

THE WAY TO HOPE, PEACE AND LIFE ETERNAL

Introduction

Today many people are interested in religion and God but are confused about what it means to find true hope, peace and life. The Bible has all the answers we need. The Bible says there is heaven (John 14:1-6) and there is hell (Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 21:8) and there is only one God, not many gods (Isaiah 45:22). God is holy and just and He has made a way for us to know Him and have fellowship with Him through Jesus Christ.

Note the Following Facts:

All People Are Depraved

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. (Romans 3:10) For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23).

Christ is the Only Solution for Our Problem

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).

All men are condemned without Christ (John 3:18). We are not only condemned sinners; we are also spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:2) until we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5) and come to believe in Christ and accept Him.

There is Penalty for Sin

***For the wages of sin is death** ... (Romans 6:23).*

Christ Paid For Our Sins Vicariously

...while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is God Himself, came to earth. He was born of a virgin (Luke 1:26-28). He lived a sinless life (Hebrews 4:15). He went to the cross to die on our behalf where He paid for all our sins of His people on Him (1 Timothy 1:15, 2:5-6; Heb 1:21). He was buried and rose from the dead on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:1-6), victorious over death and hell.

We Must Humble Ourselves to Seek Christ by Faith to be Our Saviour and Lord

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:13). We must acknowledge that Christ died for our sins and want to save us. One must sincerely seek Him to forgive his sin and save his soul for condemnation. Then he will become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), a child of God (John 1:12).

Consider these Questions & Answers

Q: *From what does Jesus Christ save us?*

A: *From our sins.*

Q: *What is sin?*

A: *Sin is disobedience to God by breaking the law of God (1 John 3:4) and failing to meet His righteous standards.*

Q: *Who has sinned?*

A: *All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10, 23).*

Q: *What is the penalty for my sin?*

A: *Eternal death in hell (Romans 6:23).*

Q: *How can I be saved from this death?*

A: *I can be saved from eternal death by trusting Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and Lord and repent of my sins (Acts 16:31).*

Consider these:

Assurance of Salvation

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that they may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God (1 John 5:13). Eternal life from God is the present possession of every Christian and you can have it freely from Christ alone when you believe in Him (John 3:36).

The Sacraments

The Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of the New Testament Church. In Matthew 16:18, He said, *Upon this rock I will build my church.* The Bible also says in Ephesians 5:25, *Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.* The church started in the Old Testament with Christ as the Head (Acts 7:38).

Christ gave to the church what we call doctrines and ordinances. The doctrines of the church are its beliefs and teachings. The ordinances of a church are the things He gave to his disciples to be observed. They are called ordinances because He commanded them or ordered them. In the New Testament Church there are two ordinances. One is baptism and the other is the Lord's Supper and both are sanctioned by Christ.

The Lord's Supper was instituted by our Saviour the night He was betrayed and delivered to die for our sins on the cross (1 Cor 11:23-30). No one is saved by partaking of the Lord's Supper. It is a memorial of the death of the Lord Jesus which bestows spiritual benefits. We are to remember what He did for us on the cross. Those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and have followed Him in baptism may partake of the Lord's Supper. Baptism is obedience to and identification with Christ (Colossians 2:11-13). We are identified with Christ in the likeness of His resurrection (Romans 6:1-4). Both ordinances of the church are beautiful pictures of spiritual benefits and God's grace extended to us. In themselves, they have no saving power. They picture what the Lord Jesus has done for us and all believers are to observe them not for salvation but as a public testimony to ourselves and to the world in obedience to God's

commandments (Matt 28:18-20). The children of believing families are to be baptised as well (Acts 2:38-39).

Know God Through the Bible, Prayer and Worship

The new Christian must let God speak to his heart and direct his life. Through the Bible God speaks to us, and through prayer we speak to God. The Bible is the providentially preserved Word of God, inerrant and infallible.

The Bible

The Bible is the most amazing, coherent and accurate Book. It is actually a library of 66 books placed together in one by God, who inspired and preserved it for us (2 Tim 3:16,17). There are two divisions of this one Book. There is the Old Testament, having 39 books, beginning with the book of Genesis; and there is the New Testament, having 27 books, beginning with the book of Matthew and concluding with the book of Revelation.

Determine to read your Bible daily and seek to apply it in your lives as well. The best time of the day for Bible reading and prayer is in early morning (Psalm 5:3). Make it part of you to rise early and begin the day with God (Mark 1:35). The Bible has the answer for everything we need to know concerning God and our duty to Him.

Facts From The Bible About God & Man

The Bible answers the three greatest questions any man has ever asked:

1. Where did I come from?
2. Why am I here?
3. Where am I going?

The Bible has one theme, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only true and living Saviour and this wonderful plan of redemption of His people through the ages. The Bible is the verbal (every word, 1 Corinthians 2:13), plenary (entirely, 2 Timothy 3:16), inspired Word of God, sufficient and authoritative and providentially preserved by God for us today (1 Pet 1:23-25).

Memorize God's Word and hide it in your heart. The Bible says in Psalm 119:11, *Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee*. Someone has said that God's Word keeps us from sin, but sin keeps us from God's Word. Treat your Bible as a map, compass and lamp unto your feet (Ps 119:105). Mark important passages as God speaks to your heart through them. The Bible is the only Book authored by God alone for every Christian, to read and obey and apply in this daily life.

Prayer

The Lord Jesus is our example in prayer. He got up early and spent time with God the Father in prayer (Luke 6:12). He left the crowds and spent time alone with God in prayer. Every Christian ought to pray, sincerely and fervently to God.

