**THE GOSPEL OF HOPE (6-11-23 Oak Ridge, TN)**

During our gospel meeting with David Dann and in our teenage class on Revelation, the thought of hope has been a focus. When you watch the news, talk to neighbors, interact with colleagues, and simply observe what is going on in our community, our nation, and the world; it is obvious to me that people need the hope of the gospel, the hope for a better place. [***This World Is Not My Home (715)***]

We all understand the concept of hope. If you eat less the hope is you will lose weight. If you practice baseball or softball the hope is you will get better. If you get training in a field, the hope is you will then get a job. If you pick your fantasy team carefully the hope is you will win the championship. It is wonderful to see newlyweds full of hope for the future in their eyes!

There can also be false hope, like me hoping my lost hair will grow back. When I was young I dreamed about being 6 foot 10 inches and playing in the NBA. That was one of those false hopes.

We have brethren in Cuba who suffer on a daily basis because they have decided that the Hope of Heaven and eternal life is worth anything they suffer as a disciple of Jesus. Many times we might point out to folks the blessings that Christians have; a spiritual family, a purpose, and the Lord by our side. However, becoming a disciple of Jesus does not guarantee an easier life. But it is a life that leads to eternal life in Heaven (**Matthew 7:13-14**). The focus of the gospel is that Jesus died and ascended to Heaven so that we could do the same.

***And this Hope of salvation and Hope of Heaven is a powerful message!***

Those who crucified Jesus (**Matthew 27:15-26**)

Those who stoned Steven (**Acts 7:54-8:3**)

Jezebel and those she caused to sin (**Revelation 2:18-22**)

The lukewarm in Laodicea (**Revelation 3:14-22**)

Because Jesus died for the sins of all mankind, overcame death by being resurrected, and then ascended to Heaven, even these could have hope of salvation and eternal life in Heaven!

Notice the focus on the Hope of Heaven and Eternal life in the New Testament:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Romans 8:20-25****Colossians 1:5-6****1 Thessalonians 2:19** | **Titus 1:1-2, 2:11-14, 3:4-7****1 Peter 1:3, 13, 3:15** |

**CLOSE - Acts 2:36-41, 47**

***Maybe you need hope this morning?*** The Love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have made Heaven a Hope that you can have!

This Hope of Heaven is only possible if you become a disciple of Jesus by repenting of your sins and being baptized to wash those sins all away. Then you can have the Hope of Heaven.

If you are already a Christian and have sin that is separating you from the Lord, you can regain your hope by repenting of those sins now.

Or maybe all that is going on in the world is tempting you to doubt about the Hope of Heaven? We are here to encourage you and the Lord will reassure you, that the Hope of Heaven is as strong as ever!