

Many of us heard this week the statement that there is no hope. Hope is dead. As I heard this statement I began to wonder how many people in today's world have accepted no hope as their reality. Beloved there are more than we may even realize that believe all hope is gone from their lives. You see beloved, many do not understand what Christmas is all about. It is all about "Hope" coming into to the world as the Glory of the only begotten Son of the Father. It is about Jesus bringing salvation to a lost and dying world. We are now God's instruments to bring that message of hope to the world. We may live in the world but we are building a Kingdom for the Glory of God through Christ Jesus within us. How are we building the City of Hope today?



"BUILDING THE CITY OF HOPE"

Imagine a building contractor, who has a clear vision of life in God's coming kingdom. He knows it will be characterized by justice, harmonious relationships, and enduring beauty. As a person of faith, he seeks to

realize this vision in the present. He stewards the earth's raw materials in the construction of the home, creating a home of beauty but not wasteful opulence. He treats his workers with the concern and respect that will be characteristic of God's future city. He shows heavenly love to his clients by listening to their hopes for their earthly homes, trying to realize those hopes within the constraints of money and materials. He perseveres through troubles, when the radiator is two inches too long for the bathroom, or when a carpenter cuts an expensive wood two inches too short. He accepts that an earthquake or hurricane could destroy all his labors in minutes, yet he puts his whole self into his work. Amid both the joys and the frustrations, he wants to live out the values of God's city by showing consistent love to others in the quality of his personal relationships and in the quality of the houses he builds. And he trusts that every building, frail and imperfect as it is, is a witness day by day to the great city to come, "For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (Hebrews 11:10). This builder's eye was focused on something far greater than the buildings. The people that surrounded him whether they were clients or employees were his priority. He was demonstrating the love of Christ by living out the scripture "And Whatever You Do, In Word Or Deed, Do Everything In The Name Of The Lord Jesus, Giving Thanks To God The Father Through Him." (Colossians 3:17) "In the kingdom of God, this builder has found something far superior to personal fulfillment. He has found the heart of God. He has discovered his reason for being here." Hope is alive and well today because we are the builders and carriers of that hope to the world.



A Letter From The Pastor:

As the Church takes the Gospel into the entire world, it extends the Kingdom of God. An optimistic vision holds that it is the mission of the Church to win the entire world to Christ and thus transform the world into the Kingdom of God. The Gospel is the supernatural redeeming Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Kingdom is to be established by the Church's proclamation of the Gospel. The Gospel must not only offer a personal salvation in the future life to those who believe; it must also transform all of the relationships of life here and now and thus cause the Kingdom of God to prevail in all the world. The Gospel of redeeming grace has the power to save the social, economic and political orders as well as the souls of individual believers. The Kingdom of God is like a bit of leaven placed in a bowl of dough which slowly but steadily permeates the dough until the entire lump is leavened. So is the Kingdom of God to transform the world by slow and gradual permeation. To be without hope is a horrible place of existence and to live in fear, anxiety, and stress is unimaginable to me. Jesus describes people without His hope as lost and His full purpose for coming here is to seek that which is lost.

Our hearts go out to those who have no such hope. This is where we come in. We are building a city of hope and our mission is to invite and compel others to know Christ the foundation to this city. It does not matter where we are in life, God will use us. All we have to be is a willing vessel. God has given us all the building materials we need to help build this city. We begin building others up by the Fruit of the Spirit, "Love, Joy, Peace, Forbearance, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness And Self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23) We continue with a life time of building relationships through His grace and forgiveness. Even though at times we may sin, make mistakes, fail at attempts in life and have weakness, we are still the perfect candidates as God's construction workers. As we continue to help to build up others God is continuing to build us up as well. It's a Win-Win!

My Christmas prayer for you today is that you know The Kingdom of God is an inward power which enters into your heart and soul and lays hold of it. May we effect this world more than it effects us in His Name and for His Kingdom. Merry Christmas! Pastor Diane