

HOPE TO COPE 7 – “HOPE FOR HEROES”

INTRO. – HAPPY FATHER’S DAY TO ALL! ASK: “WHO WAS YOUR HERO GROWING UP?”

***JUST LOST A SUPER HERO – BATMAN – ADAM WEST – [SHOW PIC](#). HIS SECRET IDENTITY? BRUCE WAYNE – YES BUT ALSO BILL ANDERSON FROM WALLA WALLA, WASH. – MOM DATED ONCE AT “WAHI”. MY CLAIM TO FAME.**

YES, I WAS BORN IN WALLA WALLA AND MOVED TO RIVERSIDE AT 6 WKS.

****[TODAY WEARING MY GUNN FAMILY CREST FROM SCOTLAND LIKE MY FATHER AND HIS FATHER BEFORE HIM. WOULD LIKE TO SAY I AM A DIRECT DESCENDENT OF WILLIAM WALLACE, BUT INSTEAD I AM A DIRECT DESCENDENT FROM WALLA WALLA!](#)**

SOMETIMES WE FEEL WE HAVE A RATHER DULL LIFE COMPARED TO A SUPER HERO.

MY SONS – AS COPS GET TO BE A HERO TO SOMEONE EVERY DAY. WHEN THEY GET BAD GUYS OFF THE STREET WHO SELL DRUGS AND WEAPONS TO OUR KIDS, SAVE SOMEONE FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, STOP A SHOOTER – THEY CALL ME. THEN ASK HOW MY DAY IS GOING? “I SAT AT MY DESK

AND WROTE ANOTHER SERMON. PUT TOGETHER AN ARTICLE FOR THE ENEWS, MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR MORE BANNERS/SIGNAGE, PLANNED AN UPCOMING EVENT, ETC. THEY JUST GOT BACK FROM JU JITSU PRACTICE. I JUST FINISHED WATCHING A WEBINAR ON HOW TO INCREASE OUR HITS AS A CHURCH ON FACEBOOK.

SOMETIMES SOUNDS PRETTY DULL IN COMPARISON. BUT JOEL OFTEN REMINDS ME THAT I AM MAKING MORE OF A DIFFERENCE ETERNALLY.

***BIG IDEA: AS CHRIST FOLLOWERS WE ALL CAN BE A HERO SPIRITUALLY. AS A DAD OR A MOM OR TEACHER (PHYSICALLY OR SPIRITUALLY) OR A VOLUNTEER, YOU CAN HELP TO DISCIPLE A LIFE FOR CHRIST THAT WILL MAKE AN ETERNAL DIFF. IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS.**

****THAT'S WHAT WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT TODAY. . .**

HOW YOU CAN BE A HERO SPIRITUALLY!

IN BOOK OF 1 PETER , THE APOSTLE PETER ADDRESSES FIRST CENT CHRISTIANS IN ASIA BEING PERSECUTED FOR THEIR FAITH AND HOW THEY CAN BE HEROS SPIRITUALLY.

****BEING A HERO OFTEN INCLUDES PREVAILING AGAINST INCREDIBLE ODDS!**

Despite the suffering they face, these early believers will overcome and prevail against incredible odds because of identifying with Jesus' death and resurrection. So will we!

- I. **1 PETER 4:1-2. Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. 2 As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.**

- A. **“THEREFORE”- LEFT OFF TALKING ABOUT BAPTISM IN CH. 3 (NO CHAPTER DIVISIONS ORIGINALLY)**

- 1. **IN BAPTISM WE IDENTIFY W. CHRIST'S DEATH – WE PLEDGE TO BE DEAD TO SIN'S CONTROL (SYMBOLIZED BY BURIAL IN WATER – NO INFANT BAPTISM IN EARLY CHURCH. ALL ABOUT REPENTANCE. WOULD RECOMMEND BOTH IF BAPTIZED AS INFANT. I WAS)**

ROMANS 6:4. We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

CAN'T CONTINUE TO SIN IF YOU ARE DEAD. NEXT TIME SOMEONE TRIES TO TEMPT YOU INTO SOMETHING, YOU JUST SAY – SORRY I CAN'T PARTICIPATE IN THAT 'CAUSE I'M DEAD.

JESUS SAID "IT IS FINISHED" AS FAR AS SINS CONTROL. YOU'RE DEAD TO SINS CONTROL ONCE YOU FOLLOW AND IDENTIFY WITH CHRIST.

