

EVIDENCES YOU ARE TRYING TO FIND HOPE IN THIS LIFE ONLY
10-18-20

Every time, I talk with people it seems one common thread comes into the conversation, which is that the year 2020 has been the worst year of their life. With lockdowns, this Covid-19, and all the rest. It is amazing how many people are finding this year to be somewhat of a year of trials and difficulties. There has been nothing like it ever in our lives. The fact is, a person here or there could be having difficult times, but when everyone says the same thing it is apparent that there is something going on. In light of the current crisis I thought it good to write a tract that we can distribute to friends and relatives. Here is the text of the tract. I hope this tract can be used of the Lord in this present crisis.

Has 2020 Been the Worst Year of Your Life?

I have heard many say that the year 2020 is the worst year of their lives. The early part of the year we went into lockdowns and quarantines, and then we saw shortages, and we all feared getting Covid. Wearing masks is a constant reminder of how bad this year has been. The Antifa riots, civil unrest, and political tensions added more drama to an already bad year. The truth is, most of us are saying we have seen nothing like this past year.

The events of this year have been almost apocalyptic. For many, this has been the worst year of their lives. You may be wondering, what lies ahead? I believe that what lies ahead can be either the best years of your life, or just more bad news. It all depends on what you learn from this year. I am writing this little pamphlet because I believe God is bringing hard times so you can receive this message and see better days ahead.

First, the Bible predicts in this world we will face tribulation:

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

If you are looking for hope in this world, you will be disappointed and have tribulation. Jesus said, in Him you can have peace and good cheer. Therefore, either better days can be ahead or more tribulation. It is up to you. The best is yet to come or the worst is yet to come.

Consider, if you are trying to find hope in this world, the Bible says more tribulation lies before you.

The Bible predicts worse things for this world than the Coronavirus. We are seeing many warning signals that we are in the last days. Consider the following Bible predictions:

1. The Bible predicted the computer age and air travel as we near the end of days (see Daniel 12:4).
2. The Bible predicted that Jews would be back in their promised land: this happened in 1948, and in the year 2017, America further acknowledged Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel.
3. The Bible, in the book of Revelation, predicts God sending cataclysmic disasters and plagues to bring people back to Himself, yet in all this men will be sent strong delusion so they will not see God's hand in all these things. Today we are seeing people looking more to science to solve men's problems with fewer and fewer people believing God is in control. This will only lead to more disasters, which will lead to more environmental regulations (like the Green New Deal), that will in turn bankrupt our economy and lead to food shortages and other problems. Again all these things are predicted in the book of Revelation.
4. The Bible predicts a cashless society, the breakup of families, increasing violence, rising global temperatures, and a host of other developments we are witnessing today.

BUT THE BEST IS YET TO COME FOR SOME

What for some could be the worst year of their lives, for others could be the best. Jesus said, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Jesus came to give us life and life more abundant. Jesus said in this life we will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, He has overcome the world and has defeated man's greatest enemy (i.e. "DEATH ITSELF").

Jesus' coming back to this world will be the worst nightmare of some, and it will be the happiest day for others. So, what to some may be the worst year of their lives, to others may be the best ever. When Jesus returns, He is going to set up a perfect Kingdom with a perfect economy, with a perfect environment, with everything that men have ever wanted in this world since the beginning of time.

Jesus came to Earth to save us. He defeated man's worst enemy, death itself. Jesus died on the cross, was buried, and on the third day came out of the grave showing He can defeat death. He promises that just before the final days of great tribulation He will resurrect all those who receive Him. Here is what the Bible says:

I Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

I Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

This is called "the resurrection of the dead". If you receive by faith the gospel message (gospel means good news) that Jesus died, and was buried, and arose from the dead, then someday Jesus will come back to take you to Himself in the final resurrection. So the best is yet to come for those who have given their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ.

As we see great unrest in the world it makes us realize that our Lord's return is coming more quickly than we could ever imagine. If you have never received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, let me encourage you to bow your head in prayer and ask Jesus into your heart so you can be prepared for that day when He returns. That day will be the best day of your life if you believe on Him and receive Him.

