

1. Welcome everyone
2. Recap on the last months theme of “Life Interrupted”

What will I be speaking about?

- This morning I want to speak to you about Hope. And the importance of hoping in Jesus. You see never before has the world been in such a hopeless situation as what our generation finds itself in.
- Wherever you look everything is negative – in the papers on the news – we are constantly surrounded by and bombarded with negative reports.
- Statistics tell us:

1. Should you marry the odds are very high that you will become another divorce statistics – a hopeless situation.
2. Bringing it back home in 2009 each one of us felt the effect of the recession that swept over the globe. Still today we are feeling the ripple effects thereof.
 - ✓ Businesses lost Billions of Dollars
 - ✓ Economic growth came to a grinding halt
 - ✓ Budgets were cut
 - ✓ Many lost their jobs

JUST ANOTHER HOPELESS SITUATION...

- Just last year I had a conversation with a guy that owned a family law practice and another person who worked for a Psychologist. The strange thing is that both of them confirmed the same reality and that being that while the world was experiencing a recession they both were experiencing exponential growth in their businesses.
 - For the guy that owned the law practice, divorce was on the increase because couples couldn't cope with the added financial stress so they opted to abort their marriage unions – they buckled under the added pressure
 - For the Psychologists they experienced growth because people suddenly found themselves in a hopeless situation and were either having suicidal tendencies or battling with depression or anxiety.
- You see even though some of us are facing these very facts I am here this morning to declare Truth to you! This is why I want to speak to you about Hope.
- The facts might reflect what's happening in the natural to you but I am here to tell you the Truth that God is a God of Hope and who operates in the Supernatural

- That the Gospel is a Gospel of Hope – from the beginning of time even in the book of Genesis we see God bursting onto the scene and bringing hope to a lost world.

THIS MORNING I WANT TO BRING A VERSE THAT I BELIEVE GOD HAS LAID ON MY HEART FOR SOME IN THIS HOUSE.

LAMENTATIONS 3:19-33 (MSG)

It's a Good Thing to Hope for Help from God

¹⁹⁻²¹I'll never forget the trouble, the utter lostness, the taste of ashes, the poison I've swallowed. I remember it all—oh, how well I remember—the feeling of hitting the bottom. But there's one other thing I remember, and remembering, I keep a grip on hope:

²²⁻²⁴God's loyal love couldn't have run out, his merciful love couldn't have dried up. They're created new every morning. How great your faithfulness! I'm sticking with God (I say it over and over). He's all I've got left.

²⁵⁻²⁷God proves to be good to the man who passionately waits, to the woman who diligently seeks. It's a good thing to quietly hope, quietly hope for help from God. It's a good thing when you're young to stick it out through the hard times.

²⁸⁻³⁰When life is heavy and hard to take, go off by yourself. Enter the silence. Bow in prayer. Don't ask questions: Wait for hope to appear. Don't run from trouble. Take it full-face. The "worst" is never the worst.

³¹⁻³³Why? Because the Master won't ever walk out and fail to return.

THIS MORNING I WANT TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT HOPE. BUT IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND IT I HAVE BROKEN IT DOWN INTO AN ACROSSTICK.

H.O.P.E

H = HOLD ON

LAMENTATIONS 3:21-24

²¹But there's one other thing I remember, and remembering, I keep a grip on hope: ²²⁻²⁴God's loyal love couldn't have run out, his merciful love couldn't have dried up. They're created new every morning. How great

your faithfulness! I'm sticking with God (I say it over and over). He's all I've got left.

