

Happiness, Help, Hope

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2,3 Lar - Water Wave Park. Men's Breakfast.
- B. Slide4 Children at Risk - 3-5pm Birth Choice of Tem. Various outreaches. Partner w/them
- C. Slide5 Jeff Jackson - I served with Jeff on his board with *Shepherd Staff* (Calvary Missions). I think he has 1 of the greatest minds/hearts in missions in Calvary. Jeff will be unpacking a fundamental difference between our *Western culture* and *non-western cultures*. And then looking at 2 familiar texts: the prodigal son and Jesus' first miracle...through *a non-western, honor and shame based lens*. [He'll be here next 2 weeks]
1. Its not just for missions...you will use this information with everyone you meet/work with/run into...that has a different culture than your own. [guilt/innocence]
- D. Slide6 Chad Robichaux. Chad is a former Special Operations Force Recon Marine and DoD Contractor with 8 deployments to Afghanistan as part of a Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) Task Force. He has earned an MBA and is a Board Certified Pastoral Counselor with a focus on PTSD. Chad and his wife, Kathy, have been married for 21 years, and have 3 children. [I am 2nd. Worship with us here at CM now]
1. He was also a police officer, and is a Pro MMA Champion, but Chad's life spiraled because of PTSD. His marriage began to disintegrate. He almost became a statistic of suicide. Sunday August 6th, you'll hear how God healed his own marriage and is now fighting for the lives of others. [invite!]
- E. Prayer: I agree w/Spurgeon who said *I will sing as long as my breath lasts, & when I have none, I shall do it better.*

II. Slide7 Intro:

- A. The last 5 *Hallelujah Songs/Hymns* are marked by an opening & closing cry of *Praise the Lord*. [thus known as the *Hallelujah Psalms*]
1. So 5 great doxologies bring *the Hebrew Hymnbook* to its close.
 2. The LXX attributes the **authorship** to the *prophets Haggai & Zechariah* at the dedication of the new temple (back from Babyl captivity, see Ezra/Neh).

B. What would it have been like for **an old covenant believer** to sing this song?
 What would it have been like for **Jesus** to have sang this song?
 What will it mean for **us in Christ** to sing this song? [read beginning & end]

C. **Slide8 Praise the Lord** - have you ever been challenged with *how is your prayer life?* in our Psalm this morning we would ask *how is your praise life?* **But** we'd already be starting off on the wrong foot.

1. We usually answer this 1 of 3 ways: **1)** *I'm doing well* (which is usually a lie). **2)** is the zealots response, *I'll try harder*. **3)** is just utter despair, *just one more thing I'm not doing well in*.
2. When it comes to **praise** there are 2 different aspects:
 - a) **Theological** - *If He's not praised, He's not known*. He is immeasurably great, and to **know** Him is to **praise** Him.
 - b) **Spiritual** - If **praise** does not characterize us, if *joylessness* characterizes us...we will be in a place of danger.
3. You can **both** give praise directly to your spouse **or** praise her to others.
 - a) He calls for praise...yet to be given. Jesus listening to this in synagogue, *praise the Lord*, responds, *okay yes I will*. I will not only tell My Father *how great He is*. I will also make him known to all the world.
4. You and I do not have to **start** this praise, **conjure up** praise, **or** try to **whip up** people into a *praise frenzy*. Let me illustrate...
 - a) I think we've all participated in *the Wave* at a baseball or soccer stadium. You don't have to start a wave (someone has/Jesus) **but** you **do** have to decide when it's my time to praise/stand *will I? Will I join in?*
 - b) When the Psalms say, *Praise the Lord*, these are not **challenges** to grab the **microphone**, **but** an **invitation** to join the **choir**. *Will you join in?*
 - (1) Preach **Praise** as **gospel** *rather than* moralistic exhortation.

III. **Slide9 Happiness, Help, Hope (1-10)** [read all]

A. (1,2) This individual summons himself *to praise & then* pledges the praise of God *as long as he lives*.

B. (2) Twice the psalmist says **I will**. *Hope in God is a decision*. Thus his double resolved to *praise Him*.

1. Believers, you either trust in **your own** strength, **or** what **others** may offer, **or** **reject a reliance on humans** and resolve to trust in **God**.

C. (3,4) **Warning** - **do not trust in princes** *Slide10a* I've never put my trust in prince William, prince Harry, nor prince Charles. **Nor** in prince Charming, the fresh prince of Bel Air, nor Prince. **Nor** prince Albert, not even in *Prince Albert in the can*. [is yur frig runing? Do u hav PA in the can?]

1. It means don't trust in *human beings, man, princes*.

2. *Slide10b Princes meaning*: rich people, gifted people, talented people, powerful people, people that can *make things happen*. People you're attempted to put your trust in (doctors, financial planners, your *bookie*, etc.)

a) Princes have a dangerous attraction.

3. The author does not deny the necessity of **mutual trust in the give & take of life**. We should thank God for the *princes and princesses* in your life...**just don't** put your **trust** in them. **If you do**, at some point they will **let you down**. And it will save you from *bitterness* when they **do** let you down.

D. (3b,4a) **Play on words** - don't trust in the **earthly** as they return to the **earth**. [ben adam - adamah]

1. **What's the problem with trusting in humans?** well, every **human agent** is *human* and on the way to **death**. Humans die. Humans let you down.

2. *Slide11* The NIV sums it up very well in Is.2:22 **Stop trusting in mere humans, who have but a breath in their nostrils. Why hold them in esteem? (did you know that you can only hold but 1 breath?)**

a) So humans, will return to the dust to which they've been decreed **&** his/her plans will die with them.

