want, right?

Okay? And the challenge is, is you find out that real relationships take a whole lot of different kind of effort. That is not like the storybooks.

[49 : 15] It's not like the movies. And the real world kind of has this way of bringing us into a whole other place. You may have spent all those years studying something, thought it was a passion, and thought you were going to be able to do this for a long time, looking forward to this rewarding career, but then you got out into that career, and all of a sudden you realize that the work was really, really different than what you expected.

And then maybe that passion started to fade, and then all of a sudden you started to get bored, if not downright resentful, as you started to do it, and all of a sudden, welcome to your real world.

You may have been cruising right along, feeling good about yourself, doing what you wanted to do, enjoying things, and then all of a sudden maybe a financial crisis hit your family.

You may lose a job. You may have a health crisis of some kind. And things aren't what you thought they were going to be anymore. Welcome to the real world.

But you just can't do those things the way you thought you were going to be able to do them. Real world has this way of literally walking up and smacking you right across the face, doesn't it?

[50 : 32] And the thing about that in the real world stuff is that if you live in the real world long enough, it becomes really difficult to hold on to some of these things we profess.

that if you have one of those challenges in a relationship, if that job isn't stoking your soul the way you thought it was going to, if your body isn't working the way you expected it to work, or causing you legitimate pain, if ends don't meet the way they're supposed to anymore, how do you hold on to hope?

That's kind of our challenge, right? That's the whole point of this journey. When we talk about these things that give us life as opposed to drain life from us. Because as we all said, or at least most of us at the beginning, that's what it's like out here in the real world.

But see, the thing for us, as people who profess Jesus, we shouldn't have this problem, but we live in the real world. And because we do, I think that if we're going to be honest, everybody has struggled with this idea of where is my hope?

How do I hang on to what I said I believed? Because we know what to say, right? I mean, the words can kind of come from our mouths and we can speak them, but that's the thing we want to get into today.

[52 : 14] Because you can say it and you can mouth the words and they can fall from your lips. But do you own them? Do you hold on to them? Do they come from the pit of your gut?

Do they come from that place in your heart? Because you know that these are true. Just as you heard at the end of the song that Bill read for us today.

Be strong, you who hope in the Lord. It can be tough out here in the real world. How do you do that with full throat?

How do you do that with clear eyes? How do you do that with your head up? That's what we want to talk about today. Because we want to be able to live as people who understand that our hope is sure and certain.

That it's not fleeting. That we're not living in this world where we just sort of make wishes on stars. We know the source of our hope. And that can be tricky.

[53 : 23] Because the world out here can give us a lot of things that sound good. It may make a lot of sense. But from a faith perspective, these things don't actually work the way we think they're supposed to work.

Let me give you an example of what I'm talking about. Adrian? Good afternoon, everyone.

Good afternoon. We all have this one life to live. A fleeting shadow amongst all that exists in this vast universe.

We have the ability to accomplish anything. Truly anything. If we use our time wisely. Is this jar full?

Yes. And is it full now?

[54 : 51] Yes. And how about now?

Is the jar full now? Yes. Yes. Yeah, it is. Now, I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life.

Golf balls are the important things. Your family, your friends, your health, and your passions. The pebbles are the other important things. Your car, your job, your home.

The sand is everything else. It's just the small stuff. Now, if you put the sand in the jar first, you won't have room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same is true in life.

If you spend all your energy and your time on the small stuff, you won't have time for all the really important things that matter to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness.

[56 : 08] Take care of the golf balls first. The really important things. Set your priorities. Because everything else is just sand. Yes.

Uh, Professor, what does the beer represent? I'm glad you asked. It goes to show that no matter how full your life may seem to be, there's always room for a couple of beers with a friend.

So, this jar is your life.

It's got the big balls in it. And those little pebbles. It's got that sand that takes up all of our time. I added something up here, though.

I want you to imagine that this picture is God.

[57 : 13] If this is your life, where's God in it? Now, some folks might say, well, you know, we got those sort of big balls in it.

And that Jesus is one of my most important big balls. That kind of makes sense. But here's the problem I have with that.

So, okay, Jesus is one of the important things in your life. I think that, too, could be another sermon. But, two things come up for me when I hear that.

First, if Jesus is only one of the things in your life, one of those balls that takes up space, how much of your life is Jesus actually getting?

Because you kind of put him in this nice, discreet box.