- You need to hold onto Him. In the storms when there seems to be nothing to grab a hold of, hold onto Him.
- Life has many arms trying to grab hold of our attention and emotions and try and bring us down but you need to hold onto Him
- One minute you might be walking on water the next you find yourself sinking – reach out and hold onto Him.
- The fact is that things are tough out there. Every Monday you go out there not knowing what awaits you, you get battered and bruised only to walk in these doors on a Sunday to get bandaged up only to repeat the cycle all over again on Monday morning.
- At times it seems that we face wave after wave of opposition.
- When everyone is asleep we find no rest as we battle those demons that come out of the closet.
- We walk around like a ticking time bomb just waiting for the right charge so that we can explode.
- In the midst of the facts that we are facing there is the inner cry that says...“God where are You in all of this?”
- We ask God questions like:
 1. Why are You allowing this to happen?
 2. Will this ever come to an end?
 3. Will I ever be able to recover from the loss?
- We find ourselves in a place of confusion / discouragement & despair with no sense of direction.
- The facts tell us:
 1. We are finished.
 2. We will never recover.
 3. We will never see a brighter day.
 4. Things are only going to get worse.
- It is in these very most that you need to hold on – you need to dig deep and muster up everything you have and hold on – never give up and never let go – hold on!!
- You need to understand one truth and that being, that God is able to pitch up and any moment – completely unannounced and pull you right out of where you are and place you in the shadow of His favour.
 - ✠ You will find that doors that always seemed shut are suddenly flung wide open.
 - ✠ Where you were on the verge of losing your job suddenly you find yourself in a place of promotion.
 - ✠ Where you found yourself in lack suddenly you are placed into plenty.
- Hold on by seeking His face.
- Hold on by reading His word.
- Hold on by staying in fellowship – hope groups.
- Hold on by not running away from the church but running to it

³¹⁻³³Why? Because the Master won't ever walk out and fail to return.

O = BE ON THE OFFENSIVE

²⁵⁻²⁷God proves to be good to the man who passionately waits, to the woman who diligently seeks. It's a good thing to quietly hope, quietly hope for help from God. It's a good thing when you're young to stick it out through the hard times.

- The word “offensive” means to take a attitude or position of aggression. In other words it is not a passive stance that you take. The word is often used in naval or military terms when preparing for battle.
- You see you need to keep moving forward – the battle offensive cannot be carried out while moving backwards – that is retreating
- You haven't been called to be a Settler you have been called to be a Possessor
 - Genesis – God instructs Adam to take dominion over the earth
 - Various books of the OT – God calls Israel to take possession of the promised land.
- God is never on the defensive.
- He is never caught by surprise – He always has a game plan.
- He is always on the move taking new ground.
- Like He spoke the heavens into being – you need to speak yourself into a better future.

PROVERBS 18:21 Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

- Don't be on the defensive with negative talk but move into the offensive mode by speaking faith / hope and life into your situation.
- Start declaring God's promises
- Start reading and believing His word for your life.

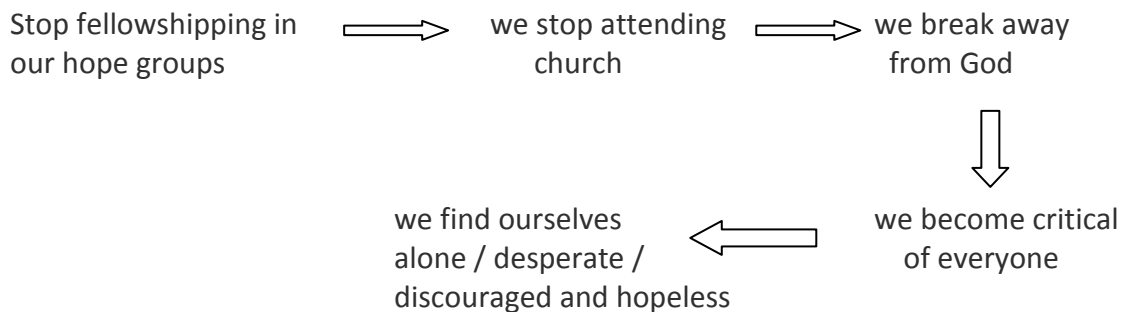
P = POSITION YOURSELF

POSITION....POSITION....POSITION

Lamentations 28-30When life is heavy and hard to take, **go** off by yourself. Enter the silence. Bow in prayer. Don't ask questions: **Wait** for hope to appear. **Don't run** from trouble. Take it full-face. The "worst" is never the worst.

1. David positioned himself by serving Saul and was promoted from shepherd to king.
2. Joshua positioned himself by serving Moses and later lead Israel into victory.
3. Joseph allowed himself to be positioned in the prison and later was promoted to the palace.
4. Elisha positioned himself by serving Elijah and later succeeded Elijah.

- Do you notice the pattern? In each case these men sought to serve another and later were exalted to a place of position.
- You see often the pattern that develops when we find our lives interrupted is that we



- Like Samuel you need to position yourself in the House of God so that you can hear from God.
- Many of us want the palace without the prison but we need to understand that the palace and prison like with Joseph go hand in hand.