So when Jesus returns, for some it will be the worst day of their lives, and for others, it will be the best day of their lives. Which will it be for you? I hope it will be the best day that lies ahead for you. Let me encourage you to pray a sincere prayer of commitment in your heart asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior. Pray, "Dear Lord I know I am a sinner worthy of death and hell. I believe you died and arose from the dead. Come into my heart and save me. Amen." For more information feel free to contact us at:

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This is missions month, and missions must start with reaching our local community. Almost everyone I talk to is upset about what is going on in the world and in our nation. This is a good time to reach out and tell people our hope is not in this world. If our hope is in this world we will be of all men most miserable. This morning I want to preach a message concerning what happens to a person whose only hope is in this world and some evidences that a person is looking for hope only in this life.

EVIDENCES THAT A PERSON IS TRYING TO FIND HOPE IN THIS LIFE ONLY!

I Corinthians 15:14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

I Corinthians 15:15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

I Corinthians 15:16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

I Corinthians 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

I Corinthians 15:18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

I Corinthians 15:19 **If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.**

I Corinthians 15:32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.
I Corinthians 15:33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

WHERE IS OUR HOPE, IN THIS WORLD OR THE NEXT?

WHAT ARE THE EVIDENCES IN OUR LIVES THAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR HOPE IN THIS LIFE?

INTRODUCTION: CONSIDER WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE HOPE.

What does it mean to have hope?

The word hope means to have something to look forward to.
An expectation.

A reward, something to live for.
To have hope is to have an anticipation for something good.
When we look to the future there is the prospect of something good.

Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes describes all the possible earthly hopes and things we could desire.

WHAT DO WE HOPE FOR?
WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FORWARD TO?

In Bible college I remember young people who would get all worried that maybe the rapture would come before they got married.

They were madly in love every week. I used to take students back and forth to church and they would be talking about this person or that person, always looking at the end of the rainbow for that right person.

When you are young there are all kind of dreams and ambitions that people have.

Solomon, in the book of Ecclesiastes, explores all the avenues of life and explains that anything we could pursue or think of pursuing will in fact come up empty and void.

VANITY VANITY VANITY SOLOMON CONCLUDES.
EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR HOPE IN THIS WORLD ONLY.

I. WHEN WE LOOK FOR HOPE IN THIS LIFE ONLY WE WILL BECOME MISERABLE.

Proverbs 13:12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.

I Corinthians 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most **miserable.**

When we try to find meaning for our existence in this present life, we ultimately will be of all men most miserable.

But yet, many people do not read or heed the Bible so they think they have found hope in this life and in fact they are just chasing rainbows.

And when they get to the end of the rainbow and realize it is just vanity or vapor, in the end they are miserable.

Truth is, while you are chasing your rainbow you will think a person crazy who tries to convince you that your pursuit is in vain!

When your hope is in this world you will, in the end, be a miserable person.

When your hope is in the resurrection or the next world you will experience the joy of the Lord.

The reason you will become miserable is that everything in this present life will disappoint you.

THIS LIFE IS FILLED WITH DISAPPOINTMENTS, HARDSHIPS, AND VANITY.

Every earthly goal you have will, in the end, vaporize and let you down.

And in the end this let down will cause you to be miserable.

Proverbs 13:12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.

A miserable person is a person who has lost all hope.

A miserable person is a person who has lost joy.

A miserable person is a person who suddenly has nothing to look forward to.

There is nothing that is certain in this life.

And this is why when our hope is in this life we cannot but be people who are most miserable. WE WILL LOOSE HOPE BECAUSE THIS WORLD CARRIES WITH IT NO HOPE, ONLY CONDEMNATION AND DOOM AND DESTRUCTION.

Amazing how so many of the people we laud for greatness are in fact the most miserable of all. LOOK TO THE ONES THAT THE WORLD LAUDS AS MOST SUCCESSFUL. IT IS SAD THAT THE #1 TV SHOW IS THE AMERICAN IDOL.

