

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Hope For The World

PART

5

TITLE

Our Promised Deliverer

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-21, 38-41



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So if you are new with us over the last month, what we've been looking at just a little bit is the idea of hope. This reality of hope. And if you haven't been here, that's obviously okay. I just want to share a few thoughts about that because it's really pertinent for a day like today.

What we've looked at is hope is this unusual fuel that sort of fills our heart, that allows us to do things. It's a fuel that actually sort of motivates us to make new plans when our old plans fail. It's the fuel that allows us to take another step in enduring something that's really difficult when it seems like that the finish line is nowhere in sight. It's the fuel that allows us to make room for joy when we look around at our life or our circumstances and all we see is difficulty and it's the fuel that anticipates the light of day when we're still in the dead of night. And all of those things sound wonderful and clean and sort of poetic, and yet they all matter a whole lot when your dark situation is something like cancer or the valley of the shadow of death or a difficult marriage that you've contributed in its deconstruction.

When we get into a situation to where it's really, really dark and you look around and you start to sort of imagine all of the factors that fit into the equation of your life, suddenly what happens is if there's no hope, you suddenly see the value and the power of hope. Some of us, I know that's exactly where you're at. And so you're looking and you think where about does hope come from. Many of you, perhaps you're even in a situation where your children are making choices that grieve your heart. You're not quite sure what to do. And there's so many of us, we find ourself in these situations and we say, where is hope? And the reason is because we know that hope is important. We know that it's helpful to us, it's fascinating, it's invisible, and yet it's substantive. It's something that doesn't sit on a shelf and yet it can fill up a whole room.

It's something that is non-medicinal. But every cancer treatment center in the world will tell you that hope is restorative. There's power in hope. There's something about it that is critical to our life. It's vital to life. And what's interesting is without it, life actually becomes very dangerous. You see, when hope runs out of our life, out of our heart, what fills and what runs in is not just the absence of hope, but the presence of despair. And what's so critically important about despair is it has a limited imagination when it comes to making good decisions. It's typically limited to either sinning against God, settling against our own convictions and preferences or quitting when things get too hard. And as a result of that, a lot of our bad decisions in life, if you really go back to them, you can see that sometimes they were motivated by a thought that there's no better thing that I could do than this. So I might as well just quit before it's over or sin against God or settle against my convictions because our equation lacks hope.

It's interesting, God even created the human body to respond to despair because God doesn't want us to live in it. There's something that God did within us. When you feel real despair, your brain releases adrenaline, which is like a takeoff fuel for the shuttle. It gets us off the ground in that moment of despair. But here's the thing about the body is if that takeoff fuel is not substituted by a sustaining fuel of hope, then when the body continues to absorb adrenaline for a long period of time, it eventually breaks down with greater levels of burnout and fatigue, which create a deeper darkness and despair. So you come to Christmas and you think, well, where in the world do we find hope? It's not on the shelf. You can't have it shipped to your house. Where does it come from? And this is the beauty of Christmas ultimately is what the Bible tells us is that hope is not

accidental.

You don't stumble upon it. Hope is buoyed by promise. When promise, when someone who has the moral capital, when someone has the moral perfection, when someone makes promises, who has that kind of power and authority and perfection. And suddenly the insertion of their promise changes the equation from bad news, plus bad news, plus bad news equals despair to bad news, plus bad news, plus bad news, plus the promise of one who has power to make a difference. And suddenly the circumstances may be just the same. But now the presence of promise gives hope. The Bible was about a promise that God made to give us hope. It began very early in the Bible. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. God created humanity. He gave us a garden to live in, a place to live in, to enjoy him and each other.

And he gave us one simple instruction. Finding Him too overbearing in that instruction, we sinned against God and suddenly brokenness swept over all of the earth. And in that moment, God and all of his grace and all of his perfection, he made a promise to us, a promise to send us a special son, a promised son, a Christ, the Christ. He told us within the Bible where he would be born because he didn't want us guessing. He told us which line he would be coming from. He says, from Abraham, from Isaac, from Jacob, from Judah, from David. Follow the line, follow this line to Bethlehem and someone's going to be born there. But then to make sure that we didn't miss it, God told us what this Christ, this special son would have the capacity to do and indeed would go to the earth and actually perform.