[58 : 34] And says, okay, so there's Jesus over there. There's work over there. There's friends over there. I don't think that's how it's supposed to work.

Wouldn't you rather have Jesus be part of everything you do? As you read Scripture, as you listen to Jesus teach, doesn't it sound like God is saying, I want to be everything to you.

I want you to, I want to be a part of all that you're a part of. Don't hold anything back from me. So, if Jesus is just one of those pieces, that's kind of an issue.

The other thing we want to get at is just simply the logic of it. Goes back to that first question. Where's God supposed to fit?

Friends, this is our point. If you are dealing with a real world that is full of all this stuff, not all of it bad, not all of it horrible, but just full of all this stuff, and yet, those things in your real world that are challenging you, those things in your real world that are sucking life from you, those things in your real world that cause you pain, problem, anxiety, frustration, cynicism, and yet, you look at your real world, and you say, where's my hope?

[60 : 28] Why am I having a hard time knowing that there's joy? Why am I having a hard time finding the peace that surpasses all understanding?

If this is the source of our hope, if God is the source of our hope, yet, our life has no space for God, why are you surprised you're not in touch with your hope?

Why are you surprised you're not in touch with your peace? Why does it shock you that it's hard to find?

Because there's literally no space for it. The challenge for all of us is our world is so easy for us to fill with stuff.

Busy is not hard. All of us know that. Busy is not hard. Faithfulness and fruitfulness are hard.

[61 : 58] So you don't have a problem filling a day, but what fills your soul? And yet, we talk about leading causes of life as opposed to leading causes of death.

friends, if you want to not be beaten down by the world, if you not, if you don't want to feel lost, if you don't want to feel overcome, if you're looking and grasping and saying, where are these things?

Where is the stuff that I read about, hear about? God? How can I get to what we were saying before? It's like, when the world comes at me this way and I can say those things full throat, full heart and know that they're not just platitudes that just fall out of my mouth, but they're where I stand in reality and in truth.

How do we get there? make some space. Make some very real space for God.

because if you're not intentionally doing that, see the challenge for most of us is that if we start to feel those things, if we start to feel that cynicism, that loss, that sort of stuff, that anxiety, we go looking for the things that give us relief.

[63 : 42] The problem is the things that give relief in the world might give us a momentary break, but they don't really provide relief. They might help us escape, but they don't really solve.

You will never drink enough. You will never sleep with enough people. You will never shop enough. You will never go out and do all the things that make you smile.

Enough to deal with the real world. It doesn't work, and I know we already all know that.

So our problem, then, is how do we really do this? Well, first, we've got to get out of transactional thinking, because the world teaches us to think transactionally, right?

In other words, God, if I do this for you, you do this for me, right? So, if I make ten minutes for you, then, you'll make me feel better, right?

[64 : 55] That's not really how it works. Okay? The idea here is if you did make that ten minutes, what would you do with it?

would you just speak magic words? Or would you really do what Jesus talks about? Would you seek him with your whole heart?

Would you be engaged in practices, some of which you heard Louis talk about? Would your prayer be honest in a way that gave you a chance to listen for the voice of God?

Would you spend time perhaps calling someone who you know is struggling? Would you take a minute in the middle of all your stress and strain and remember just simply looking outside at the sunshine that, wow, somebody did that on purpose and that somebody cares about me and just offer a sincere time of thanks for him doing it?

Not transactional because that, friends, would be what we call transformational. and that is what we really want.

[66 : 28] If we want to remember our hope, if we want to get back in touch with it, see, when the real world starts telling us things like, you can't afford this, or how are you going to pay this bill, or your body hurts and you can't do what you used to do, or how am I going to go over here and solve this problem, what we do is listen to the words we heard in Scripture today.

Be strong, you who hope in the Lord. When you hear the psalm, what you see is King David who is giving testimony.

David been through it. He talks about being under siege in the city and was afraid that God couldn't see him even anymore, but he knows he's out now. And because he knows he's out now, that no matter what the world tells him, he's going to hope in the Lord.

Because he knows who his God is, and he's seen what his God can do. When you listen to Paul talk to the Roman church, and they're going through all these persecutions, and people are coming after them, and they're not even sure if this Jesus thing is worth it.

Paul says, look, these present sufferings are nothing compared to what God's getting ready to do for us. But you got to believe in that.