E. (5) This is our reminder that **God is all we need for today...and tomorrow**.

It's all about **His help**...**God** is the only one capable of helping those in distress.

1. When you know God, you have *happiness, help and hope*.

a) *Slide12 Happiness* in walking with Him. **Help** for the burdens of the day.

Hope for the concerns of the future. *What more could you want?* Warren Wiersbe

2. This verse provides the **theme** of the song, **and** the following verses described His **power** and **compassion**.

F. **The God of Jacob** - Jacob stumbled and made mistakes, **but** God remained his God. :)

G. (6-9) Here we find the reason for the psalmist's praise. God is Creator/Maker of heaven and earth **& therefore** has all power at his disposal.

1. **Slide13** He is also the **saving** Lord of history who meets the needs of the oppressed & the abused. The physically hungry & those spiritually malnourished. The local convicts, & those who find themselves captive to some drug or intoxicant, & those who are prisoners spiritually. The physically blind & those spiritually blind. Those bowed down by adversity. The refugees in our midst. The spouse who lost his/her mate. And kids w/o dads.

2. See, any God **great** enough, **wise** enough, and **strong** enough to create & sustain & run this universe, can take care of **our problems** today.

3. This psalm **praises the Lord** for His wonderful deeds, offering a catalog of the kinds of things God does.

a) **Slide14** **But** the Bible shows that these are **not absolutes** - He has not vindicated **all** who are oppressed, **or** fed **all** who are hungry, **or** given sight to **all** who are blind.

b) **But it is** His intent to **do** all these things, and He will. The Bible affirms that **all** the promises of God **will** be fulfilled, **if not in this life, surely in the life to come**.

c) **Everything will be put right**. But the fact is that God has done these things again and again, and His greatest fulfillment has been in the work of **Christ**.

H. **Slide15** So, **Jesus** takes up these **themes** making them *the program of His whole ministry*.
Lk4:16-21

1. **Thus once again the Scripture combines** the saving gospel with the hands/feet gospel. **Or**, the saving gospel w/the social/communal gospel. **Or**, the saving gospel w/the humanitarian gospel.

a) **Important sub-point:** **NOT** *the old social gospel* that accepts the **2nd** great command, *love your neighbor as yourself*, **but** ignores the **1st** *love the Lord God w/ all your heart, mind, soul*.

- b) Remember, Jesus was asked...**what is the 1st commandment?** (the foremost, 1st in rank, most imp) **Jesus' answer?** He couldn't separate them out. Mrk. 12:28-34
2. **Christ invested His life in people.** He **fed** them, **healed** them, **raised** them from the dead. And He did this for *both* those who would **follow Him** & those He knew **never would**.
 3. Jesus dealt with, and was concerned about, *global poverty, hunger, sickness, injustice, & oppression*. And yet of all the titles given to Christ, *Humanitarian* has not been one of them.¹
 4. We constantly make it [the saving gospel & the humanitarian gospel] a *dichotomy* when maybe it should be envisioned **as** conjoined twins, **or** 2 sides of the same coin, **or** 2 pees in the same pod.
 5. Jesus was a humanitarian, **but** of a unique kind. He **healed** to revealed true healing. He **fed** to reveal true food. He **quenched thirst** to reveal everlasting water. Christ's actions were temporal, **but** is intended impact was for His every word and deed to be eternally transforming.²
 6. *Christ's religion lives in the streets where boots get dirty.* Bono, 2006 National Prayer Breakfast Washington DC. *Slide16*
 - a) He went on to say, *God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house. God is in the silence of a mother who has infected her child with a virus that will end both their lives. God is in the cries heard under the rubble of war. God is in the debris of wasted opportunity & lives, & God is with us if we are with them.*
 - I. *Slide17a* (8) **5 times** the psalmist uses *the Lord*, thereby stressing the fact that **God** is the **hope** of the needy.
 - J. **The Lord** raises those who are **bowed down** - this is a classic expression of *depression*.
 1. Someone so burdened by a load of care that he or she cannot even straighten up. *Slide17b* The God of hope comes along & *lifts up, renews hope, invigorates*
 - K. **If worship** is *praising God for who He is...then* we must know who He is.
 1. The psalms set **the worship of God** in the context of *teachings about God*.

¹ Humanitarian Jesus, Christian Buckley & Ryan Dobson, pg.14.

² Humanitarian Jesus, Christian Buckley & Ryan Dobson, pg.26.

2. If we are not reflecting on **what God is like & has done**, we are not really worshipping.
 3. **Slide18** So we can worship Him if we know something about Him. Something which excites our admiration, our gratitude, our faith, our joy.
 4. So worship is heartfelt, emotionally-charged expression; but it is also a rational & thoughtful expression.
 5. Worship is always a response to what we know of God, as a result of His revealing Himself to us.
- L. (9a) **Strangers/גֵּרִים (gē·rîm)** - resident aliens who were outside of social power structures and vulnerable to injustice.
- M. (9b) **The sting of the tail** - He'll flip you upside down if you put your trust in princes.
1. Note in 9b God **flanks** the story of **compassion** with **judgment**.
 2. Flank = **sides** (Flank steak, betw animal ribs/hip. Flanker/football, line up sides. Military term)
 3. **Here**, on 1 side **compassion**, on the other **judgment**. This is one of the themes of the gospel. **Slide19** Jn.3:18 **He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**
- N. (10) **Zion** - unlike the human kings, God's reign continues. Though He is the God of all creation, He has made Himself known in & through **Zion**.
1. In Christian terms, the one true God of the whole universe has chosen to make Himself known to the world through His Cov community, **the Church**.
- O. **Slide20** Call upon the God of Jacob, He will be your **help, hope** and **happiness**.