

Remnant Life Church
November 10, 2019
God Gives a Word of Hope
Genesis 4:6-7

Gal 5:22-23 - *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law.*

satan is attempting in his last hours, to eradicate or remove as much of these fruits from as many people as he can

- We see this as the primary focus on every news outlet
- And the hearts of people are turning darker and darker
- Our children are coping with things that, only 50 years ago most adults were not even exposed to
- Katerina and I will be vividly reminded of the condition of our world when we fly this week
- Perhaps one of the saddest things is that as the older generations die out no one will be left to remember what it was like when it wasn't this way – it will be more engrained as the norm

We could go into much more detail about the condition of our world, our nation, even aspects regarding our own lives

- But the main question in all of this is simply...
- “Is there hope?”

READ – **Gen 4:6-7**

But then God gives a word of hope

- **Gen 4:7c** - *...but you must master it*
- The word “hope” is found in the NIV Bible 180 times
 - The OT Hebrew word is *yah-(chk)el*
 - It means to wait, tarry, and to expect
 - It is not an empty self-made promise of something to come
 - The NT word in Greek *el-PEES* adds something more because of Jesus
 - Now it is a confident and joyful expectation
 - In other words, to wait with pleasure (an oxymoron?)
- And as God said this to Cain so too Jesus offered hope to the people when talking about the end times
 - **Luke 21:26-28** - *People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time, they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads because your redemption (or hope) is drawing near.*
 - Jesus is saying that their hope will not be one of desperation or fear, but one of a bold certainty

How do we deal with things of this world, the things in our lives, that seem so overwhelming?
Where is our hope?

First – Hope begins when you admit your need for God

- It begins with surrendering your life and accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior
 - This is not about being good, going to church, reading your Bible, or even praying
 - There are a lot of people who read their Bible, even pray, that don't know Jesus
 - Salvation is not about what you do, but what Jesus did for you
 - Nice is not a synonym for saved
 - I told a young man the other day, there are going to be a lot of “nice” people in hell
 - *Acts 16:29-31 - The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...*
 - I am amazed at how many people want nothing to do with God in their lives, and then suddenly, during a difficult time, they expect Him to be their vehicle of rescue.
 - Once you have accepted Jesus Christ, the change in how you act, talk, react to situations should reflect the new life you live (**Rom 10:10**)
- Surrendering your life to Jesus Christ is a matter of willingly giving up your pride
 - Pride is addressed throughout both the OT and NT
 - Over 60 times and not once in a positive way
 - **2 Chron 26:16** - *But after Uzziah (also called Azariah) became powerful, his pride led to his downfall.*
 - Following the death of Solomon in 931 BC the nation divided into two – Israel and Judah
 - Uzziah with the 10th king of Judah and began his reign as a godly king at the age of 16
 - God blessed what he did through a large portion of his rule, but pride changed that
 - We read in 2 Chron that Uzziah entered the temple and burned incense to the Lord – something only the priests were permitted to do
 - Leprosy broke out on his forehead (**2 Chron 26:19**)
 - NOTE: the forehead was one of two locations that the priests wore scripture passages on their bodies
 - Little leather boxes called phylacteries
 - One on the forehead one on the left arm
 - **Duet 11** – God said to keep His law on their hands (what they do) and their foreheads (what they think)
 - Uzziah was breaking God's law so the disease started at the point of his violation
- To admit your need for God means recognizing your inability to deal with things of your life without Him
 - We are given assurance

- **Joel 2:32a** - *And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved;*
- **Luke 2:22** and **Revelation 10:13** quote the same passage again
- When we admit our need for God we are positioning our lives to receive all that He promises us as His child – including hope

Second – Hope begins to grow when we surrender both our weaknesses AND our strengths to God

- You cannot do this alone!
- Satan knows both where you are weak and where you are strong
- He will attempt to exploit them both
 - Samson
 - The 13th and final judge of Israel
 - The time of the Judges was between the time of the death of Joshua and the coronation of King Saul
 - A period of about 300 years
 - Samson was a good judge with some very serious weaknesses and strengths
 - Judas
 - He was very close to Jesus
 - Some scholars believe that they were as close as John and Jesus
 - But his weakness was greed
- Surrendering a weakness is often pretty easy
- It is the strengths that are difficult
 - Why? Because it is a strength – we don't think we need anything or anyone in that area of our life...including God
 - But this is where pride comes in again
 - Pride says I can do this, I am good, what people say to me means something
 - Humility understands I can do nothing apart from Him
 - **John 15:5** - *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."*

When I surrender both my strengths and my weaknesses to God, I am calling on His strength to bolster my weakness, and humility to cover my strengths

Third – Hope is built, strengthened, and increased through prayer

- There are many types of prayers
 - Thanksgiving; petition; worship; desperation; etc...
 - Hope is built in all of those
- **Psalm 33:16-18** - *No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. (These all speak to our actions and efforts)
But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love*

- **Isaiah 40:31** - *but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

Prayer changes things

- It changes the heart
- It changes the atmosphere
- It changes the outcome

Hope is available

- But it must be a hope that is found in God, through Jesus Christ, and not in our own strength
- Hope is about surrender
 - Hope is not a subtle demand or our expectations of God
 - Surrender means my plans, my desires, my aspirations are given over to His will for my life
 - His time, his outcome, his direction

Edward Mote was an English pastor in West Sussex in the early to mid-1800s

- He is credited with having written over 100 hymns
- None of which gained much prominence or popularity except for one
- Listen to these words
 - *My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame 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.*

Christ is the solid rock, and it is in Him that my hope rests!