Church of Christ
August 9 2026

Do You Remember When You Were Without Hope?

You may be thinking that this title refers to that time in your life when you had great financial distress, but it doesn't. Or you may suppose that it refers to that time when you may have been in fear for your life at the threat of a thief or a maniac, but it doesn't. Or you may be thinking it's referring to the loss of a parent or a spouse, but it doesn't.

It's referring to Ephesians chapter 2: "***Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh,… That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world***."

Too many people are hopeless, and far too many Christians are displaying hopelessness as well. It's very easy to get caught up in the concerns for this life and to forget that there's an eternity awaiting us. Paul is saying that without Christ this life is hopeless. Without Christ this life holds no promises.

The writer of Ecclesiastes makes the same point in a very powerful way. He writes about seeking success, wealth, joy and meaningful work, but at the end of the day it's vanity, "***grasping after the wind***." He's not suggesting that these pursuits are worthless. His conclusion is the same as Paul's, without God in your life all these things are hopeless. His conclusion of the whole matter is, "***Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man***." [Ecc 12:13]

Have you ever met someone that appeared to have nothing, no money, had physical disabilities or otherwise devoid of many of this world's goods but was happy? I have, many times. I met a man, whom I've told you about, who had a disease called Fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva (FOP). It is a disorder in which muscle tissue and connective tissue are gradually replaced by bone (ossified), forming bone outside the skeleton. He was one of the happiest guys I knew. I loved being around him because he brightened every room he entered.

How can anyone in a condition like that be happy? It was by no cause of his own, it happened to him beginning from his youth up. He experienced daily pain because of his disease but brought joy to those around him. How did he do it, what's the key? I'll tell you, he looked forward to being with God. In other words, he had

THE KEY TO TRUE JOY…PURPOSE

People with purpose are some of the happiest people on the planet. They will endure great pain & struggle because of purpose.

I read about a study where scientists tossed lab rats into a jar of water that had been placed in total darkness to see how long they would swim to survive. In total darkness it took 3 minutes before they gave up. Then they took the rats and placed them in the same conditions, but this time with a small ray of light at the top. How long did the rats struggle this time? 36 hours! When they had a light, a possibility of escape, they were able to endure.

Think about how strong we can be when we have hope, true hope that is in Christ. We can face tomorrow when we know that we've been reconciled to God in Christ. Paul finishes his command to remember by saying, "***But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ***."

So, let us be reminded that without Christ we are without hope, without the promise of heaven, but IN CHRIST we have both the promise of heaven and hope that He will return to take us there. [Gal 3:27 put on Christ in baptism]

The next time life gets you down, and it will, look up and be reminded that God loves you, and that He sent His Son to provide you a way of escape.

"***Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful (compassionate), and of tender***

Special Prayer Requests/Updates

- ***Rebecca Snyder***, due to aortic stenosis, she is going to have to have a valve replacement. Due to some reaction to needed medication, she is also going to have to see an allergy specialist.
- ***Mark Lance,*** Surgery to remove the nerve stimulator is scheduled for Tuesday. He will be in the hospital overnight.
- ***Tina Lance,*** is wearing a monitor to determine course of treatment of heart blockage.
- Please continue to keep ***Darnell Smith, Anthony Smith's*** brother, in prayer, (kidney transplant) that his body continues to accept the new kidney.
- Continue to keep ***Sonny and Laura Adams*** in prayer as Sonny recovers from the complications of hernia repair surgery.
- ***Jackie Gamble*** seeks prayers for a decision that she may have to make about her back pain/health.
- ***Susan Snyder Ainsworth*** is undergoing

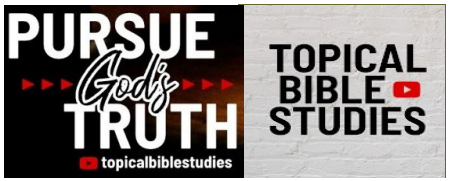
Mark Lance
God is Good All the Time
PM Sermon:
Butch Snyder
I Have Hope for Heaven

Wednesday, August 12
Songs:
Ian Lopez
PM Devotional:
Mark Lance

Wednesday, August 19
Songs:
Butch Snyder
PM Devotional:
Scott Russell

Sunday, August 16
AM Sermon:
Mark Lance
PM Sermon:
Mark Lance

Sunday, August 23
AM Sermon:
Mark Lance
PM Sermon:
Butch Snyder



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Sunday
Bible Classes 9:00 am
AM Worship 10:00 am
PM Worship 6:00 pm
Wednesday
Bible Classes 7:00 pm

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