



CALVARY
TUSCALOOSA

TEACHING PLAN
DECEMBER 2, 2018



GOD PROVIDES HOPE

MATTHEW 1:1, 17

DECEMBER 2, 2018

TEACHING PLAN

PREPARATION

- > Spend the week reading through and studying Matthew 1:1, 17. Consult the commentary provided and any additional study tools (such as a concordance or Bible dictionary) to enhance your preparation.
- > Determine which discussion points and questions will work best with your group.
- > Pray for your pastors, the upcoming group meeting, your teaching, your group members, and their receptivity to the study.

HIGHLIGHTS

TAKEAWAY: For those in Christ, He is their hope now and for eternity.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT: Jesus is both the nature and the object of biblical hope.

GOSPEL CONNECTION: Since Genesis 3:15, the people of God hoped for the coming of the Rescuer. Finally, He arrived on the scene to bring that hope into crystal clear focus. Today, all those who believe the gospel look back on the work of Christ on the cross in hope (Colossians 1:21-23).

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.

- 1 What are some different things that people put their hope in?
- 2 Can you think of any interesting examples from the sports world? We might refer to them as superstitions.

People put their hope in all sorts of things that may seem strange to us. For example, a baseball player may keep a horseshoe in his locker. Logic would tell us that a horseshoe has nothing to do with how the player performs on the field, but he may place hope in it nonetheless.

Christians have hope. But, our hope is fundamentally different than the sort of hope that we usually hear people talk about. Those who have deposited their faith in Jesus Christ have reason to hope and can possess a hope that is much grittier than anything the world has to offer. For most people, hope is simply a synonym for “wish” or “desire.” Their hope is characterized by a longing that is far from certain.

In the Scriptures, hope is a reality, a yet-to-be-realized fact. Biblical hope refers to a promise that God has made and will fulfill in the future. Further, the hope of the Scriptures is bound up in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Let’s look more closely at hope in Christ.

ALTERNATE INTRODUCTION

Where do religions outside of Christianity place their hope for forgiveness, protection, salvation, and provision?

How is Christian hope different?

For most people, hope is simply a synonym for “wish” or “desire.” Their hope is characterized by a longing that is far from certain. The Muslim faithful in the sub-Saharan countries of Chad and Sudan place their hope in the power of the Qur’an to bless them and protect them.

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UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

Notes:

The Gospel of Matthew begins with the genealogical record from Abraham to Jesus Christ. Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience and was fully aware of the weight this family tree would carry. For the Jewish people, the covenants were closely connected to their ancestry. Matthew signaled the beginning of a new covenant by naming Jesus alongside of David and Abraham. It would not have been lost on Matthew's readers that the coming Messiah would necessarily be a descendant of David (2 Samuel 7:14).

Further, the title "Christ" is significant in Matthew 1:1. This is the Greek word *christos*, which means, "anointed." This is the Greek word that was used in place of the Hebrew word *messiah* (1 Samuel 2:10).

Matthew's use of this title paired with the genealogy was a forceful apologetic and introduction to the nature of Christ. From the first words of his Gospel, Matthew proclaimed that the hope of Israel had come in flesh. For us looking back, we can rejoice with Matthew that our hope is anchored in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

> Have a volunteer read Genesis 3:15.

¹⁵ *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*

From the time of Adam's expulsion from the garden of Eden until Jesus, the people of God waited. They languished in their sinful state, under the curse of the law. They followed God, but they still rebelled against His will. Their hope was in the coming Messiah.

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- What was the origin of the people of God's misery? What made the coming of a Rescuer necessary?

Notes:

Adam and Eve's rebellion in the garden against the one true and living God resulted in a world that was corrupted by sin. It also led to a human race that was stricken with the grief of the consequences of sin. In the middle of this tragedy, God spoke to Adam and Eve about a future hope.

Genesis 3:15 is known as the protoevangelium—the first gospel. Here God proclaimed that His people would have final victory over the serpent through a Rescuer. The “offspring of the woman” is a collective noun, which indicated a victory of the whole people. However, we cannot win this war by our own strength. No, it took a particular person from Eve's offspring who would deliver the deathblow to God's enemy. That Snake Crusher was Jesus, and if we are in Him, we share in and extend His victory (Matt. 28:19; Rev. 20:4).

- Where else in the Old Testament do we see the promise of God to His people of a future hope?

When God called Abraham, He made a peculiar promise: “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2-3).

