

Hope and Holiness

1 Peter 1

Sadly, we live in a broken world without hope. Thankfully, God has provided a new "living hope" available for all people through Jesus Christ. As Christians, we have accepted this hope, and we are called to bring hope to the hopeless by living differently.

1 Peter 1:3-4, 13-16 (ESV)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you...

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Intro - Sean pulling the shower chain

- I love the end of semesters because everyone goes a little crazy. One roommate is currently living in Evans, one already went home last week, one is still in complete denial and watching every episode of Sherlock on Netflix... again. Everyone acts differently depending on their view of the other side – Dec 12th.
- In 8th grade, I had a buddy named Sean, and he was one of those guys who lived like he had nothing to lose... which was normally bad for him, but hilarious for us. Even with this life pattern, it was still a bit surprising to us when Sean told us on the last day of 8th grade that he was going to pull the emergency wash chain in our science class. We thought "Surely, he wouldn't dare! They'll never let him leave! He'll never survive prison, he's too crazy!"
- But sure enough, at the end of the last period on the last day of our 8th grade year, Sean walked calmly to the back of our science class, pulled the chain, unleashed a flood of water, and sprinted out the back door and out of the school. He pulled that chain as a simple man, but ran outside as a living legend because he realized what we couldn't understand: Teachers just didn't care anymore

The Point - He was a man with hope and it set him apart

- **The Idea** – All semester we've been discussing Culture and our place within it, how we are called to react to our Culture **with God's Grace/Bible/Church** in the hopes of changing Culture for the better. But if you haven't asked yourself this question yet, I'm going to ask you now: **Why us? Why Christians?** Why can't we just stick together and wait this world out? Why not just pray for God to change our world? Why not just leave it up to Missionaries?
 - **Because we have Hope!** Because the chain is just hanging there and God has given us the hope we need to pull it! Because by God's grace, we are no longer simple men and women, but we are sons and daughters of God Almighty, saved by His Son, and indwelt by His Spirit! Because...

The Truth is...

- We live in a culture without Hope (Louis C.K. quote from last week)

Hope

- **Our culture has No Hope** beyond the final beat of my heart or the final breath in my lungs, which is why we are obsessed with **Hopelessness**

- **Ex:** *Gravity* movie; *Breaking Bad* series – universally loved hopeless situations
- **Tough Ex:** trying to make the world safe and healthy in the midst of danger and death
- **Read: 1 Peter 1.3-4**
 - **“Great mercy”** always refers to God’s unmerited favor towards sinners in their hopeless condition
 - Beautiful language: perish (*aphtharton*), spoil (*amianton*), or fade (*amaranton*)
 - Peter wants believers to realize **our hope** is sure, certain, and real, as opposed to the deceptive, empty, **false hope** the world offers
- **How do we bring Hope to the Hopeless?**
 - We don’t **Disengage**
 - **Ex:** It’s **break-up season** again – everyone in a relationship is a bit more on edge because they know it’s time to jump out of the nest, but they aren’t sure if their wings are strong enough to fly
 - **Tough Ex: John 3.16** - If my love is dying, I don’t sit back and watch
 - We **Create and Cultivate**
 - It’s what I’ve said **every week** for the entire semester
 - We become **Holy – Set Apart**

Holy

- Holiness often carries a **negative connotation of arrogance**, but I mean it in its simplest definition: **Set Apart or Different**
- Our culture considers nothing to be Holy
 - **Ex: “Billion Dollars”** essay (pic); **top news** programs - Daily Show and Colbert
 - **Tough Ex:** We tirelessly mock anything and everything because our mindset of “Everyone and everything is special” really means “nothing is special”
 - **Tough Ex: Sandy Hook game** is horrible and people might care for a week
- **Read: 1 Peter 1.13-16**
 - Peter is laying out a **foundation for Holiness**
 - **Discipline** – Practicing obedience in easy times so it comes naturally in the hard times
 - **Ex: Seat belt** in the driveway
 - **Drive** – literally “sober” meaning don’t be steered by outside circumstances, only inward drive from the Holy Spirit
 - **Ex: Lord of the Rings** – ““I wish it need not have happened in my time,” said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”
 - **Determination** – Preparing for pain and engaging with our world while maintaining our hope in Christ
 - **Ex:** Engaging in a **relationship** w/out putting hope in it
- **Peter focuses on Christian Holiness** so much because he knows it’s the most effective way to display Hope
 - **1 Peter 2.11-12**
Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.
 - **1 Peter 3.14-16**
But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you;

yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

- **Our Culture doesn't have Holiness ultimately because it has no Hope.**
 - Thankfully for all, YOLO died, but the concept has always been linked to mankind – this world is all we have, so let's live it up. Nothing is off-limits because **who am I to say what's right and who are you to say what's wrong?**
 - No Hope = No Holy – Now enter the Christian...
- **Holy = Hope**
 - What if we lived in a way that people felt **Convicted but not Condemned?**
 - What if we lived in a way that forced people to **notice our differences?**
 - What if we were unafraid to **share the Hope** we have in Christ with our friends and family and classmates and co-workers?
 - What if we **Create and Cultivate** a new Culture?

App - Change the World

- **Follow the Spirit**
 - Gifts
 - Experience
 - Passions
 - Opportunities
- **Find your Scale**
 - 3-12-120
 - Personal Relationships and Personal Commitment