

Three Encouraging Ways to Remember the H-O-P-E We Have in Christ Alone

*“but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to **give an account for the hope that is in you**, yet with gentleness and reverence” (1 Peter 2: 15)*

Acronyms help us remember what a word means or just a funny play on the letters in a word. For example, *LOL – laugh out loud or AWOL – absent without leave*. And most everyone has heard of the KISS principle – *Keep It Simple Stupid*.

One human need that all share is the need for hope. Once hope is gone, only bad things happen. There is not a more lonely or desperate feeling than hopelessness. Hope may be defined as ***to long for, expect, or trust that something we want to happen will.***

What are you hoping for? Some hope for fortune and fame. They want to win the lottery or be on TV or in the movies. Others hope for a good job, so they can make money and feel fulfilled. Still others hope for health.

Christians always have hope. Perhaps I should say that Christians ***should*** always have hope. The word ‘hope’ is used more than 140 times in the Bible. Whether or not we have anything else this side of Heaven, we have hope. For us, it is eternal hope. But for some, that does not seem like enough. We want hope now!

Every time I teach, one of my goals is to always bring hope to the hearer. When you teach from the Bible as I do, finding messages of hope is not difficult. What can be difficult is teaching the hard truths of God’s Word which can be

frightening to those who are lost and without hope. But *hopeful* if you are honestly and humbly looking for real HOPE. When we do that—read and look hard enough, we will always find His message of Hope – Jesus.

Tonight I am bringing you a message of HOPE in acronym fashion—actually three messages of HOPE.

▪ He Offers Pardon Everyday –

(Jesus speaking to the Pharisees) *“But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to (pardon) sins”*—then He said to the paralytic, *“Get up, pick up your bed and go home.”* And he got up and went home. But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God Matthew 9: 6

“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against (pardoning our sins) them.” 2 Corinthians 5: 18-19

Have you sought and received the pardon from your sins only Jesus can give? If not, why not? Jesus is the only way to salvation (John 14:6) for the lost. And if you are in Christ, seeking His pardon restores our broken relationship when we fall back into sin.

▪ He Offers Peace Everyday

(Jesus) *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.”* John 14:27

“(God) will keep in perfect peace all who trust in Him, all whose thoughts are fixed on Him!” Isaiah 26: 3

You may have seen the bumper sticker:

Know Jesus...Know Peace No Jesus...No peace.

Finally as Christians we know the third fruit of the Spirit Paul teaches us is PEACE. This is the kind of peace he later told us is the kind that “passes all understanding”.

▪ **He Offers Power Everyday**

*“He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might
He increases power.” v 29 from Isaiah 40: 27 – 31*

In the New Testament, Jesus promised Power to His disciples (and that includes us).

“but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” Acts 1: 8

As Christians, our power to live in this world – full of all its temptations and troubles – comes from one Source – the Holy Spirit. Why do we keep trying to do things in our own power when we have His? For some of us, it is a control issue. We surrender part of our lives to Jesus but hold onto other areas.

We get the most power from God when give up control. Our surrender brings His power. The Apostle Paul said, *“when I am weak, then I am strong.”* 2 Corinthians 12:10

My dear brothers, take heart. No matter how difficult your situation—no matter how desperate your need, there is One who knows and understands where you are right now as I am teaching here tonight. He alone can bring hope to what you may believe is hopeless. My strong admonition to you tonight is to bow before Him and ask Him to restore your hope. Jesus never ever turns away a man with a humble, repentant heart.

He is our Hope today and forever. Amen.

Walter