Later, in Genesis 22, God reassured His promise to Abraham, “...And through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me” (Genesis 22:18).

Then, God made the same promise to Abraham's son, Isaac, "I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed" (Genesis 26:4). Notes:

God then told Isaac's son, Jacob, the same promise, "Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring" (Genesis 28:14).

What is this blessing that God promised to provide through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? We know this blessing to be named Jesus; but for these men and their families, they hoped in the promise of God.

- How did the prophets point to this future hope?

God used prophets to prepare the way for the coming of the Rescuer, Jesus. They foretold details of His coming and the nature of the work that He would complete. We see glimpses of this future hope, especially in the words of Isaiah. For example:

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end" (Isaiah 9:6-7a).

"But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

> Have a volunteer read Matthew 1:1, 17.

¹ *A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

Notes:

¹⁷ *Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.*

In his Gospel, Matthew announced the fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah. He illuminated the “blessing” that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He proclaimed the arrival of the Snake Crusher!

- What did Jesus do to secure our hope?

Jesus’ mission on earth wasn’t only to feed the hungry, heal the sick, or teach the masses. Jesus came to be an atoning sacrifice for sinners. Jesus’ death at the insistence of the Jews and at the hand of the Romans was not a spoiled end to the incarnation, but the exact point of the incarnation. What was the meaning of Jesus’ death? 2 Corinthians 5:21 may summarize it best: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Our sin is imputed to Christ; Christ’s righteousness is imputed to us. The word “imputation” is an accounting term; it means “to apply to one’s account.” The old King James word is “reckon.” In theological terms, we speak of a double imputation that takes place in justification. Our sin was applied to Jesus’ account at the cross, and Jesus’ righteousness was applied to our account.

- How does this secure hope for sinful man?

Jesus' work on the cross gives us a secure hope because the hope was gained by Christ's work alone, not ours. Had we done something to attain it, then surely we could do something to lose it. But we didn't earn this hope, so we also can't lose it. Thus, Jesus was the hope of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the hope of the nations. Jesus secured salvation for all who look to Him.

Notes:

> Have a volunteer read Colossians 1:21-23.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

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Hope is a spiritual attitude that looks confidently into the future, fully resting on the promises of God. In this case, we are talking specifically about the hope that we have in Christ.

- What hope was Paul referring to in this passage?

Peter gave us insight into the particulars of our hope that has been settled in Christ. 1 Peter 1:13 says, “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.” When Peter thought of the hope we have in Christ it was directly tied to the unmerited favor that will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus!

Notes:

- How does this hope intersect with life here and now?

The hope (confident expectation based on God’s promises) we have in Christ is so profound and significant that there is no area in life that it does not touch. It alters all of our reality.

Paul shed light on this radical and breathtaking hope in Colossians 1:21-23. Reflecting on the secure hope we have in Christ sets the tone for daily living. Some refer to this practice as “preaching the gospel to yourself.” We recall the gospel and warm ourselves by the great truths of grace and mercy found there. We take refuge and find safety in Jesus’ sacrifice. We claim the gospel as our great hope. As a result, we are better positioned to flee from sin, love our neighbor, be thankful, and forgive those who offend us.

Notes:

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

- 1 In what thing or person are you hoping/ resting? What is your treasure? Consider the things you give most time and attention to.
- 2 What makes the hope we have in Christ different from the hope that this world offers?
- 3 What are some practical ways that you can reflect on the hope we have in Christ, the gospel?

PRAY

Pray and thank God for the lasting hope that has been fulfilled and is sustained through Jesus Christ.

FOLLOW UP

Notes:

Midway through this week, send a follow-up email to your group with some or all of the following information:

- > Questions to consider as they continue to reflect on what they learned this week:
 - Where have you realized you have wrongly placed your hope?
 - How will you seek to put your hope in Jesus more fully?

- > A note of encouragement, following up on any specific prayer requests mentioned during your group gathering.

- > The challenge to memorize Matthew 1:17.

GENESIS 3:15

3:15 Hostility between the first woman and the serpent would be passed on to future generations. This verse is known in Christendom as the protoevangelium, or “first good news,” because it is the first foretelling of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Using an emphatic Hebrew construction, God announced here that a male descendant—He—would someday deal the serpent (meaning Satan) a fatal blow. The NT writers understood Jesus Christ to have fulfilled this prophecy (Heb 2:14; 1Jn 3:8). In an extended sense, the NT also indicates that God would work through the church—those indwelt by the Spirit of Christ—to destroy the works of the devil (Rm 16:20). The assertion that the snake would only strike his opponent’s heel (as opposed to head) suggests that the devil will be defeated in the ensuing struggle (Rev 2:2,7-10).

