

Hope Again

Part 2: Everyone can Hope

Luke 1:50-53 - [watch online](#)

Summary:

When we look around the real world doesn't really give us more to hope for. But we don't have to give up, try to ignore what's wrong, or distract ourselves with pointless diversions. There is real hope. We are all invited to play our role in a revolution of hope for the entire world.

Main Points:

[01:00] The holidays can illuminate what is wrong with our life and the world and what little we can do about any of it.

[01:28] The “real” world doesn't give us a lot to really hope for.

[01:51] Jesus invites us to join a revolution of hope.

[06:40] God's revolution is rooted in his mercy and love.

[07:45] God always accomplishes what he promises.

[09:00] Jesus' revolution of hope completely disrupts our social hierarchies.

[10:53] Jesus' revolution shows us our real worth, identity, and purpose.

[14:55] Jesus' revolution is a revolution of hope because it gives true worth to every human here and now.

[16:00] We are invited to play our own role in Jesus' revolution of hope... together.

[21:24] When we find real hope we can offer it to the real world.

Weekly Challenge [20:27]

Pray: Jesus, I am yours. My life is yours. Do with it whatever you want.

Read: Matthew 16 vv24-26

Give: Hope (Presence, Words, Money)

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out or bothered you about this week's message? Was there anything you agreed with or pushed back on?
2. In your own words, how would you describe what Jon was getting at with, “God's revolution of hope is rooted in his mercy and love?”
3. Read Matthew 16 vv24-26. Why do you think Jesus makes such a high demand from his followers?
4. Often we see ourselves as both “less than” *and* “more than” at the same time. How do you think accepting God's mercy, love, and invitation to the revolution would change both of those views for you?
5. How can your group pray for you this week?

Transcript:

IN: If you are one of the few willing to see the world for what it is... you know something is wrong.

The more you look the more hopeless it all seems.

Listen. There is hope. Don't give up yet. You have a role to play in a revolution of love and hope.

So stick around and let's talk about it together.

WE: If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be?

There's so much to change/fix isn't there... locally, globally, personally.

And then the holidays come along... Joy to the world? Where? Peace on Earth? That's cute

It all seems to shine a light on what we truly long for but can't have.

- Personally and for world

The holidays can illuminate what is wrong with our life and the world, and what little we can do about any of it.

What can we really do that makes a difference... that matters?

- Give a little money? Donate time?...

What time?! So busy and so much to deal w/.

All on top of all the personal issues in our own lives and the loves of those we love.

Just seems so... hopeless. **The "real" world doesn't give us a lot to really hope for.**

Man, that's depressing. But we don't have to leave it there.

We don't have to Give up. We don't have to Ignore. We don't have to Distract ourselves

There is hope. Real hope.

Hope that things don't have to stay this way. Hope that our lives actually matter... and that we can make a difference.

Jesus invites us to join a revolution of hope.

GOD: The world before the 1st xmas was just as, if not more, hopeless than what ours can seem now...

For normal/avg person...

- Food insecurity
- Hard life... most of us live better than the richest of the rich in those days.
- No healthcare
- No power/authority/Rights/protections against abuse large and small

Most vulnerable of the weakest... unmarried pregnant teenagers... Mary, Mother of Jesus.

But Mary wasn't hopeless. Something in Mary gave her confidence and purpose... Real Hope.

Review:

Angel appeared, told her going to have baby who was the promised one... her people had been waiting/hoping for for 100's of years.

- Mary confused... virgin
- Angel... God will make it happen
- Mary believed... "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true."

Goes and sees her relative Elizabeth (also miraculously pregnant... old)- **V. 42-45.**

Then Mary bursts out in a HS inspired song... **V. 46-56**

As we saw last time... Mary had a solid, real hope b/c she knew the real solid God,

- Knew God was her Savior, the Mighty and Holy One who would do what he said he would do,
- Knew that the baby inside of her was the answer to everything that seemed hopeless in the world.
- She knew her baby would be the one to bring what the world desperately needs... a revolution of Hope.

Now, let's focus on WHAT this Savior is going to do...

Listen: Many of us will at first cheer. BUT then we will start coming up with "yeah buts"... to distance ourselves from the weight and reality of what this Savior's revolution really means...

First Mary sets the tone/theme...

V. 50 Shows mercy- blesses... does good to... gives value and meaning for them in this harsh world.

Generation to generation- always. He is unchanging. The same God Mary knew is the same God who knows you.

To those who fear him- fear=Honor, Follow, Committed to his purpose. They hope in him.

Mary lays out what all of this is based on... what her hope is based on... God's mercy and love.

God's revolution is rooted in his mercy and love.

And b/c of that it completely upturns the usual order of how the world works...

51a- His mighty arm- Mary believes there is a God of the universe. A King who rules every dimension, every space, every time... He is mighty, all-powerful.

And he has done tremendous things- This wording is very important... we miss it in our English translations.

From the context, yes, Mary is saying he HAS DONE, in the past, tremendous things, but her emphasis is on what he WILL do...

What she is going to describe are things that WILL happen through her son... they are certain, as good as already done.

Past tense.. Why? B/c God says they will happen. Mary knows... **God always accomplishes what he promises.**

What is he going to do?

Warning: These sentences are not safe... this is not how we picture the sweet, mild, half-smiling with a holy glow around her head Mary... this is the real, fiery, fed up, empowered by the HS of God peasant, Mary seeing the structures of oppression about to be destroyed through her God and Savior, and son...

As scholar Bruce Larson put it... "These are the most revolutionary words ever spoken... they are terrifying to the establishment, whoever and wherever they are."

