

Sermon for Church Women United

"Living Water From Christ Our Hope"

on March 2, 1984

at St. Andrew Lutheran Church

and at First United Methodist Church,

Lincoln, Nebraska

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This ~~morning~~^{evening} I should like to invite you to share with me
IN REFLECTING ON ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT, ~~WORDS~~^{+ words} IN
OUR VOCABULARY --- HOPE.
Language

Detrick
First, ~~we shall~~ look at the word hope in a general sense

Then, ~~we shall~~ reflect on HOPE IN CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE
Rainbow

Our theme today is: LIVING WATER FROM CHRIST OUR HOPE.

The story
FREDDIE: *Beban*

We identify with Faeddy...here just are those days..

World is ~~threatening~~¹.... *We would rather not face the world*

More than that -- THE WORD CAN BE INTIMIDATING.
threatening

indeed TOO MUCH FOR US..

There is evidence THAT THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH FOR MANY PERSONS

withdrawal
The fact of, alcoholism..... the widespread use of drugs
Certa
Varied forms of mental illness...

Various ways of escaping from the world

A recent study was reported by the Lincoln Star 4-2-7. 9 Boston inmates - said they had seriously considered

They jump ~~ALL~~ SUGGEST THAT THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH FOR MANY PERSON

We relate to the world in some one of several ways:

FIGHTING THE WORLD: "THE WORLD IS AGAINST ME"

ESCAPING FROM THE WORLD: THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH FOR ME...

FLIGHT

FAITH AND HOPE:

the world is God's creation..God is in it...

I choose to participate in it...with all its risk..

I face the world with a sense of possibilities..

god with us
I am a person of Hope.

Fight Flight Faith

+ faith is so closely related to hope

Have you ever know¹ someone -- without hope of any kind?

If so, you know how devastating that condition¹ can be

LIFE ~~HAS GONE OUT OF~~ EXISTENCE..
no reduced TO more

On the other hand, to know someone with hope is to
see aliveness of spirit....

yes THE WORLD NEEDS HOPE

ALL OF US ~~HUMAN BEINGS~~ NEEDS HOPE...
xxxx

x WE NEED HOPE IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES

Ian McLaren: BE KIND TO EVERY PERSON YOU MEET HE IS HAVING A
HARD TIME....

JOB: MAN IS BORN TO TROUBLE AS THE ASPRAKS FLY UPWARD

THOREAU: MOST PEOPLE LIVE LIVES OF QUIET DESPARATION...

THERE ARE SO MANY DISCUARGING THINGS...

WE NEED HOPE.. in our personal lives

x AS WE LOOK AT THE WORLD AROUND US..... WE ~~SOMETIMES WONDER~~
~~IF THERE IS BASIS FOR HOPE...~~ *need hope*

HUNGER POVERTY GAPS BEWEEN THE HAVES AND HAVE NOTS
CONFLICT.... INJUSTICE... *Threat of nuclear war*

x IF WE ARE TO PRESS ON -- STRIVING FOR MORE OF
JUSTICE AND UNDERSANDING IN THE WORLD. *Human*

WE NEED THE INSPIRATION OF HOPE....

FIATH, HOPE, SPIRIT ARE INNER REALITIES

Have you noticed how ^{different} people can face the same external situation --
YET, HOW DIFFERENTLY THEY RESPOND TO IT?
YET respond so differently?

Some are defeated / some are embittered / some are
reduced to a helpless victim

OTHERS ARE STIMULATED....

FACING WHAT THEY ARE UP AGAINST WITH A SENSE OF POSSIBILITY.
~~HOPE.~~

VICTOR FRANKLL MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING..

WHERE THERE IS A SENSE OF MEANING, THERE IS HOPE..