[67 : 54] We don't hope for what we already have, because we don't have to hope for what we already have. We hope for what is not yet seen. But we hope for it in expectation.

We hope for it in love. We believe our God is able, and no matter what we see, we hold on to that. Be strong, you who hope in the Lord.

That's the difference. To know that fully, to embrace that fully, no matter what it looks like, no matter what it feels like, because it doesn't always feel good.

hope in the hope. But will you hold on to hope in the midst of all of it? So, friends, final thought.

You heard me talk about 10 minutes. That's my challenge for you. If you are struggling with trying to find a way to plug back into your hope, can you find 10 minutes?

[69 : 10] If you're already doing some faithful practices, say you're doing a daily devotion, say you pray regularly before you go to bed, can you find 10 more minutes each day to just focus on God?

If you're not doing a devotion, maybe you try starting one. if you pray in the morning, maybe you add praying at dinner. If you find yourself getting sucked out of it as you go through your work week, maybe you dedicate a little bit of your lunch hour to finding something online that's going to feed your heart.

10 more minutes. Seems so simple. It seems so small. But if you just start with that.

Start with that and see if you can't build something. See if you don't give God that 10 more minutes, how God might move in you and in your circumstances.

Not only that, but what that 10 minutes will remind you of. Because no matter what it looks like out here, you can boldly know that I am strong.

[70 : 37] Because my hope is in the Lord. And not only will you know it up here, you'll own it in here.

Because you serve a God who moves in your real world. Amen. And amen.

Almighty and gracious God, we thank you that you are who you are. The ways in which you have worked. The ways in which you have shown us we have every reason to be strong because our hope is in you.

So Lord, let us always hold on to it. No matter what our eyes see, no matter what our hearts feel, no matter what our ears hear, let us remember who you are and that you are the source of our sure and certain hope.

As we move into this world, as we move through it day by day, let us remember who you are and who we are.

[71 : 44] Amen. The Lord be with you.

And also with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. We do right to our thanks and praise.

It is right and good and a joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Holy are you and blessed is your son, Jesus Christ, by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the spirit.

[73 : 08] On the night in which he gave himself up for us, Jesus took the bread, he gave thanks to you, God, creator of all things, and he gave it to his disciples, and all in the room, and said, take and eat, my body broken for you.

And at the end of the meal, he took the cup, he gave thanks to God who had given it, and he gave it to his disciples, and all who were in the room, and said, take this, each of you, my body, my blood, given for you, for the forgiveness of your sins.

Do this in remembrance of me. And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on all of us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world as Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

[74 : 38] Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen. And now, with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not to temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, ever. Amen. Amen. kill you, for the love, you bring me Would those who are serving communion please come and join me?

Thank you.

[76 : 36] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

The table is prepared. Please come as you are able or we will bring it to you. We have gluten free both made and packaged for you as you should need it over on this side.

[78 : 33] Please, all are welcome. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Takeindaérazis.

Thank you. In Christ I stand, in Christ alone, who took on flesh, fullness of God in hell could save.

This gift of love and righteousness, sworn by the ones He came to save, till on that cross that Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied.

[80 : 24] For every sin on Him was laid, here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay, the light of the world by darkness slain.

Then burst forth in glorious day, up from the day He rose again.

And as He stands in victory, sin's curse has lost its grip on me.

For I am His, and He is mine, born with a precious blood of Christ.

[81 : 46] No guilt in life, no fear in death. This is the power of Christ in me.

No last must cry to final breath. Jesus commands my destiny.

No power of God, no scheme of man, can ever find me from His hand.

Till He returns or calls me home. Here in the power of Christ I stand.

No purpose in stars were That I can'm not gold in todas asjun, basements and gasping of God in heaven. For I am your son, shout to my utility shield and I optioned, And Yasmin, bring Your eigen ■ in my life. If you are dead me, be a saint in may be a night.

[82 : 48] Keep your reign waiting, open my heart, ask for your life. In the water is meeting, I will hope for you. You may hear all that grace of God in life been a year. To yourbek of God is wanting in life. But that's a Frodoch when you are the first before you are.

In Christ alone, my hope is found.

Last line of the psalm tells us to be strong, you who hope in the Lord. And we can have that hope because we serve a God who is mighty to save and gives us life.

I'm going to invite you to stand for our final song, Mighty to Save. Everyone needs compassion, love that's never been made.

And mercy for me. Everyone needs kindness, kindness of the Savior.

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