The prayer life of a new Christian is important for spiritual health and growth. Set aside certain times to pray. Go on your knees (Dan 6:10) if possible and pray before you retire at night. Pray before meals to give thanks to God whether you are in public or private place. Worship and praise God and ask Him in prayer to meet your needs, to give you strength, and to save your

loved ones. Get close to the Lord through prayer daily and the peace of God will be in your hearts.

Jesus says

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you (John 15:7). And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him (1 John 5:14-15). Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7). God hears and answers prayer according to His will. Our heavenly Father invites us to come to Him before His throne of grace in prayer. Pray to God everyday and seek His counsel daily (Col 4:2).

The Importance of the Local Church

When you receive the Lord Jesus as Saviour, you are saved by God's grace through faith alone and not of yourselves (Eph 2:8,9). You become part of God's family. When you obey the Lord Jesus and follow Him in baptism, you become a member of the local church in which you were baptised. A local church is a group of baptised believers who have voluntarily joined themselves together to carry out what we call the "Great Commission" and edify one another through regular worship, fellowship and service (Hebrew 10:24-25). The prophet says in Malachi 3:16, *Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.*

The Life of the Church

The Church is to follow the apostle's example. Every Church is to be

Apostolic

Bible-Based

Confessional (that is, Calvinistic and Covenantal)

Doctrinal

Evangelical and

Fundamental

Consider, *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common (Acts 2:42-44).*

The church is God's witness on earth for His glory. We are to go and make disciples of all nations, that is our privilege and duty.

Second, we are to explain to those we see how to be saved and let God work in their heart. We must tell them in clear, simple terms how they can come to know Christ as their personal

Saviour. After they are saved and taught the basic doctrines of grace, they are to be baptised and join a local church.

Those who come to Christ should be baptised in a local church as an act of obedience to the command of Christ. **We are to teach the new Christian to grow in the new faith by grounding them in the basic doctrine of the Bible.**

A Christian should be taught the things Christ has commanded (Matt 28:18-20). This means that the Christian is to be faithful to attend the Sabbath services of the church. As he faithfully hears the Word of God and worship regularly with God's people, he will grow and develop as Christian ought to (2 Peter 3:17-18).

The work of the local church is to glorify God, win the lost to Christ and to edify the saints

The Bible says that the Lord Jesus Christ founded the church and loves the church.

...upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18).

Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it (Ephesians 5:25)

The Christian & the Local Church

Consider what each church member can do for the Lord in the church with godly fear and commitment.

Pray For Your Church

Ask the Lord to guide, lead and meet each need of the church. Join the church in prayer meeting, fellowship group, Sunday School, NBC and pray for the leaders and the session and members. Pray that everything done will be pleasing to Christ. Pray especially for your pastor, elders, deacons and their family and members spiritual welfare and the health and vitality of the Church.

Be an Committed Member

Be faithful to the Lord and be fervent and fruitful in the ministry of the church. Encourage others to do the same and be a fervent zealous partner in the Lord's vineyard (Rom 12:11,12).

Be A Faithful Member

Attending a local church faithfully in holy worship and service.

1. Is obeying what the Bible teaches.
2. Identifies with the Lord and His people in reverential Sabbath worship.
3. Provides instruction for living the Christian life.

Support Your Church

It is God's plan for each member to serve God and to faithfully tithe to the Lord (Lev 27:30-34). This means that we are to give of ourselves to the Lord through our church (Rev 12:1,2). We want to give our offerings or substance through our church joyfully and willingly out of love for God and His people.

2 Corinthians 9:7 says *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

Malachi 3:10 says *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

1 Corinthians 16:2 says, *Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

With a joyful and committed heart, let each member of the local church do all he can to glorify God, edify and build up the believers in the Church in the strength of the Lord.

Tell Others About Christ

The delight and responsibility of every Christian is to tell those who are lost how they can come to know Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. Because we know Him as our personal Saviour, we have the joy and privilege to tell others how to be saved and bring them to the saving knowledge of Christ if possible.

Everyone is a depraved sinner and cannot save ourselves and we must confess and repent of our sins, believe and receive in Christ as personal Saviour. There is no other way (John 14:6, Act 4:12) whereby one can be saved.

Be Concerned about the Condition of the Unsaved

They are lost eternally and they need Christ desperately (Luke 19:10).

The direction of their lives is away from God (Isaiah 53:6).

They are condemned (John 3:18).

They are under God's wrath (John 3:36).

They are blind to God's truth (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

They are without hope (Ephesians 2:17).

They are dead in sin and trespasses (Ephesians 2:1).

They are missing the abundant and meaning of life (John 10:10).

They are headed toward an awful place called hell that has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).

The Lord used someone who is a Christian to tell us how we can know Christ as Saviour. The Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to go and tell others how to be saved (Matthew 28:19-20). Our burden for the lost increases as we care for the souls and pray for them. The best place to begin to witness is to our loved ones and friends. Every Christian should tell his family members, colleagues, neighbours and friends about Christ and pray daily for their salvation.

There is no one that Christ cannot save. He will save His people whom He called upon for salvation according to His sovereign good pleasure (Romans 10:13). Read Romans 10:9, 10; Matthew 11:28-30).

Give Your Testimony

A testimony of salvation is telling a personal experience of how one comes to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Sometimes we can begin to witness to others by telling them what Christ has done for us, giving glory to God. A Christian's testimony should call to attention three things.

1. Your depraved life before receiving Christ as Saviour.
2. In clear simple terms, how Christ save you.
3. What Christ means to me and what change He has made in you since you have become a Christian.

Conclusion

Realize we are to be faithful stewards and heralds for Christ by His grace and mercy. Remember, the Lord will preserve and keep us through the power of the Holy Spirit and sanctify us for His use.

Let us continue steadfast in the faith, looking up to Christ the Author and Finisher of our Faith. Col 1:28 *Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

Jack Sin, Pastor
Sovereign Hope Bible-Presbyterian Church