*Inner
responses*

The word hope can be used almost interchangeably with the
word spirit --- AND SPIRIT IS ONE OF THE MOST WONDERFUL THINGS
WE EVER SEE OR EXPERIENCE...

a team can have spirit.. *(makes all the difference)*

a person can have spirit in dealing with a handicap or
difficulty

GARY GRAFMAN ^{came it} PIANIST LOST THE USE OF HIS RIGHT HAND..
THAT WOULD SEEM TO END THE CAREER OF A CONCERT PIAIST

BUT THIS SUMMER I HEARD HIM PLAY RAVEL'S CONCERTO
for Left hand...AND A GREAT CROWD AT ASPEN ~~WITH~~
WAS INSPIRED...

76 MAKING MUSIC WITH WHAT YOU HAVE LEFT OVER --
THAT IS SPIRIT, THAT IS HOPE.

SPIRIT IS REVEALED IN RESPONDING TO A CHALLENGE...
CLIMBING A GREAT MOUNTAIN..... GOING TO THE MOON..
SEEKING THE ANSWER TO A PROBLEM

SPIRIT IS REVEALED IN DEDICATION TO A CAUSE: GANDHI PESSING ON IN
THE BELIEF THAT TRUTH AND LOVE PREVAIL

SPIRIT IS REVEALED IN PEOPLE REACHING OUT TO THOSE IN NEED L
ST. FRANCUS.....ALBERT SCWEITER (Africa..I would identify
with those who bear the
mark of pain.

SPIRIT IS REVEALED IN MAKING DIFFICULT DECISIONS...knowing one
might pay a very high price for the decision...

SPIRIT TAKES SO MANY FORMS....AND SPIRIT IS LINKED

*Sometimes it is
just getting up
in the morning
in possible
meanings*

HOPE IS THE INNER READINESS TO FACE THE SITUATION... *the moment*
LIFE, THE FUTURE

~~HOPE IS OPENNESS TO THE MOMENT, THE DAY, THE FUTURE~~

HOPE IS LIVING ~~LIFE~~ WITH A SENSE OF POSSIBILITY...

of hope
A PERSON MAY KNOW ~~DIS~~ *discouraging* TIMES

DARK NIGHTS OF THE SOUL...

BUT THE MAIN DIRECTION IS FORWARD...

AND THE CHIEF SPIRIT --- IS ONE OF POSSIBILITY.

X X X X /

I am not alone

Many things can contribute to the coming of hope and spirit:

Physical factors may be involved;

The way we have been brought up - may have something to do with

People we are associated with may have something to do with it

Experiences we have -- may have something to do with it.

BUT NOW I WANT TO TALK ABOUT CHRISTIAN FAITH ----

AS A FOUNDATION OF HOPE

Living water from CHRIST -- HOPE

THE BIBLE IS REALLY A LIBRARY OF WRITINGS.....

WRITTEN OVER MANY YEARS BY MANY PERSONS IN MANY SITUATIONS
HAVE YOU REFLECTED ON HOW MANY OF THE BIBLICAL WRITINGS
REFLECT EXPERIENCES OF ADVERSITY AND CHALLENGE

HAVE YOU REFLECTED ON HOW MANY OF THE GREAT INSIGHTS
ASSOCIATED WITH THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN FAITH

ethical monotheism

the God who works in history

the God who ^{sometimes} ~~uses~~ suffering ^{for} redemptive ends

the God whose love reconciles, redeems, renews

HAVE YOU REFLECTED ON ^vOW MANY OF THESE INSIGHTS

GREW OUT OF SITUATIONS IN WHICH PEOPLE WERE TEMPTED TO GIVE UP
in exile "How can we say we have s..." — new vision of God — hope

MUCH OF THE O.T. FOR EXAMPLE WAS WRITTEN IN RETROSPECT....

AT THE M OMENT, THINGS SE\$EMED ALL BAD

IN THE LIGHT OF THE YEARS --- GOD IS SEEN TO BE IN IT.

Psalmist: For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him.

JESUS PREACHED A GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD... *(both present & future)*
God's reign, calling for repentance and commitment and hope

PAUL PREACHED OF A NEW CREATION....