He would do amazing things on the earth. One of those places where he tells us some of the things that he would do is in Isaiah 61 and in verse one, I just want to show you three of the things that the Christ would do in each of our lives. There it says that he will bring good news to the poor, says that he will bind up the broken-hearted and he will proclaim liberty to the captives. Now, that might not look all that special to you, but the fact is what he is addressing here is this, is that the Christ is going to come and he's going to be able to deal with sin and the effects of sin. Sin is disobedience to God and it has enormous effects, ripple effects. And he tells us here about three of them. One of the effects is that what sin does is sin creates a spiritual poverty.

Sin knocks on the front door of our life, we open up the door and sin begins to make all kinds of great promises about life and vitality and happiness and joy. And all the while it's telling us these promises. He's stealing from us from the back door. And so sin, when we engage in it promises so much, and yet it takes so much more and we become spiritually poor. And so we needed a Christ, a special someone who would be able to speak good news to people who have been spiritually impoverished because we've all have sinned and fallen short of his glory. We also know from the Bible that sin, it creates a broken heart. Sin stands at the door and it promises all kinds of things such as contentment of heart and peace of heart and joy of heart, vitality of heart. And yet what it does is behind the scenes, it literally robs us of all of these things, shattering the heart, all the more.

So many people engage in sin, believing it's going to be the satisfaction of their soul, only to find out that sin radishes their soul and crushes their heart. And so this special Christ, this special son would come to the earth. And not only would he have the ability to speak good news to people who've been impoverished by

sin, but he'd have the ability to bind those broken hearts back together. And then we're told that sin creates a spiritual captivity. Sin promises us freedom. Sin says, you can have your own truth. You can do what you want. There is no king. So everyone do what is right in your own eyes promises us unlimited freedom. And yet what it does is behind the scenes is it builds a prison of shame and guilt and confusion and futility and frustration. Making us captives of the very things that told us that they would set us free.

And so the Christ who would come, he would have the moral ability, he'd have the perfection and the strength in order to set people free. When the fullness of time God sent his Christ, he gave him the name Jesus, because the name Jesus means savior. He was born in Bethlehem. He was born in the line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David just as it was promised. And not only that, but the Christ had the ability and then he went and he carried out what he said that he was supposed to be able to do. You see, the Christ was supposed to be able to set the body, the mind, and the soul free. And he walked around and he forgave people of sins that had bound their soul and he healed people's sickness that bound their body. And he began to speak with such lucid clarity and precision about the truth of God in every single arena of life in order to set our minds free, that have been held captive by ideas that were compromised.

This Christ, his name is Jesus. He came as a little baby. Oh, he was precious looking. He had baby skin. He was soft just like every other baby, but bound up in this little baby was the courage of a king. And Christ did. He lived and he forgave and he healed and he taught. And then one day, one day he said, it's time to go back where I grew up. And he went to Nazareth. And when he got to Nazareth, he went to the synagogue. And when he made it to the synagogue, he had been a traveling teacher. He had just begun his public ministry. But they looked at him, they said, you should probably read and teach today. And so he went up and he took the scroll of Isaiah and he opened it up to Isaiah chapter 61 verse one. And he began speaking about how the Christ, how he would proclaim good news to the poor, how he would bind up the broken-hearted, how he would set free people who have been held captive by sin.

He folded it up, he handed it back, and he went and sat down and everyone's eyes are upon him. And then what did he say? He said, today, today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing. Oh God, may it happen today. May it be fulfilled to set us free. You see this savior, he has authority to forgive. He has authority to teach. And he did. And then it came time just as had been promised that he said to his disciples, it's time to go to Jerusalem. And when we get there, I'm going to be bound.