Average life expectancy of celebrity rock stars is about 40 years old.

When I was 21 years old I was challenged to think about life and death.
And I concluded I was not going to live very long.

Even if I fulfilled all my goals in life I concluded at the end of my rainbow I would face misery, The Lord used this reasoning in my life to lead me to salvation.

Jim Elliot once said,

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

EVIDENCE THAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR HOPE IN THIS WORLD ONLY.

II. A PERSON WHO TRIES TO FIND HOPE IN THIS WORLD OFTEN GIVES THEMSELVES TO FLESHLY VICES TO FILL THE VOID OF THEIR EMPTY LIFE.

I Corinthians 15:32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

Paul says unless a person has their spiritual head screwed on straight and are truly living for the Lord they will conclude that there is nothing better for them to do then gratify themselves in the flesh with carnal devices that make them feel good.

The eat drink mentality for tomorrow we die leads a person to:

DRINKING.

DRUGS.

IMMORALITY.

EATING GLUTTONY ETC.

Many a person who are mentally unstable do bizarre atrocities.

Columbine is an example.

Most of the school shootings are an example.

A person who commits these atrocities are to the point of suicide.

But many are not content to just hurt themselves. They are angry and decide to destroy as many others as they can with them.

The tragic murder of Joe Thompson is a perfect example of a young person who in despair of suicide decides to kill someone else first for no good reason.

This is all a reaction to a life that is void of spiritual hope.

There is nothing that we should look to in this life as our blessed hope. Our hope should not be in this life.

We should not live a life with false expectations about what is ahead of us.

I have seen people try to find hope in this life by getting rich, having successful business, etc.

After I dedicated my life to the Lord I died to my worldly aspirations and ambitions.

I certainly was not going to get excited about the ministry like I got excited about my worldly career.

It is sad how many a minister goes into the ministry like I went into my music career with dreams and ambitions of glory and grandeur, all desirous of exaltation, etc.

This is why so many preachers fall into immorality. When you think that anything in this life is going to fill in a void that only the Lord can fill, this is a carnal ambition. This is no different than what I was doing when I was seeking glory and fame when I was a kid with my music.

Solomon even mentions seeking ministerial pursuits as vain, when he wrote:

Ecclesiastes 7:16 Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldst thou destroy thyself?

So some young people pursue the ministry like so many pursue purpose and satisfaction in this world. And find that at the end of that rainbow is not the pot of Gold that they imagined.

Years ago when I was at this church we were running into financial problems, so I believe the Lord led me to supplement my income with the business I have of tuning and rebuilding pianos. I was out tuning one day and stopped at the McDonalds in Halstead and meet a big shot preacher who graduated with me in seminary. We stopped and talked and he had just come back from the funeral of a very rich man in the town. He told me how the man just about owned everything in the city, then he bragged about his TV and Radio ministry and all the great things he was doing for the Lord. I sat there eating my hamburger feeling smaller and smaller thinking how I was working night and day just to keep things going at our little country church.

It was just a short time later that someone asked me if I heard what happened at that that preacher's church. There was a big church split because it was found out that this same preacher was having an affair with the church secretary. Then I thanked God I

was just a small time country preacher who had to work night and day to keep things going.

If a person tries to find hope in any pursuit in this life, when they find the end of the rainbow empty, they often fall into some fleshly sins.. Carnal sins. Many times this is why we see ministers falling into immorality. They are not going to drink or do drugs, that would become too obvious, so what other fleshly devices do they fall to?

THEY LOSE HOPE AND THEN SEEK TO EAT DRINK AND BE MERRY.

But our hope is not in this world. It never should be in this world.

WHAT ARE OTHER EVIDENCES THAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR HOPE IN THIS WORLD ONLY?

III. SOME OF THE OTHER EVIDENCES OUR HOPE IS IN THIS WORLD AND NOT IN THE RESURRECTION.

1. WHEN WE COME TO CHRIST ONLY FOR THE BENEFITS WE RECEIVE IN THIS PRESENT LIFE, WE FAIL TO DEMONSTRATE OUR FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION.

