

voice of hope

1. Voice of hope

1 Peter 3:15 (NET) But set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope you possess.

part of our vision

- The hope that you possess
- what does it mean to have a voice of hope
- What kind of hope do we have and how is it expressed

Faith & hope

What the difference

- Normally we talk about sharing our faith.
- When we share our faith, typically, we're looking back.

When we share our hope we're looking ahead

- What is our hope based on
- nobody says her is my hope for yesterday

Hope verses optimism

The world's definition of hope is an optimistic outlook.

The problem with the world's hopes, as many as they have, they are pretty foundationless.

Bible def: Hope is an optimistic outlook based on powerful promises.

See I think our hope has to look different

Proverbs 29:18 (The Message) If people cannot see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.

- we get into trouble when we can't see what God is doing

this is what I want to talk about this morning

Without a vision

Proverbs 29:18 (CEB)

18 When there's no vision, the people get out of control, but whoever obeys instruction is happy.

- when we don't have a bigger picture we lose the ability to choose well in life
- we settle for less
- I think this is one of Satan's primary areas of focus

- Our hope has to look different from the optimism the world has otherwise why would they bother asking?

The greatest pain

- most painful to lose for your life
- been there - a few times
- Painful to regain
- but its having a hope and a dream that sets you apart

Lessons from a life well lived

Romans 4:18 (The Message) When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis of what he saw he couldn't do but on what God said he would do. And so he was made father of a multitude of peoples. God himself said to him, "You're going to have a big family, Abraham!"

God has a dream for your life - but to realize that dream you have to go through phases

Dream

An idea, an ambition, a goal. God gives you a dream

(God) "I will make you into a great nation..." Gen. 12:1-3

- Abraham aged 75

Decide

A decision is when you decide to act on that dream.

- A dream without a decision is worthless.
- And every dream of God has a risk to it.
- It has a part where you have to take a step of faith.

"So Abraham left as the Lord had told him to..." Gen. 12:4

Delay

A dream is never fulfilled instantly.

- When God gives you an idea of what He wants to do with your life and when He actually fulfills it there is always a time gap because He wants to grow you.
- He wants to build you up

"But Sarah still had not borne any children..." Gen. 16:1

- Abraham aged 86

Psalm 105:19 (NLT) Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the Lord tested Joseph's character.

Difficulty

God not only lets you wait for a while but while you wait He lets you have some problems.

- Isn't that fun?
- So you go through the stage of difficulty where things go from bad to really bad to worse to impossible

“How can a son be born to a man my age?,” Gen. 17-18

- Abraham now 99

Dead End

“Take your only son, whom you love, and sacrifice him...,” Gen. 21:1-6, 22:1-12

At Dead end God allows your dream to seemingly die.

- Abraham waits a hundred years and has a baby
- He starts to grow up then God says, “By the way, now I want you to give him back to Me. I want you to sacrifice him to Me.

What kind of God is this? Is this a cruel joke?

- at dead end you feel nothing but hopelessness
- the only thing good about this phase is that it is the second to last one

Deliverance

(God) “Don't hurt the boy...I have provided a lamb...,” Gen. 22:12-14

Genesis 22:12 (NET) 22:12 “Do not harm the boy!” the angel said. “Do not do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God because you did not withhold your son, your only son, from me.”

The greater the dead end, the more hopeless the situation,

- the greater the deliverance is going to be, the more of a miracle its going to be.
- Only God could have done that.
- AND NOW your and God know your heart

Problems don't stop us

One of the main reasons we live with no dream is all we can see is the mistakes we have made

- I make mistakes, but God doesn't
- He knows the mistakes we're going to make twenty years from now, so He just fits them into the plan.

Rom. 8.28 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

God uses my mistakes.

- Why? Because He already knows them before we even do them.
- You have to know that there is no mistake you can make that is bigger than God

But there is one mistake you can make that will stop what God wants - to give up

- There is no Plan B in your life.

You have to see God is bigger

let me show you from the bible

Matthew 1, we have the family tree of Jesus on Joseph,Äôs side.

- The genealogy, the lineage of Jesus, because the Jews said the Messiah, the coming Saviour, must come through the line of David.

Four women are mentioned.

- Unheard of in Jewish culture.
- Because you always trace the family tree through the father, not the mother.
- But in Jesus family tree it mentions four women.

The first woman mentioned was a woman named Tamar.

- Do you know what Tamar was famous for?
- She was raped by her half brother, Absalom.
- A very, very sad story in the Old Testament. Yet God brought good out of it.

The second woman mentioned in Jesus,Äô family tree was Rahab.

- Rahab was a prostitute who found faith and became a great godly woman.
- She's in the family tree of Jesus.

The third one is a woman named Ruth.

- Ruth wasn't even Jewish.
- She was a Moabite who married a Jewish man illegally.
- Jewish men weren't allowed to marry outside of their faith.
- So her whole marriage was illegal.
- But she's in the family tree of Jesus.

Then the fourth woman was Bathsheba. Anybody heard of her?

In every one of those situations, the heartbreaks that those four women went through, little did they know that God said "I'm going to put that in My plan to bring the Saviour of the world onto this planet.,"

God is bigger than your problem.

- God is bigger than your sin.
- He's bigger than your mess-ups.

What is God's purpose for your life?

Rom. 8.29 God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him.

- God wants you to grow up and be like Jesus Christ.

What about all those times when I made the mistakes?

Rom. 8.26 Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans.

- Did you know that when you're hurting so bad you don't even know what to say, that God prays for you?

A life of worship

1 Peter 3:15 (NLT) Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.

It seems to me that we get this the wrong way round

- We want to tell people what they should believe rather than live a life that invites questions

What does lord mean

Three things being a follower of Jesus means

1. Connecting with Jesus accepting his claims
2. Irrevocably choosing to follow him without reservation
3. Learning to think like him

Bible calls the sum total of this worship.

- Worship honors and glorifies God
- you cannot just reduce worship to a song
- like reducing marriage to a kiss

Romans 12:1 (The Message) So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life, your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.

Worship fully expressed will always connect the hearts of those far from God to him

- Worship and hope are connected
- when we worship this way we become the voice of hope
- nearly all our songs are about what God has done - not about what he is going to do
- to sing songs about how amazing God is yet be living a life that has no God dream is.....well

Ecclesiastes 3:11 Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.