51b-53-Why is this terrifying to the establishment? Because **Jesus' revolution of hope completely disrupts our social hierarchies.**

Who usually seems "blessed by God"?

- Those with Wealth, Influence, attention, power, attractiveness, success, those who are IN...

So we give respect, honor, and authority to those who have/are these things

AND...we work and fight to have them as well...

We think if we don't have them we don't matter, we've failed, we are less than, we will LOSE.

We think if we do achieve them, then we are it! We've made it. We are the ones who deserve God's blessing.

But how do we usually get there?

Often... either on the backs of others or by grasping at every last shred we can get for ourselves.

Making sure THEY lose or at least are demonized and canceled.

Usually the case in Mary's day... the problem wasn't that people had wealth/authority... the problem was how they got it, what they did with it, and how they treated those who didn't have it, or stood in their way to keeping it.

Taking advantage of those who were weaker.

Hoarding what they had been given...

Turning a blind eye to those in need...

Abusing their power and position.

But Mary knows... All wealth, authority, power, influence is *on loan* from the real king... God.

And those who trust in what they think is or should be theirs will be painfully brought to reality by the true authority.

B/c... **Jesus' revolution shows us our real worth, identity, and purpose.**

Those who think they are higher than others are knocked down as their egos are deflated and they are shown they are just as in need of God's mercy as the least of these... and the evil THEM.

They are shown their real identity- images of God completely dependent on him for everything they have.

They are shown their purpose in life is not to wield power or amass more for themselves... but to love and serve others

Why Mary's younger son said- **James 5:1-6** (Who do you think he inherited his fire from?)

But those who think they are nothing compared to others will be elevated as they discover they are just as worthy as the greatest

And they are shown their true identity- images of God who can completely depend on him for everything they need.

And their lives are given real purpose... here and now as full citizens of God's Kingdom on earth.

Bring it home: It's so easy to push back or try to take Mary's words as some kind of spiritual metaphor.

But we can't... b/c her baby grew up and said the same thing...

So it's bad to be rich and good to be poor?

No. It's bad to abuse the authority, power we are given.

It's bad to hoard/selfishly spend our wealth on ourselves.

It's bad to refuse to see that that other person created in God's image is just as worthy of attention, love, care as you and do nothing about their needs if you have the ability.

It's bad to think and act like you are better than... more than... greater than... holier than... deserve more than.

No matter how rich or poor... you matter. You are noticed. You are known, wanted, and loved.

Jesus' revolution is a revolution of hope because it gives true worth to every human here and now.

This revolution began the moment the HS put that baby in Mary...

- God began fulfilling his promise to restore our worth... THEN
- Jesus showed us the true nature of the revolution.....
 - In his life: Undoing the power of sin by forgiving, healing, bringing back to life...
 - In his death: he proved our worth by choosing to die for us to free us from sin to purchase us as his own...
 - In his resurrection, he showed us there is hope for more than just this life by rising from the dead as proof that God will keep his promise to raise his people for eternity.
 - And he continues the revolution today by giving us the Holy Spirit to be our counselor/helper, enabling/empowering his followers to love and carry out his purposes for our lives in the kingdom now...

We are invited to play our own role in Jesus' revolution of hope... together.

What we call the Church...

Individual Jesus Followers living, loving, and working together to bring hope to a world that has all but given up hope.

YOU: Do you want your life to matter?

- Not just be comfortable and richer/more successful than that guy (they don't care)?

If so... I either have good news or bad news depending on where you find yourself... but all of it is rooted in God's mercy and love.

For some this is good news- No one is *more than* anyone.

No matter where you are from, what you have done, who you are... You are as worthy as anyone else to experience the life Jesus offers.

When you give your life to Jesus and his kingdom **you are free** to be generous, loving, forgiving, accepting.

You are invited to receive the love of your God and accept his invitation to join his revolution.

For others this is more difficult. You have more to give up when you accept that no one is more than anyone else:

- Maybe you've built your whole identity on being more than
- You work/study harder than, you sacrificed more than, your choices were better than, you're values are purer

Listen, you are as worthy as anyone else to experience the life Jesus offers...

- Your goodness/ success/ education/ values/ politics/ race doesn't make you any more worthy of Jesus' love.

Yes, you have more to give up... why Jesus said **Matt 19:24**... but there's more to this... **Matt 19:25-26**

When we are willing to join his revolution... In his love and mercy, Jesus transforms our hearts and we find true life...

Matt 10:39.

You are invited to accept the mercy and love of your God and his invitation to join his revolution.

All: Going to lean on you a little more than usual...

You are invited today. Not tomorrow. Not some day. Not after the holidays or in the New Year.

The revolution is here now. Your invitation has already been given. For many it's time to choose... Today.

Whether you see yourself as less than or more than... you are exactly what Jesus said you are... An image of God whom he died for and longs to embrace. A person of infinite worth who has a specific personal role to play in his revolution.

Based on what she knew of God, Mary was able to say... "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true."

It revolutionized her life... it's a prayer that has revolutionized hundreds of millions of lives ever since.
It can revolutionize your life today...

If you are ready to accept then tell him... the most dangerous/courageous/life-changing prayer ever prayed.

Pray: Jesus, I am yours. My life is yours. Do with it whatever you want.

Read: Matthew 16:24-26

Give: Hope

- Presence
- Words
- Money

WE: Jesus is hope realized and hope personified.

He is proof that God will do what he says he will do.

He has brought a revolution that has and is changing the world one person at a time.

We are invited to experience this real hope, To Join the revolution and have a life that matters... bringing real hope to the real people who need it.

When we find real hope we can offer it to the real world.