"the God who said Let light shine out of darkness has now shown in o
harts to give the light of the knowlege of th gloy of God in the face o
CHRIST....AND SO WE DO NOT LOSE HEART '...

HE THAT IS IN CHRIST IS A NEW CREATION....

FOR 19 centuries the CHRISTIAN CHURCH HAS AFFIRMED THAT

THERE IS HOPE ---- THIS IS OUR FATHERS WORLD

GOD IS CREATIVELY AND REDEMPTIVELY PRESENT IN HIS
IN-CHRIST THERE IS HOPE....
The 1100's

*On his 80th Birthday
E. S. James said,
"I don't know what
the future holds
But I do know
who holds the future."*

*That is hope — grounded
in faith*

*And we can put what we have on
the side of what is good — True Heart*

*Linking what we have
with the presence & power of God*

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND HOPE SPEAK TO THE DISCOURAGING THINGS IN OUR LIVES:

~~personal~~

I. Personal Lives

DISCOURAGEMENT WITH OUR SOMETIMES DEPRESSED, CONFUSED, MIXED UP PERSONAL LIVES....

OUR FAITH SPEAKS TO US OF THAT WONDROUS REALITY CALLED GRACE..

RALPH W. SOCKMAN: A saying good beyond our own planning, predicting or producing...

A POWER NOT OURSELVES THAT MAKES FOR HEALING AND WHOLENESS.

WE ARE NOT ALONE.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" is a grace that

assures us that although we may be tempted to give up on ourselves, THERE IS A LOVE THAT DOES NOT GIVE UP ON US..

that tho' we cannot erase the past....BY THE GRACE OF GOD WE CAN GO BEYOND IT...

LIVES CAN BE CHANGED.....

here can be a movement from

distrust to FAITH

despair to hope

alienation to caring and love..

IN 1972 EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND SR.

Search me O god and know my heart, try me..

At conditiong..

THE LOST SHEEP NIBBLING...

alcoholic family breakup... GRAE OF GOD...

JOHN MCNEIL, CHURCH HISTORIAN, CALLS THE ROLL OF PERSONS WHO HAVE HEARD THE GOSPEL AS GOOD NEWS FOR THEM....

HE WRITES: "Whether suddenly or slowly, they were inwardly born anew, and filled with gratitude for a redemptive power that laid hold on them."

He concludes: THE GOSPEL IS GOODNEWS, AND THERE IS NO OTHER TIDINGS SO MOMENTOUS THAT WE CAN HEAR OR SPEAK."

II.

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND HOPE SPEAK TO THE DISCOURAGEMENTS WE HAVE
ABOUT OUR TROUBLED WORLD

so much of human need and pain and ^{and} conflict

plus faith + hope

~~It~~ holds up the vision of a family of humankind

a reign of God.....

and affirms that GOD WILLS WHOLE PERSONS IN A WHOLE WORLD

Xtra hope
~~It~~ refuses to give up on efforts for peace and justice

HOLDING THAT GOD'S FINAL WORD TO THE HUMAN RACE IS NOT A
WORD OF CONDEMNATION AND DESPAIR, BUT A WORD OF GRACE AND HOPE.

***** God does make all things new.

Sometimes we hear about the individual gospel and the
social gospel.....

Some of us are convinced that IF WE REALLY UNDERSTAND CHRISTIAN FAITH
IT IS NOT JUST ONE OR THE OTHER..... IT IS A GOSPEL FOR THE
INDIVIDUAL AND FOR SOCIETY...

A few moments ago I spoke of Dr. King's sermon on the Lost Sheep
THAT WAS ADDRESSED TO THE NEED FOR A PERSONAL GOSPEL

BUT IS IT NOT INTERESTING HOW THAT PERSONAL GOSPEL REACHED OUT

AND EXTENDED TO GREAT SOCIAL VISION AND COMMITMENT. DR. MARTIN LUTHER ^{R/}

~~KING JUNIOR WHO SAID:~~ IN MOVING WORDS: *in accepting the Nobel Peace Prize*

(P. 28 - Windsor)

II. Hope For A More Humane Society

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"I refuse to accept the idea that ~~men~~^{persons are} are mere flotsam and jetsam in the river of life, ~~which surrounds him~~^{human}. I refuse to accept the view that ~~mankind~~^{human} is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three means a day for equality and freedom for their minds, and dignity, centered ~~men~~^{Person} have torn down other-centered ~~men~~^{being} can build up. I still believe that one day ~~mankind~~^{human} will bow before the altars of God and be crowned triumphant over war and bloodshed, and non-violent redemptive good will will proclaim the rule of the land I still believe that we shall overcome.