WHEN WE LIVE OUR LIVES ONLY FOR THE COMFORTS AND BENEFITS WE CAN RECEIVE IN THIS LIFE, WE FAIL TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WE BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION.

2. WHEN WE DO THE THINGS THAT UNBELIEVERS DO, CAN WE REALLY SAY OUR HOPE IS IN THE RESURRECTION?

We say that we believe in the resurrection.
But how do we demonstrate that belief and faith?

I Corinthians 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

We say we believe in a resurrection.
We say we are hoping for the resurrection.

But then why do we set our hope in this world?

There is nothing that you ever will find in this life that is going to bring contentment, fulfillment, meaning, and purpose.

I could tell you story after story of people that I meet that seemed to have it all in this life only to find despair at the end.

Sad that most people after they achieve what they want are setting themselves up for a miserable let down.

I have known people that think that in their golden years they are going to find meaning and purpose in this life. Their hope is in retirement!

Luke 12:16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

Luke 12:17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Luke 12:18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

Luke 12:19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Luke 12:21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Two ways we can learn something.

We can learn by way of hard knocks. Experience it first hand.

Or we can learn from other people's experiences.

Our old friend Jack McKeeby used to say, good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgment. We learn from our mistakes. But it is sad to have to live your whole life as one big mistake. You only have one life to live.

So many people live their lives and then fail.

I only have one life to live. why should I invest it and live it and then when it is all over say I made a mistake?

When I was 21 I looked at those who had achieved what I wanted to achieve and it seemed as they got older and neared the end of their lives they were very unhappy.

Many of the people who "made it big.. " actually ended their lives early. Some even committed suicide! In the 70's a number of musicians, especially rock n' roll musicians, overdosed on drugs and committed suicide.

I believe I could have and would have in time made it "BIG" but then what?

TWO WAYS TO LEARN. We can observe what happens to those who have gone before us, or we can just blindly go down the road and experience things for ourselves.

THE LORD LET ONE MAN IN THE BIBLE EXPERIENCE JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MOST PEOPLE WOULD DREAM OF EXPERIENCING OR DOING.

SOLOMON IN ECCLESIASTES CONCLUDED EVERYTHING IN THIS LIFE IS VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT!

SO SAD TO SEE PEOPLE GOING DOWN THE SAME ROAD of failure.

When we set our hope in this world, or some achievement in this life, we are doomed for failure.

If you think that achieving something in this life is going to fulfill you, if you think the answer to peace and contentment can be found in this world..

If you think that your purpose in life can be found in some thing, some person, other than our Lord, some achievement other than the Lord,

YOU ARE BEING SET UP FOR A MISERABLE EXPERIENCE SOME DAY!

OUR HOPE SHOULD NOT BE IN THIS WORLD.

OTHER EVIDENCES THAT PEOPLE ARE LOOKING FOR HOPE IN CHRIST IN THIS LIFE ONLY:

IV. OFTEN PEOPLE COME TO CHRIST ONLY FOR THE BENEFITS & COMFORTS THEY THINK THEY WILL RECEIVE IN THIS PRESENT LIFE. WHEN THEY FAIL TO RECEIVE THESE BENEFITS THEY TURN THEIR BACK ON CHRIST.

Imagine coming to Christ for hope in this life only???

I have had many people come to Christ only to solve a certain problem in their life, only to become disappointed in the end.

Watch out.

Marital problem.
Financial problems.
Physical problem.

Remember what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego wisely said to Nebuchadnezzar:

They said our God is able to deliver us in this life, but if not, IF NOT, we have a greater hope than this world only!

Daniel 3:17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

Daniel 3:18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Many people came to Jesus to be healed but not all of them got saved! He told one man watch out a worse thing happens to you after you are healed.

Jesus rebuked the multitude that came to Him because He fed them bread. In this they were looking for some hope in this world only, in Christ, some benefit package. Then they would soon be disappointed.