Threats to being positioned:

1. Impatience – often at times we think God is moving too slowly for our liking and we take things into our own hands. Saul instead of waiting for the prophet to arrive and perform the ceremony decided to take things into his own hands and this later led to God rejecting him as king.
2. Agitation / Irritation & Fatigue – at times we find ourselves irritated with people or the church, slowly we become critical of others and we begin to move from church to church in an effort to find an institution that suits our needs. The sad reality is that we never find peace because the problem is not others but rather ourselves.
3. Self Seeking – Many of us have a shadow mission in life. What this is, is that often we have our own hidden agenda or motives for why we do what we do. Often we do things for recognition or to find favour with someone. Do you do what you do simply because you want to be the hands and feet of the Master or do you have a shadow mission.

WHAT IS YOUR SHADOW MISSION?

E = ENDURE

You see it took a nation 400yrs of slavery – followed by a lifetime in a desert – while battling ridicule of the surrounding nations / famine / drought and wars to come to a place called Jericho. Where in the midst of their tired bodies, aching souls and confused minds they were called to march around a wall that seemed like a hopeless situation. None the less they positioned themselves and exalted a God whom they had many questions about and while they stood their tired / aggravated and miserable, mustering up everything and anything they could to exalt the king. In the moment of silence and expectation that must of followed they began to hear a crack here and noticed a rock fall there and before they knew it the mass of rock that stood before them like a towering giant began to come tumbling down.

Conclusion

- In concluding when enduring you need to go another step further and that is to EXHALT

Matthew 6:33 But **seek** first God's Kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things will be given to you as well

- Once you progressed form enduring to exhaling you need to start expecting.
- Start believing and trusting that God is who He says He is and that He is able and willing.

JAMES 1:5-8 If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help, and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. People who "worry their prayers" are like wind-whipped waves. Don't think you're going to get anything from the Master that way, adrift at sea, keeping all your options open.

ENDURE / EXHALT & EXPECT.

SHORT STORY FOR CLOSING

With the lighting in this place you can never figure out what time it is. His roommates were talking again about how he would never get the transplant that he needed in time the list was so long and he was so sick.

The nurse came in and told him we have to get you ready they had found him a heart. It was on its way and they needed to get him prep for the surgery. He looked at her ask her to get

his wife and his daughter for him. She said there was no time. He looked at her and told her to make the time.

He watched his wife walk in. She was so beautiful. Their daughter behind her, her mother's looks and intelligence and her father pit bull mentality and he smiled. One on either side of his bed holding his hands. Was he strong enough for this he didn't know? He done a lot bad things in his life he cut corners and cheated when he could get a way with. But this was different this was where the rubber meets the road. He knew what had to be done. He looked at his wife and said, " I love more now than I ever did thank you for the life we have had. I will miss you."

To his daughter he said, " Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think that I could have a child like you. No father anywhere at anytime could be a more proud parent than I am. You are the best thing that has ever happened to me. I will love until the last star is a memory."

The doctor came rushing into the room and started talking about how they had to get him ready. He looked at wife and his daughter then he turned to the doctor and told him " Doc we ain't doing this. You give that heart to the person on the list. I have had a good life. Let someone else get a chance at theirs."

He looked at the other woman in the room as said. " How could God not answer your prayer"

He looked at wife and said " Get me out of here while I still have the strength to leave and before I get scared. "

The doctor left the nurse brought in a wheel chair at he left that hospital knowing he had done the right thing. He didn't particularly believe God but some else needed that heart. He died that at his home with wife and daughter with him. A cigarette in his mouth and a beer in his hand. With no regrets.

Back at the hospital days kept turning. His roommate was recovering from getting his heart transplant. And it looked like he would get to see his unborn child grow up.

The nurse took a different position at the hospital she could not work with dying people anymore. So she went to OB/GYN department help bring lives into the world. As things would happen the woman whose husband had needed the transplant months before was there to have her baby. The nurse was not involved in the delivery but stayed to see the child. As she was looking at baby thorough the window the husband showed up to see the baby. He noticed the tears that were running down the nurse's face and asked her way was she crying.

The nurse responded pointing at his child she said " That baby has daddy because of the unselfishness of one man. And the baby's mother's prayer."

The man asked to explain why she would say this about this child. She told him of a night when she worked in the Intensive care unit of hospital. And that a man gave up his heart

transplant to the next person on the list. The next person on the list at the hospital with the same blood type was the baby's father. .