I have authority to be able to literally do anything that I desire, walk on water, calm the storm, but I'm going to let them bind me. I'm going to be falsely accused. I'm going to be condemned. I'm going to be crucified. I'm going to die as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of people in the world, and then I'm going to be buried and you watch for it on the third day, I'm going to rise from the dead. And then Jesus did just that. He walked with courage to Jerusalem. He was bound, falsely accused, condemned, crucified. He went to the cross. He died for our sin. He was buried in a grave, and then he rose from the dead. He appeared to over 500 living eyewitnesses that were allowed to touch his hands and his feet. And then he ascended to the right hand of the Father. He sat down and he proclaimed an invitation to the world. What would be that invitation? He says, you have not lived as you ought to have lived, but I have.

And if you'll put your trust in me and stop trusting in your own morality, your own righteousness, your own religion, your own sincerity. But instead you begin to trust in my performance and my righteousness, then I will take away all of your sin and I will give you my righteousness as a gift. It's the substitution that he made that he was born to give. This is what Christmas is all about. And you wonder, well, does this really have hope for me? Let me tell you how it has hope for you. Isaiah chapter nine says this. He says, for to us a child is born and to us, a son is given. And what that means is this, is that whatever is bound up intrinsically within this son is for you. What does that mean? One of the things he says is He's the advocate. In other words, he gives us his righteousness.

And then he argues as our advocate in heaven interceding for us on the basis of the righteousness that now fills our heart. And so some of us right now, we are literally, literally, you're in a plague right now of guilt. You feel shame every single day of your life because of things in your life. And there's a reason. Your equation says this, I am guilty. I'm guilty. I'm guilty equals shame and that equals despair. But when you trust Christ, what that means is this, is that there's an insertion of not only the righteous one, but an advocate in heaven that says, yes, you are guilty, guilty, guilty, but I am inserting my righteousness into your equation and my advocacy. And what this yields is hope. Some of us today, you're in a storm of anxiety. And the reason is because you have stress plus stress plus stress equals despair.

For the good news is that Jesus is not only our advocate, he calls himself the prince of peace, which means that your equation changes from stress, plus stress plus stress plus prince of peace. And suddenly the insertion of his character, of his moral fabric, of his perfection, of his strength suddenly begins to change the equation of your life. You go through all the things that we've been studying. He's the son of God. He's the son of man, he's the advocate, the intercessor. He's the cornerstone, he's the good shepherd. He's the everlasting father, the prince of peace. He's the wonderful counselor. He's the mighty God. And suddenly what you have is you have somebody who has inserted his promise and power into your life in order to give hope. And I pray this Christmas, you feel hope, for some of us in the room, I know you've trusted Christ and I'm thankful that you have.

And what I want to do right now is to give you a moment, simply to say thank you to him. For those of you who have never trusted Christ, I want to give you an opportunity of quiet where you can actually pray to him and simply confess and call out Tim in faith and saying, I believe, I believe I'm a sinner. I can't save myself. Christ, I believe that you died on a cross for me, and you rose from the dead. Would you save me? Would you give me hope? So would you bow your head with me? And let's take just a few moments to pray.

Father in heaven, thank you so much. How could we not say thank you? For giving us your best, your son, the righteous one. Come and set us free. You can take us in a place of spiritual poverty and make us spiritually rich. You can take our broken heart and bind it up. That could be whole again. God, I pray for those who are here who have a relationship with you, we say thank you. And I pray for those who have a relationship with you and yet are finding it very difficult these days to believe your promises. And as a result of that, they feel despair.

Lord, in the reality of the pains of their life, I ask God that you would remind them right now the promises that you made backed by your own character and perfection. And would you allow that insertion, that reminder into their equation to give them hope? And I pray for those who are here, who perhaps or even praying right now, or you draw people to yourself. You lead people to see those in the room who do not have a relationship with you, would you lead them right now, Lord, to call out to you in faith and say, I cannot do this on my own, but I trust in Christ who came to rescue me. God, would you please give us hope? Those who are in happy places and those who are in very sad places, would you give us hope? We pray in Christ's name, amen.



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