This faith can give us courage to face the uncertainties of the future. It will give our tired feet new strength as we continue our forward stride toward the city of freedom. When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds and our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, we will know that we are living in the creative turmoil of a genuine civilization struggling to be born"

Martin Luther King, Jr.

X1 and Press on for a
more humane world
in faith
undergirded by faith

III.

CHRISTIAN FATH AND HOPE SPEAK TO THE MYSTERIES OF DEATH

The loss the sorrow the sometimes seeming defeat
involved in it...

One of the wisest teachers I ever had ~~once~~ said:

IN THE FACE OF GREAT MYSTERY --- PROFOUND RELIGION IS NOT
SO MUCH ^{a detailed} ANSWER AS AN ATTITUDE.....AND THAT ATTITUDE IS TRUST ^{in god}
Yea, tho I walk through the valley of the shaow of death I
will fear no evil..for ^{thou art} ~~thou art~~ with me...

THAT IS FAITH AND THAT IS HOPE..

If we live, we live to the Lord If we die we die to the LOR,
SO THEN WHETHER WE LIVE OR WHETHER WE DIE WE ARE THE Lords..

That is faith and hope..

I am persuaded that nothing in all creation..neither death nor
life, can separate us from the love of God... ^{in christ}

THAT IS FAITH AND HOPE.....

FATHDR. INTO THY HANDS I COMEND MY SPIRIT.

THAT IS FAITH AND HOPE...

IN THE DIVINE ORDER LIFE AND DEATH ARE WOMDOUSLYN INTERMINCLED...

AND GOD IS A GOD OF THE LIING WHO BRINGS LIFE OUT OF DATH

THAT IS FAITH AND HOPE..

BE OF GOOD CHEER..I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD

THAT IS FAITH AND HOPE..

TIME LIKE AN EVER ROLLING STEAM
 BEARS ALL ITS SONS AWAY
 THEY FLY FORGOTTEN AS A DREAM
 Flies at the openig day

O GOD OUR HELP IGES PAST UR HOPE FPR YARS T COME
 BE THOU OUR GUIDE WHILE LIFE SHA:L LAST
 AND OR ETERNL HOME.

IN LIFE AND DEATH GOD IS WITH US....
 THAT IS FAITH AND THAT IS OUR HOPE.

*The god of our yesterday & today
 is god in our Tumorous*

*The living Christ is our hope
 as we face the mystery of Death*

~~But, now,~~ ^{a few words}
~~FINALLY~~ I SHOULD LIKE TO SAY ~~SOMETHING~~ ABOUT

HOW WE APPROPRIATE THIS FAITH AND HOPE

HOW ~~WE MAKE~~ IT BECOMES A PART OF OUR INNER LIVES

HOW WE GROW IN IT...

HOW WE BECOME INSTRUMENTS OF IT.

THERE IS MUCH OF MYSTERY IN THE COMING OF ^a FITH AND HOPE..

BUT WE DO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT IT...

THE WAY WE ARE BROUGHT UP ^aND NURTURED HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

GOOD EXAMPLES AND MODELS HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT...

GROWTH THROUGH TESTING TIMES... HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT

^a LEARNING THROUGH SUFFERING HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT

DECISIONS TO DO THE RIGHT THING, THE COURAGEOUS THING
 HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT....

^h PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH -- HAS
 SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT....

^h HABITS OF MEDITATION AND PRAYER AND WORSHIP
^{ve} HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT... A GREAT DEAL TO DO WITH IT..

