

Proverbs: *Hope-an expectation or desire that a certain thing would happen...*

1. Have you ever felt that everything was going to be ok because you had, money, a good job, relationships or health?
2. Have you ever suffered a loss and felt there was no hope?
3. Have you ever trusted your own opinion and were wrong?
4. Have you ever had a time in life in which your hope in Jesus was what got you through?

It is reasonable to say that all people want some degree of good for their lives. One of the biggest things we see in our culture is that people are generally looking for something to have HOPE in. When we look at our world and see violence, deceit and injustice. We are looking for someone to tell us “everything is going to be alright”

*Friedrich Nietzsche the noted Atheist says this about Hope “Hope in reality is the worst of all evils because it prolongs the torments of man.”*

So his viewpoint is don't bother having HOPE in anything because eventually you will come to the conclusion there is no HOPE...life stinks.

The truth is the Bible is all about HOPE...spiritual HOPE, who we should place our HOPE in no matter what the situation. Today we are going to learn four things about HOPE from the book of Proverbs.

The problem that many people deal with is they look for and place their HOPE in the wrong place.

**Hope in the wrong place leads to spiritual sickness**

*Proverbs 13:12 “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.”*

People want to know that “everything is going to be ok” not only in this life but the next life as well. So what are some things people place their hope in?

### ***Hope in this life***

- Money/possessions- I will be fine if I have a lot of resources.
- Job security-Some people feel they have hope in this life because they have a good job.
- Love/relationships-Sometimes we feel that if we are loved and have relationships everything in this life will be ok.
- Health-Sometimes we feel that things will be ok because we have our health

These things can all give us comfort and temporary happiness but if we focus too much on these things they can give us false hope...why? Because they can all be lost...Remember...in *Luke 12 “The Rich Fool”*? When something like that happens we feel HOPELESS. So the natural response is to look outside of this life for hope...there has got to be something more

***Hope in the afterlife***...ok so this life is not working out the way you expected so you think...if I have two tries I will make the next one work. So where do people try to find HOPE for the afterlife?

- I am spiritual- I believe that this is not all there is and I think about spiritual things
- I am a good person-surely if there is a God He will accept me I am a good person.
- I am religious- I am very sincere in my religion

But at some point looking at the afterlife in these ways comes up short and we realize that when we look for hope in the wrong places we become sick as in unhappy, unfulfilled and uncertain. *“Hope deferred makes the heart sick”* Now because our heart is sick we start to look within to find the answers...

Which brings us to the next thing we learn about hope...

## **False hope can come from within**

We hear phrases like...*"believe in yourself", "listen to your heart", "look within" and "go with your gut"* In some cases these phrases can be true in some life situations...but do these phrases prove true when it comes to spiritual hope? Can or should we trust ourselves?

Here are two Proverbs that teach that we can lead ourselves into false hope.

*Proverbs 26:12 "Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him."*

When we think we have all the answers we will eventually prove ourselves to be fools. We are not equipped within ourselves to provide hope or answers for everything.

There needs to be an authority higher than ourselves and as Christians we realize that God and what He reveals to us in His Word is that final authority.

Many people do not accept that there is an authority outside of themselves so they argue and teach and spread their own philosophies...

listen to...*Proverbs 29:20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.* Here we have someone speaking out without knowing the truth or ignoring the truth of what God teaches. *In Ephesian 5:6 "Let no one deceive you with empty words*

So what does the Bible teach about where we can find our hope?

**True Hope is found in Jesus** *Proverbs 10:28 "The hope of the righteous brings joy,*

The HOPE that Jesus gives, helps us in this life...and the afterlife.

Let me explain the HOPE for the afterlife...this verse says the HOPE of the “righteous”

How does a person become righteous? GOSPEL Explain how Jesus gave us His righteousness and took our sinfulness.

Then the verse says brings “joy” ...this is where the Proverbs is talking about the HOPE we have in this life.

All the things of this world that we look to for HOPE cannot deliver but the HOPE we have in Jesus changes everything because we know that we are part of a bigger purpose and bigger plan and we are included in the plan of God. So when you find yourself in situations when you want someone to say “everything is going to be ok” you know you can look to Jesus.

*MLK Said “We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.” Listen to...Proverbs 23:18 “Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.”*

So what do we do with our HOPE?

**Tell others about true hope.**

*Proverbs 11:7 “When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.”*

We have an amazing opportunity as Christians because we know the true message of HOPE found in Jesus. Not only that...God has placed us in the lives of other people so that we can be light to shine for that HOPE.

So what should we do?-Pray for them -Look for opportunities to talk to them -Invite them

Let me give you a rundown of the next few weeks and months.

Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday I am doing a series called Victory. It will be a very evangelistic and practical sermon series...

After Easter I am going to be teaching through the NT book of Philippians and the theme is "A Joy Filled Life" and I know you all know people that need joy.

So we have HOPE in Jesus and our call is to spread that HOPE to others.