

## Christmas is for you: Part 2- HOPE

### I. ME

- A. Welcome/Online
- B. Xmas dreams v. reality
- C. Remember that feeling of hope as a kid?
  - 1. Danny and Benji- "Is it Xmas today?"
  - 2. Barely remember what last xmas was like/what they got- the fact that they barely play with it... but they know the thrill... they have the HOPE that Xmas will be amazing.

### D. **Hope- The conviction that something will happen in the future.**

### II. WE

- A. What do you hope for?
  - 1. Husband to stop snoring? To have a husband?
  - 2. Kids to be out of the house? To have kids? To not be called a kid anymore?
  - 3. Retirement? A job?
  - 4. Peace in your relationships? Freedom from an addiction?
  - 5. Health?
  - 6. Star Wars 9 won't suck?
- B. As we get older we start experiencing more and more broken dreams and hopeless situations.
  - 1. Life doesn't turn out how we'd HOPED.
  - 2. You choose to believe in something or someone and you only get letdown and heartbroken.
- C. Even God seems to not show up or do what you'd HOPED He'd do...
- D. So what do we do?
  - 1. We become realists (not pessimists) ...ADULTS
  - 2. Stop getting our hopes up b/c we'll just be disappointed...
    - a. "Just expect the worst b/c then at least you'll be surprised if something good happens."

- E. But remember when you were a kid and hope was all you had?
  - 1. You had no past experience to make you cynical, anything was possible, you allowed yourself to dream the big dreams and imagine what life COULD be....
- F. We can have that hope again...
- G. "Yeah but... what good will HOPE do... reality is still there"- You're right.
  - 1. So what if we based our HOPE in reality? What if we were Hope-filled realists?
  - 2. What if when life was at its worst you had a hope that sustained you... that wasn't just wishful thinking but was based in reality and certainty?
- H. That's the kind of HOPE Christmas brings us.
  - 1. That's the kind of HOPE Jesus brings us.
  - 2. **Christmas makes hope a reality.**
- I. **Not a Jesus-Follower**- What if it's true? What if you could have this hope?
- J. Peter talks about this HOPE.

### III. GOD (1 Peter 1:3-6)

#### A. Peter Background

#### B. V. 3a (into a living Hope)

1. In his great **MERCY- Gospel**. Baby came to be savior.
2. In His great mercy **HE has given us- Hope is a gift from God**
  - a. Not something you have to try really hard to muster up or you might let it slip and disappear.
  - b. It's God's gift not your invention or work
3. **(Back to scripture)** New Birth- New person/Identity. Not who you were... a beloved child of God.
4. Living Hope- Not wishful thinking. Not dreams that will eventually die... Living breathing—LIFE GIVING HOPE.
5. What makes this hope not just wishful/positive thinking?

#### C. V.3b

1. It's based on the real event of Jesus' resurrection.
  - a. **Peter is eyewitness...**
2. Do you have a confident hope that the sun will rise tomorrow?
  - a. Why? B/c it did yesterday... you saw it.
  - b. We can have confident hope b/c Jesus rose from the dead.
  - c. **The resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of real hope.**
3. It's a hope based on reality. A realistic/confident hope. B/c it's been proven.

4. WHAT IS THIS LIFE-GIVING/SUSTAINING HOPE????
  - a. **WARNING:** It might sound crazy. In fact it sounded crazy to people when Peter first wrote it, Paul first preached it, and Jesus first said it.
  - b. It's the weirdest part of Xianity and it's the very core of Xianity...

#### D. V. 4-5

1. B/c of the resurrection we have hope that one-day everything (including those who follow-Jesus) will be resurrected to new life to be as it always should've been.
  - a. "Oh it shouldn't be this way..."
  - b. Death/Evil/Betrayal.
2. This is the ultimate hope that Xmas brings... **Rev. 21:1-5a** (...making everything new)
3. B/c Jesus came as a baby, lived a perfect life, died on the cross in our place, and rose from the dead... we have a realistic hope of a perfect eternity with our Heavenly Father.
4. It's the perfect gift....This inheritance-
  - a. Will never perish- Will last forever... even if you fail
  - b. Will never spoil- Pure/Perfect/Won't ever go bad
  - c. Will never fade- Greatness doesn't go away. Don't just get used to it, don't get bored with it,
5. **We can have confident hope for a perfect eternity...**
6. There IS a happy ending... there is light at the end... and it's based on real historical events!!!
7. When you have that perspective... you have hope, not just for eternity, but for today too...

## E. V. 6

1. **Hope for tomorrow makes us courageous today.**
    - a. It also makes us joyful... next week
  2. When you are confident in the hope of your eternity... you can face whatever happens today.
  3. You know all pain is temporary.
  4. All pain is allowed by and being used by an all-loving heavenly Father who has promised you a perfect eternal relationship with Him.
    - a. Even death- the ultimate fear- isn't something to be afraid of...
  5. When you aren't afraid to die... you aren't afraid of much.
  6. It's what Jesus promised... the whole point of Xmas--- **John 10:10b** (I have come)
  7. Full life now and forever.
- F. See... Jesus' resurrection not only proves that we can be resurrected,
1. But that we can have a new life now
  2. That our past doesn't have to define us
  3. That our relationships can be resurrected with new life
  4. That our hope and dreams can be changed into something better...
  5. **The resurrection of Jesus gives us hope for today and forever**

## IV. YOU

- G. What about you? Are you realistically hopeful?
1. Has too much happened in life that's caused you to give up hoping?
  2. Has it gone on so long that it seems hopeless?

## H. What is your hope for eternity?

1. I hope I go to heaven? I hope my good things outweigh my bad?
  2. If you did die today... are you sure?
  3. You can be... you can have that solid/concrete/life-giving Hope...
  4. **Hope is a gift from God... you just have to open it.**
  5. **Not ready to open it...** just ask yourself this week... What if it's true? Allow yourself to hope that it might be.
- I. **Jesus-Follower... Let hope shape your perspective.**
1. Choose to look at life through hope-filled glasses.
  2. No matter what happens to you, your heavenly Father is holding on to you and has our inheritance ready for you... it'll be better than any Xmas morning you've ever had.

## V. WE

- A. Heartbreak and letdowns are all around us... always will be.
1. If we let them, they will drag us down and chain us to a miserable existence.
  2. **What if...** in the middle of life's most difficult/painful moments... we still dared to hope?
  3. **What if...** we had the audacity and the courage to trust that God raised the dead before... He will do it again in this life and the next.
  4. He can revive your relationships.
  5. He can renew your dreams and give you new/better dreams
  6. He can make your today and your tomorrow what it was always meant to be.
  7. It all starts with accepting the true gift of Xmas

## B. Accept the life-giving Hope of Christmas.