2. DON'T STOP THERE. WE ALSO IDENTIFY WITH HIS *RESURRECTION* THROUGH THE NEW LIFE AND VICTORIES WE NOW ENJOY. LIKE A HERO THAT COMES BACK TO LIFE!

IF YOU IDENTIFY WITH THE LIFE OF CHRIST, YOU SHARE IN HIS PURPOSE. WHAT WAS CHRIST'S PURPOSE IN LIFE? *TO DO THE WILL OF HIS FATHER IN HEAVEN.* SO DOING THE WILL OF GOD BECOMES OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE INSTEAD OF SPENDING OUR TIME GRATIFYING OUR OWN (EVIL/SELFISH) DESIRES. (TEACHES THIS TO CHRISTIANS IN HEDONISTIC ROMAN/GREEK SOCIETY.)

HERE IS WHAT PETER SAYS NEXT IN THE MSG. PARAPHRASE OF 1 PETER:

II. 1 PETER 4:3-5 You've already put in your time in that God-ignorant way of life, partying night after night, a drunken and profligate life (wasteful, indulgent, out of control). Now it's time to

be done with it for good. Of course, your old friends don't understand why you don't join in with the old gang anymore. But you don't have to give an account to them. They're the ones who will be called on the carpet—and before God himself.

- A. V. 3 – HAVE SPENT ENOUGH TIME IN PAST. IF A CHRIST FOLLOWER YOU DIED TO THESE THINGS. DON'T BE PULLED BACK THROUGH PEER PRESSURE. THIS IS NOT WHO YOU ARE ANY MORE.**

***A GREAT EXAMPLE OF WHAT THIS IS TALKING ABOUT = TIM ALLEN. MANY OF YOU ENJOYED HIM IN "HOME IMPROVEMENT". Or "last man standing". THOUGHT THIS WAS GREAT ILLUS. OF WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT TODAY:**

SHOW TIM ALLEN YOUTUBE CLIP

IN THIS PASSAGE REMINDED THAT IT'S TIME TO GROW UP AND MOVE ON FROM YOUR PAST. WHEN WE DO THAT AND FOLLOW GOD INSTEAD OF OUR SELFISH DESIRES, WE EXPERIENCE WHAT **ROMANS 12:2** TALKS ABOUT. **Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your*

mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Transformation vs Conformity

WE SOON LEARN HOW GOD'S WILL CAN REALLY PLEASE!

MORE THAN ANYTHING AS A PARENT, I WANT MY KIDS TO EXPERIENCE THIS TOO!

***ON BACK OF BULLETIN YOU CAN SEE STAGES OF "GROWING UP" IN CHRIST. WE WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT SOMEDAY BEFORE GOD OF HOW WE MOVED THROUGH THESE STAGES. IF A PARENT/FATHER – HOW YOU HELPED YOUR KIDS MOVE THROUGH THESE STEPS SPIRITUALLY.**

Best way to teach = through example.

AS WE "GROW UP IN CHRIST" WE HELP THEM DO THE SAME!

****N.I.V. - "THEY THINK IT STRANGE YOU DO NOT RUN WITH THEM ANY MORE" WE SHOULD BE "STRANGE" IN A GOOD WAY. MOST HEROS ARE!**

Every hero needs self-control so they are not distracted from their purpose. THAT IS WHAT PETER IS GETTING AT HERE.

****LIKE STRENGTHENING A MUSCLE, THE MORE YOU DEPEND ON GOD AND OVERCOME TEMPTATION IN YOUR LIFE, THE MORE STRENGTH YOU GAIN FOR VICTORY THE NEXT TIME.**

***I PICTURE LIFE SOMETIMES LIKE RUNNING THE LENGTH OF A FOOTBALL FIELD TRYING TO MAKE IT TO THE GOAL WITH OPPONENTS (TEMPTATIONS) ON EVERY SIDE TRYING TO TAKE US DOWN. WE HAVE TO PUSH THEM AWAY. WE NEED ALSO TO WORK AS A TEAM TO BLOCK FOR EA. OTHER. THAT IS CALLED FELLOWSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY!**

DO YOU THINK IT WOULD BE WORTH IT FOR TIM ALLEN TO GO BACK TO HIS OLD WAY OF LIFE? NO WAY! THE TIME FOR THAT IS OVER. WHAT IS AHEAD IS SO MUCH SWEETER!

