



Get Your Hopes Up Series - Hope for Change

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 | Hebrews 5:11-6:1 | 1Peter 1:3-9

Community Group Hosts – Thank you for hosting and know that our staff and elders are praying for you as you prepare and host your community group.

Say, This sermon finishes the Get Your Hopes Up series that we were in for the month of December. Allow time for participants to share what was helpful to them in this series.

Ask, What are things you want to change in the new year? (Allow time for people to share some of the things that they would like to be able to change in 2018.)

Say, the first point of Michael’s sermon is **Change our outlook**.

Ask, How is outlook different than our circumstances. (We change how we look out at our circumstances.)

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.”

Say, Everything is temporary and is for a season.

Ask, What season are you in life? (After allowing time for people to share, remind them that whether tough; prosperous; troubling; exciting; painful; or glorious, the season will change.)

Ask, How can our outlook change on these circumstances we find ourselves? (Give thanks, prepare for other seasons, and know based upon God’s Word that the season will change.)

Say, Hope is renewed by changing our outlook through the lens of Scripture.

Ask, Would anyone like to share a Scripture that has been helpful to you as you encounter a circumstance?

Say, The second point of the sermon is **Change our diet**.

Ask, Is anyone here changing a eating or exercise habit for 2018? (Allow time for feedback.)

Say, Those are good things to do in a healthy way physically, but we are not talking about a food kind of diet but a change in our journey of faith and growth.

Read or have someone read Hebrews 5:11-6:1. *“About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. Therefore, let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,”*

Say, A familiar saying is Ignorance is bliss. Nice saying but not a sign of maturing.

Say, The writer of Hebrews talks about moving from milk drinkers to meat eaters. To grow in our spiritual strength and maturity.

Ask, How have you positioned yourself in your faith journey to move towards spiritual maturity in your life? (Give time for response.)

Say, We want to encourage you to take the next step. Being a part of this community group is a good step. But to be clear, we are not interested in you just learning more intellectually or simply just volunteering more, but in also putting growing as a disciple that eventually makes disciples as you go through your normal life activities.

Say, This is a great reminder for all of us. ***We are more sinful than we could possibly imagine and we are more loved than we could possibly imagine.***

Say, The last point of the sermon is **Change in our future.**

Read or have someone read 1 Peter 1:3-9

"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, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls."

Say, Our future is an imperishable inheritance. Nothing can change the eternity of those who are His. The salvation of our soul is promised through faith. It is evidenced through inexpressible joy of those who are His. This inheritance is guarded by God Himself, the salvation of your soul.

Ask, What are some things that you doubt when it comes to trusting God? (Remind them that there is nothing that can be accomplished outside of Him.)

Say, Trusting God requires faith that is actually beyond our own capabilities. It is only through His Son and His Spirit that any of us is able to lean in and trust the one who saves our soul.

Say, As we head into this new year, it is our desire that you will resemble Christ more and more. And we pray that this community group will encourage you as you become more like Him.

Read 2 Corinthians 3:18 - *And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

Allow time for prayer requests and close in prayer.