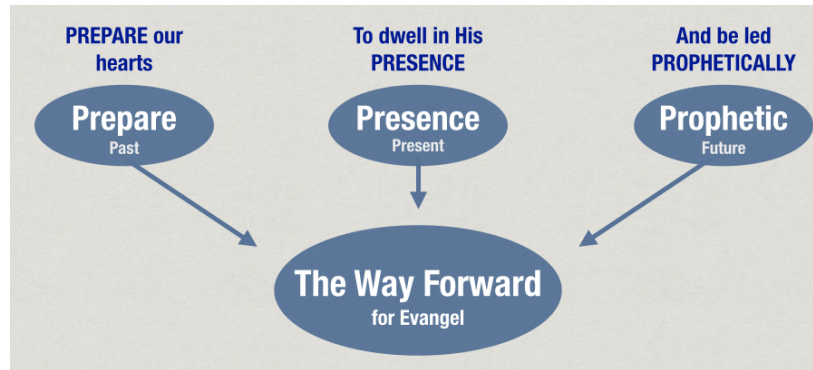


Hope Changes Everything!

“Prepare our hearts to dwell in His Presence and be led prophetically.”



- **Intro:** The restoration of HOPE in people's lives will require us to, "Prepare our hearts to dwell in His Presence and be led prophetically."
 - Jesus is **positioning us to bring hope** to a hopeless world.
 - **"If you know hope, you can show hope."** *Kathe Wunnenberg, author of Hopelifter: Creative Ways to Spread Hope When Life Hurts*
 - **Is this not the world we live in today?**
 - ¹ You should know this, Timothy, that ***in the last days there will be very difficult times***. ² For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. ³ They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. ⁴ They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. ⁵ They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that! (2 Tim 3:1–5 NLT-SE)
 - There are many pictures like this in the OT as well. Tonight, we're going to look at one in particular that stands **because of the HOPE hidden in it...**
 - ¹⁵ This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says *(to a rebellious people who want nothing to do with His leadership)*: ***"Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength.*** But you would have none of it. ¹⁶ You said, 'No, we will get our help from Egypt. They will give us swift horses for riding into battle.' But the only swiftness you are going to see is the swiftness of your enemies chasing you! ¹⁷ One of them will chase a thousand of you. Five of them will make all of you flee. You will be left like a lonely flagpole on a hill or a tattered banner on a distant mountaintop." ¹⁸ ***So the LORD must wait for you to come to him so he can show you his love and compassion. For the LORD is a faithful God. Blessed are those who wait for his help.*** ¹⁹ ***O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. He will be gracious if you ask for help. He will surely respond to the sound of your cries.*** ²⁰ ***Though the Lord gave you adversity for food and suffering for drink, he will still be with you to teach you. You will see your teacher with your own eyes.*** ²¹ ***Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go," whether to the right or to the left.*** (Is 30:15–21 NLT-SE)

- **The Seven Seals...**All this probably happens over about a 2 year period!
 - 1st Seal: **White horse**...The Antichrist manifests with political aggression (6:1-2)
 - 2nd Seal: **Red horse**...Bloodshed and final world war (6:3-4)
 - 3rd Seal: **Black horse**...Famine and economic crisis (6:5-6)
 - 4th Seal: **Pale horse**...One-fourth of humanity is killed (6:7-8)
 - 5th Seal: **Prayer movement**...Prayer is strengthened by martyrs (6:9-11)
 - 6th Seal: **Cosmic Disturbances**...Cosmic disturbances and God's glory (6:12-17)
 - **Angelic explanation** (Chapter 7)...Questions get answered. "Why is God's wrath so severe? **What will happen to us?**
 - 7th Seal: **Anointed prayer**...Prayer is strengthened by the angels (8:1-6)
 - ³ Then another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar. And a great amount of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God's people as an offering on the gold altar before the throne. ⁴ The smoke of the incense, mixed with the prayers of God's holy people, ascended up to God from the altar where the angel had poured them out. ⁵ Then **the angel filled the incense burner with fire from the altar and threw it down upon the earth**; and thunder crashed, lightning flashed, and there was a terrible earthquake. (Rev 8:3-5 NLT-SE)
- **Main Point**: We WILL restore HOPE to a hopeless world!

Hope...The active, confident expectation of good based upon the character of God.

"What about the relationship between full assurance of faith and full assurance of hope? Is there a difference? I would suggest that faith is the larger idea and hope is a necessary part of biblical faith. **Hope is that part of faith that focuses on the future. In biblical terms, when faith is directed to the future, you can call it hope.** But faith can focus on the past and the present too, so faith is the larger term." ~ John Piper

- **Restoring Hope to the Hopeless**: There is a common denominator when you search the scriptures to find hope.
 - As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and **the enduring hope you have** because of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Th 1:3 NLT-SE)
 - Let us hold unswervingly to **the hope we profess**, for he who promised is faithful. (Heb 10:23 NIV)
 - ¹⁵ You must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And **if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.** ¹⁶ But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. (1 Pet 3:15-16 NLT-SE)
- **What is the common denominator?** The hope we have because we are **IN CHRIST!**

- There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For **you are all one in Christ Jesus**. (Gal 3:28 NLT-SE)
- For we are God's masterpiece. He has **created us anew in Christ Jesus**, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. (Eph 2:10 NLT-SE)
- Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds **as you live in Christ Jesus**. (Phil 4:7 NLT-SE)
- And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, **which have been given to us in Christ Jesus**. (Phil 4:19 NLT-SE)
- **Apollos**: Stirring up hope by the power of the Spirit
 - ²³ After spending some time in Antioch, Paul went back through Galatia and Phrygia, visiting and strengthening all the believers. ²⁴ Meanwhile, a Jew named **Apollos, an eloquent speaker who knew the Scriptures well**, had arrived in Ephesus from Alexandria in Egypt. ²⁵ He had been taught the way of the Lord, and **he taught others about Jesus with an enthusiastic spirit and with accuracy**. However, he knew only about John's baptism. ²⁶ When Priscilla and Aquila heard him preaching boldly in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained the way of God even more accurately. (Acts 18:23–26 NLT-SE)
 - **Question**: If Apollos could have this impact WITHOUT the power of the Holy Spirit, how much greater impact can we have with Him????
- So, in these troubled times, **what should we do?** Jesus' own word will set our course.
 - ³² "However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows. ³³ And since you don't know when that time will come, be on guard! **Stay alert!** ³⁴ "The coming of the Son of Man can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. When he left home, he gave each of his slaves instructions about the work they were to do, and he told the gatekeeper to watch for his return. ³⁵ You, too, must **keep watch!** For you don't know when the master of the household will return—in the evening, at midnight, before dawn, or at daybreak. ³⁶ **Don't let him find you sleeping when he arrives** without warning. ³⁷ I say to you what I say to everyone: **Watch for him!** (Mark 13:32–37 NLT-SE)
 - **Be on guard! Stay alert!**
 - **Keep watch!**
 - **Don't let him find you sleeping!**
 - **Watch for him!**
 - ¹⁵ So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. ¹⁶ **Make the most of every opportunity** in these evil days. (Eph 5:15–16 NLT-SE)