YOU MAY GET SOME ABUSE FOR YOUR STANDS, BUT THAT IS WHERE YOU CAN PRACTICE 1 PETER 3:15! AND IF YOU ARE GROWING UP DAILY IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST – PEOPLE WILL SHOW SURPRISE AT YOUR SELF CONTROL AND ABILITY TO MEET YOUR GOALS. *EVENTUALLY THEIR RIDICULE WILL TURN INTO RESPECT.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED BY THEIR MOCKING. ALL WILL HAVE TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT. NIV TRANSLATION SAYS JESUS WILL JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE

DEAD WHEN HE COMES AGAIN – THOSE ALIVE AT HIS COMING AND THOSE WHO ALREADY HAVE PASSED ON.

III. 1 PETER 4:6. For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

A. “FOR THIS REASON” – BECAUSE EVERYONE MUST STAND BEFORE GOD AND GIVE AN ACCOUNT – EVERYONE NEEDS THE GOSPEL. SHARED THROUGH YOUR EXAMPLE AND WORDS.

- “THOSE NOW DEAD” MOST LIKELY = CHRISTIANS KILLED BY NERO IN PERSECUTION.

- NOT A “DOCTRINE OF A SECOND CHANCE” AFTER WE DIE

- WE ARE SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH “FAITH” – EPH. 2:8,9; HEB. 9:27

JOHN 5:28-29. “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out—those who have done what is

good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.

- **YOU CAN CHOOSE TO BELIEVE THE “SECOND CHANCE” DOCTRINE, DESPITE THESE VERSES, BUT I’M GOING TO BET MY LIFE AND THE LIFE OF MY KIDS AND THOSE I TEACH ON WHAT IT ACTUALLY SAYS, NOT A GRAY AREA THAT COULD MEAN A NUMBER OF THINGS. (CAN ASK MORE QUESTIONS AT OUR SUMMER BIBLE STUDY STARTING THIS TUES. NIGHT!)**

IV. 1 PETER 4:7-9. The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

A. ANOTHER REASON PETER GIVES FOR AN UNSELFISH LIFE = ANY MINUTE THE LORD COULD RETURN. (THE PROMISES AND PROPHECIES ABOUT HIS FIRST COMING CAME TRUE IN LIT. HISTORY, SO WHY NOT HIS SECOND?)

- **EARLY WRITERS AND EARLY CHURCH THOUGHT MAYBE IN THEIR LIFETIME.**

- EVEN IF HE DOESN'T RETURN IN OUR LIFETIME, THE END COULD COME FOR ANY OF US AT ANY TIME. BETTER TO BE READY!

*ILLUS. - SMALL TOWN PAPER CARRIED STORY OF COACH, WELL KNOWN FAMILY MAN IN TOWN, WHO DIED SUDDENLY WHILE IN BED WITH A PROSTITUTE HEADLINE READ, "WHAT A WAY TO GO!" I WONDER IF HIS FAMILY SHARED THAT SENTIMENT. . .HIS WIFE, HIS KIDS?

B. PETER SAYS TO BE PREPARED FOR THE END – BE SOBER ("CLEAR MINDED") – ABLE TO SEE WHAT IS IMPORTANT AND WHAT IS SHALLOW AND FLEETING. PRAY AND THINK CLEARLY VS IMPULSIVE INDULGENCE WITH REPENTANCE AT THE LAST MINUTE.

"It is when God is given His rightful place, that everything (else) takes its rightful place."

(PRAYER WALK THIS SAT. A.M. FOR NEIGHBORHOODS AROUND WHERE WE MEET FOR CHURCH. WE HAVE SEEN RESULTS IN PAST! LOOK FOR ME BY THE TABLES)

C. ALSO SAYS TO LOVE EA. OTHER "DEEPLY" WHILE MOVING FORWARD TOWARD OUR SPIRITUAL GOALS – CONSTANT, UNCONDITIONAL– LOVE COVERS A MULTITUDE OF

SINS – WHEN YOU LOVE LIKE THIS YOU ARE ABLE TO LOOK PAST IMPERFECTION AND FORGIVE. THIS WAS IMPORTANT IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE CHURCH TO AVOID DIVISIONS, AND IMPORTANT TO A FAMILY GOING THROUGH DIFF. STAGES – ESP. DURING THE TEENAGE YEARS! YOUR LOVE WILL BE TESTED. **PROVERBS 10:12. Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs.**

GOD IS PATIENT WITH US WHILE WE ARE GOING THROUGH OUR STAGES OF GROWING UP IN CHRIST. (MAYBE THAT’S WHY HE GIVES US TEENAGERS). WE CAN PAY THAT LOVE AND PATIENCE FORWARD WITH THOSE AROUND US

D.HOSPITALITY – A MUST IN EARLY CHURCH AND IN LAST DAYS. MET IN HOMES LIKE WE DO FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS. (MANY OF YOU HAVE SHOWN HOSPITALITY THIS WAY FOR YEARS!) MISSIONARIES PASSING THROUGH, CHURCHES MEETING IN SECRET.