Notes:

MATTHEW 1:1, 17

1:1. It is fitting that the first verse of the first book of the New Testament, Matthew 1:1, identifies Jesus as the Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. These few words sum up the culmination of the entire Old Testament, and in them are the seeds from which the New Testament plan will grow. The long-awaited, promised Messiah, the restorer of God’s kingdom and the redeemer of his people, is Jesus himself. This is Matthew’s central message, his purpose for writing his book.

In his first verse, Matthew made an amazing claim. At the time he was writing, many Jewish readers would have been skeptical about the idea that the man Jesus was indeed also the promised king or Christ. After all, he was merely a carpenter from a backwoods province, and they wanted a king just like other worldly kings—politically connected, militarily powerful, and personally charismatic,

with all the accompanying pomp, circumstance, and credentials.

1:2-17. Jesus had credentials all right. Overwhelmingly so. But he was not interested in “pomp.” As Exhibit A to substantiate Jesus’ claim to the throne, Matthew presented Jesus’ pedigree—the genealogy linking Jesus by blood to both Abraham and David (1:1-17). Because the promised Christ must be descended from both of those key historical figures, the documentation of Jesus’ lineage was critically important. When it comes to kings, people want to know just where they come from. These first seventeen verses may at first seem a little boring. But they were not to Matthew’s audience—first-century Jews! So put yourself in the place of the first readers. Look up the names listed here. Recall their stories. And worship the God who authors such creative grace!

Notes:

These lists serve a practical purpose. In a day before the man on the street had his own copy of the Bible, people had to rely on memory and oral history. So Matthew traced Christ’s genealogy in three sets of fourteen generations. The three sets are broken down into those generations: (1) before the monarchy, (2) during the monarchy, and (3) after the fall of the monarchy to Babylon. He did not mention every single ancestor, but traced the generations in systematic, memorable terms. If the reader wanted more detail, it was available through the temple records. But Matthew’s undeniable point was that Jesus of Nazareth is legal heir to the throne of Israel! The king is on the scene.

Note one more memorable fact. In the course of tracing the generations, Matthew tossed in a few surprises to help his readers begin to see the mercy and grace of God. He included no less than four women in the lineage, a highly unusual approach for a Jewish genealogy! And some of them are Gentiles! From the outset, Matthew

used indisputable documentation to show the first-century Jewish mind that even Gentiles are included prominently in this kingdom of the new covenant.

Notes:

COLOSSIANS 1:21-23

1:21-22. This concept of reconciliation is not just a universal theory; it is a personal truth. Jesus' death allows God's enemy to become God's friend. Before the miracle of reconciliation, the Colossians, and all unbelievers, were at odds with God. We were alienated, that is we were separated, estranged. We were alone, an outsider, exiled, shut out, cut off, locked out. Ephesians 2:11-12 gives us another sad perspective on our estranged position before reconciliation.

Paul then tells us we were once God's enemies in two ways. First, we were enemies in [our] minds. Our thoughts and our attitudes were hostile to God. Before we trusted Christ, our entire way of thinking was contrary to God's. For us, and for those who have yet to be reconciled, the problem was and is simple. We refused to accept God's evaluation of us as being sinners. We would also not accept God's remedy for the situation—dependence on Christ.

Second, we were enemies in [our deeds], because of [our] evil behavior. It's not just that we thought wrong; we also acted wrong. Despite our active opposition to God, he reconciled us through the death of Jesus. Jesus died for a race of rebels to offer them a chance to become his allies.

The outcome of this reconciliation is present peace and a future presentation of ourselves before God. The slate of sin has been wiped clean, and we look forward to the day we will stand before God

holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

1:23. The if of verse 23 should not be misunderstood. This verse is not saying that we will be presented holy and blameless if we remain faithful, as if our eternal salvation depends on our performance. The Greek construction of the if is not an expression of doubt but an expression of confidence and is better translated as since. Paul is not in doubt about whether the Colossians will remain faithful (see Col. 2:5). He is confident that because they have understood what it means to be reconciled they will remain faithful to the gospel that reconciled them. He writes this as an expression of confidence and as a warning to avoid the religious fads of the false teachers of Colosse.

Notes: