

Daring to Dream Again (God's Gift of Hope)

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Feb 25th

In the struggle for self awareness and control there's a predictable cycle that's seen:
In individual souls (Romans 7:14-25; Gal. 5:16-26) and entire societies. (Romans 1:18-32)

Reflection: The Cause (Problem): Our Perception (Conscience) has been Polluted (Corrupted) by Satan (2 Cor 4:4); Selfishness (Jer 17:9); and Sin (Ro 1:21)

The Consequences (Pain): Satan, Selfishness and Sin will inevitably Produce: Shortsighted-ness (Heb. 11:25,26); Suffering (Pr 14:12; Mt 7:13); & Separation. (Is. 59:1,2; Mt 7:22)

In describing humanity in Jesus said: Mt 24:12 *"because iniquity (Self will) shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."* Paul reaffirmed this in 2 Tim 3:1-4 Jesus came into this self-centered and sin saturated world, to provide for us a way to find direction, peace, and hope. (Mt 11:28,29, Jn 14:6)

The price for this "path" was his Life! (Is. 53:6-10) He became the Cure (God's Promise) for our contaminated conscience, offering us: A New Heart (Ez 36:25-26) and a New Hope! (Jer 29:10,11) *"For I know the thoughts (maḥāšābâ': plans) that I think toward you, saith the LORD, (ḥāšab': to regard, weave, purpose) thoughts of peace, (šālôm: welfare) and not of evil, (ra': malignant evil, harm) to give you an expected end!"* (tiqwâ aḥarît: hope of a future reward, posterity!)

Direction: How do we find "this path of life" (Ps 16:11; Jn 10:10) and avail ourselves of God's Promise of a New Heart and Hope?

1. It Starts (Begins) With Repentance. (*Truth*) Jn 8:32; Jer 29:12-14

A. We won't be open to the cure *until we accurately understand (diagnose) the cause!*

B. To recognize & respond to God's directions, we must "Repent" (*Rethink*) our own!

Mt 4:17 *"Jesus began to preach, and to say Repent: For the Kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

(metanoēō: understand, perceive, think, Differently!)

Luke 13:3 *"except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."* (apol'lymi: be destroyed)

(See John 5:39,40; 8:24)

Is.55:6-8 *"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake (āzab: relinquish) his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: (maḥāšābâ) and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.... For My thoughts are not your thoughts"*

We must Repent or "Rethink" our own:

1) Worthiness!

a) I can't "earn" forgiveness! (Titus 3:5; Rom. 4); I can only "accept" (Trust) God's Grace! Eph. 2:8,9

2) Way (Pr 14:12; 16:25; Is. 53:6; Mt 7:13)

a) In order to thrive in "the Kingdom of Heaven", we must shift our allegiance away from our own "kingdom on earth." (See Col. 1:12-14)

Mt. 6:24 *"No man can serve two masters... 33 "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God..."*

2. It's Sustained through Rest (*Trust.*) Pr. 3:5,6 *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, ... lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, (yada: know, understand, consider) and He shall direct (Yashar: prosper) thy paths."*

A. Just as a damaged compass can misdirect us, Our Past experiences can damage/distort:

- 1) Our current perspective
- 2) Our future hope/plans.

B. Our Hope can affect our peace!

1) Satan uses past rejection, failures, and sin to keep us from trusting God and Facing the future with faith.

a) He's known as: "The accuser" (Rev. 12:10)

2) Israel had trouble feeling "hope" as they were being forced into slavery, so God directed Jeremiah and Ezekiel to remind them to:

a) Repent of the sins of the past. Jer 29:12-14

b) Refocus on the future. Jer 29:4-6 *"Build houses, plant gardens...marry...seek peace..."*

C. Our Faith is related to our Focus.

1) Israel had a history of focusing on the past. Num 11:5-18; 14:1-4

2) Countless people get sidetracked and stopped dreaming/daring because of their painful pasts.

3) You can't safely navigate the future *when you're focusing backwards!*

After a miserable night fishing Jesus tells Peter to *"launch out into the deep and let down your nets*

for a draught" (Lk. 5:4) He replies in vs 5: *"Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing:*

nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." Jesus was basically asking them to "try again"

under Christ's supervision. (Shift their focus!) This produced incredible results! 6-11

Conclusion:

In spite of our painful past, God Graciously intercepts our lives and challenges us to Dare to Dream again!

In Luke 4:17-22 Jesus chose a very significant passage of scripture to introduce the purpose of his ministry. Isaiah 61:1-3

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because He hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;... To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Over the next several weeks we're going to examine how God intercepts the lives of broken and misdirected people and invited them to exchange their:

**Disappointment (ashes) for His Destiny (beauty); Mourning for His magnificent Joy
Heaviness for His Hope, Peace and Praise.**

He does this so that we might be able:

1) To Reflect God's Glory: Is. 61:3 *"That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified."*

2) To Rebuild the "Old Paths" of Blessing. *"They shall build the old wastes" Vs 4*

3) To Represent Him to others. Vs 6 *"ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God."*

**Application: Jesus came to offer you the gift (hope) of
Eternal Life (Jn 3:16; 10:10; Rev. 3:20) and Abundant Life (Jn 10:10; Ps 16:11)!
How have you responded to him?**