This is why Judas betrayed the Lord.

Jesus declared that we should count the cost before we come to Him.

Luke 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luke 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

Luke 9:25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

What do we need to do to come to Christ?

We need to realize that in this world there is no HOPE!!!!!!

So we bail out totally of the world system.

The world looks to make it, to find meaning and purpose apart from God.

What do you think will fulfill you and give you joy and purpose in this life?

RICHES.

FAME.

POPULARITY.

ACHIEVEMENTS.

NOTORIETY.

YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, ETC.

Luke 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

Luke 9:25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

Put all these on the altar.

Philippians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.
Philippians 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

Sometimes a person can experience divorce and God uses that to bring them to Christ, realizing there is nothing else but God. Not even your marriage will fill the gap!

Lost of health loss of job.

But some use Christ as a magic genie in the jar only to be disappointed.

Our hope is not in this world. And our Lord is looking to recruit people for His kingdom which is not of this world!

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

WHEN WE LIVE OUR LIVES ONLY FOR THE COMFORTS AND BENEFITS WE CAN RECEIVE IN THIS LIFE WE FAIL TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WE BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION.

CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER.

TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE.

Matthew 8:19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

Matthew 8:20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Matthew 8:21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

Matthew 8:22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

One was looking for bigger and better things.

The other was afraid of the sacrifice and realized it would be a sacrifice to follow Christ. He was counting the cost and the Lord told him to follow him.

I Have heard people say,

I heard preacher tell young people when they would come to them and ask, " How do I know if I am called to preach?"

I would hear many of those preachers say "well son, you know you are called to preach when you can do nothing else but preach..."

In other words, the passion and desire and the discontentment of doing anything else is the evidence of your call.

Problem with that is, that is the complete opposite of what happened in the Bible every time God called someone to preach.

NEVER ONCE CAN YOU FIND A PERSON WHO WAS A FAILURE AT WHAT THEY WERE DOING AND DISCONTENT IN THEIR VOCATION CALLED OF THE LORD.

WAS PAUL NOT DOING WELL AS A PHARISEE?
WAS PETER A POOR FISHERMAN?
WAS MATHEW UNSUCCESSFUL AS A TAX COLLECTOR?
WAS LUKE A WASHED UP PHYSICIAN?
WAS ELISHA A BAD FARMER?
WAS MOSES A DISCONTENTED SHEPHERD?
WAS DAVID A FAILURE AT GUARDING HIS FATHER'S SHEEP?
WAS NEHEMIAH UNSUCCESSFUL IN THE COURTS OF ARTAXERXES?
WAS AMOS A BAD HERDSMAN?

You will find just the opposite of the opportunists.

Simon the sorcerer was looking for bigger and better things.
Judas was a thief and robber and looking for a bigger purse.
Balaam was an opportunist.
And so it is today that many are following the same pattern.

I SAY!!!!

If you can do nothing else besides preach and you could not be content doing anything else, you are probably not called.

There is never a time that God calls a man to do His will but there is a cost that comes with it.

When Jesus called Peter, James, and John, they left their ships and business and followed the Lord.

When Jesus called Mathew he left his government job with all the benefit package and followed the Lord.

When Jesus called Paul, he ceased to be that well respected Pharisee, and soon was persecuted of the same crowd that revered him.

Application:

We have too many people seeking to serve Christ for benefit packages in this life.

Philippians 4:12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

Some will only come to Christ if the benefit package in this life is good enough.

IV. Conclusion:

IF YOU BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION WHY ARE YOU DOING THINGS THAT PEOPLE DO WHO DON'T BELIEVE IN IT?

What are those things?

Drugs. Drinking. Eating. Drinking. Partying.

But in Christ we have a better hope.

Our hope is not in this life. We are in training for eternity.
We have the promise of something far better!

Do you believe that?

Say yes preacher I believe it.

THEN.

Why is your hope in this life? Why do you think this or that in this world will make you happy?

Why are you looking for comfort and benefit packages in this life?

Why are you living like those who have no hope?