***EARLY CHURCH – NO BUILDINGS FOR 200 YEARS (ONLY BEEN 10 FOR US!). UNDERGROUND CHURCH IN CHINA MEETS SOMETIMES AT 3 AM. WE MEET AT 10 AM. SHOULDN’T BE A PROBLEM!**

V. 1 PETER 4:10-11 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as

faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

A. SPIRITUAL GIFTS - THEIR PURPOSE = TO SERVE OTHERS, NOT OURSELVES. LIKE A HERO HAS "SPECIAL ABILITIES" (GIFTS = CHARISMA – GRACE) ARE GIVEN AT SALVATION. (LISTED IN ROMANS 12, 1 COR. 12, EPH. 4)

WE GO THROUGH AND HELP YOU FIND IN OUR QUARTERLY "FOUNDATIONS".

- 1. WE ARE "STEWARDS" OF THEM. A FAITHFUL STEWARD MANAGES WHAT REALLY BELONGS TO THE MASTER.**

****WE DON'T SERVE WITH OUR GIFTS AS A PERSONAL FAVOR TO OTHERS, BUT WE ARE SIMPLY SHARING WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM GOD'S GRACE ON HIS BEHALF. (WE NEED TO MODEL THIS TO OUR KIDS TOO!)**

- A. V. 11 – MENTIONS 2 GIFTS THAT KIND OF SUM UP EARLY CHURCH PRACTICES:**

1. TEACHING OR PREACHING WHEN THEY MET TOGETHER. PURPOSE = TO FOCUS US ON GOD'S WORD, NOT OPINIONS. STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS ARE TO HELP YOU REMEMBER MAIN POINTS. NOT JUST ABOUT LEARNING GOOD CONTENT, BUT *ABOUT MOVING TRUTH FROM HEART TO HAND.*

2. SERVING = HANDS ON TASKS – NOT TO BE RECOGNIZED OR THANKED (ALTHOUGH THIS IS A KIND THING TO DO), BUT WE SERVE TO GIVE GOD CREDIT AND DRAW OTHERS TO HIM!

**ALL KINDS OF PHYSICAL, CREATIVE, MENTAL, TECHNICAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE. EVERYONE NEEDS TO FIND A PLACE OF SERVICE WHERE THEY CAN USE THEIR GIFTS TO GROW UP IN CHRIST!
LIST ON CC CARD.**

****AS WE USE OURS TOGETHER IN LOVE, WE MODEL AND HELP OUR KIDS DO THE SAME SO THEY GROW UP IN CHRIST.**

CONCLUSION:

4 STEPS TO KEEP MOVING AHEAD IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE AND GROW UP IN CHRIST:

S hare

C onnect (SUMMER BIBLE STUDY STARTS TUES. WON'T CALL ON OR ASK TO PRAY. ALL VOLUNTARY)

M inister

D iscipline (EVEN IN LATER STAGES MAY NOT REALIZE NEED TO REPRODUCE OR RAISE UP)

SCMD – THESE 4 STEPS WILL HELP YOU GROW THRU EA. STAGE OF LIFE IN CHRIST.

****AS YOU PRACTICE THOSE STEPS W. KIDS, WILL HELP THEM BECOME ALL THEY CAN BE IN CHRIST.**

****THAT IS WHAT BEING A SPIRITUAL HERO IS ALL ABOUT.**

***ILLUS. LITTLE BOYS SITTING AROUND BRAGGING – “MY DADDY KNOWS THE MVP OF THE ANGELS/DODGERS; MY DADDY KNOWS THE MAYOR; MY DADDY KNOWS BATMAN; MY DADDY KNOWS GOD!”**

BE A SPIRITUAL HERO TO THE NEXT GENERATION IF YOU KNOW GOD. WE ALL CAN. WE JUST NEED TO REACH OUT AND RECEIVE HIM AND LET HIM FILL US, MAKE HIS WILL OUR PURPOSE AND SHARE IT LIFE TO LIFE.

PRAY