REACHING OUT TO OTHER PERSONS...HAS
 SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT....THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES ^sSAYS: "HE WHO IS
^{joined} JOINED TO ALL THE LIVING, HAS HOPE..."

THE DECISION TO LIVE EACH DAY AS
 BEST WE CAN....APPRECIATING THE GOODNESS AND BEAUTY IN OUR MIDST,
[✓] LEARNING SOMETHING, [✓] DOING SOMETHING FOR SOMEONE [✓] ELSE, [✓] THANKING GOD
 FOR THE GIFT OF LIFE AND SEEKING GOD'S GUIDANCE...^{see by 70} GROWING IN THE
 GRACE OF CHRIST ---- THIS IS A PART OF IT...

^{Being} TO BE OPEN TO GOD'S INDWELLING SPIRIT...~~that~~ HAS SO
 MUCH TO DO WITH IT..

Then *pulling our own stamp* on the word has so much to do with *10*

IN CLOSING I SHOULD LIKE TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT PUTTING OUR OWN
STAMP OF HOPING ON THE WORLD. - *how much this has to do with*

AS CHRISTIANS, WE ARE CALLED TO BE INSTRUMENTS, MEDIATORS OF HOPE
SO MUCH OF GOD'S GRACE IS MEDIATED THROUGH PERSONS....

IN HIS TREATISE ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY *14* MARTIN LUTHER SPOKE OF
CHRISTIAN BEING CHRISTS TO THEIR NEIGHBORS...

So EVEN AS WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS THIS DAY....LET US FIND JOY IN
KNOWING THAT WE CAN BE INSTRUMENTS OF HOPE...

WE CAN PUT OUR STAMP OF HOPING ON THE WORLD....

WHERE WE ARE AS WE MEET PEOPLE AS WE LIVE

Some time ago I was in Montgomery Alabama and recalled an
that incident there DURING THE BUS BOYCOTT..

, WHEN MANY PERSONS WERE WALKING TO WALK,,,PROTESTING
DISCRIMINATION ON THE BUSES...

Someone *saw* an *elderly* black woman walking to work, with difficulty
and asked if *she* would like to a ride..

"NO I WANT TO WALK. I AM NOT WALKING JUST FOR MYSELF, BUT FOR
MY CHILDREN AND MY GRANDCHILDREN...MY FEET ARE TIRED, BUT MY
HEART IS GLAD."

WHO CAN *measure* THE INFLUENCE OF THAT? SHE WAS PUTTING HER STAMP
OF HOPING ON THE WORLD...IN THE WAY SHE COULD..

Sometimes we can put *our* stamp of hope on the word
in a word of encouragement.... a smile / a word of appreciation /
in our work...supporting a cause....

sometimes by walking.. -----

BUT WE CAN ALL BE INSTRUMENTS OF HOPE.....

YES, CHRIST IS OUR HOPE.... TO KNOW HIM IS TO KNOW *X* LIVING WATER...

IT IS TO REACH OUT....KNOWING WE CAN BE SALT AND LIGHT

WE CAN ADD TO THE HOPE IN THE WORLD.

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PAUL SPOKE OF "THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST...."

THAT CALL COMES TO ^{each of} US....

IT CAME TO ^{Albert} SCWEITZER WHO FELT THE CALL TO PUT HIS STAMP OF
HOPE ON THE WORLD....

THIS IS THE WAY SCWEIZET ^{propose} ~~PUT~~ IT:

HE COMES TO US AS ONE UNKN^{own} OWN, AS ~~OF~~ OLD HE
CAME TO THEM WHO KNEW HIM NOT...

HE SPEAKS TO US THE SAME WORD, "FOLLOW THOU ME." AND SETS
US TO THE TASKS WHICH HE HAS TO FULFILL FOR OUR TIME.

HE COMMANDS. AND TO THOSE WHO OBEY HIM, WHETHER THEY BE WISE
OR SIMPLE, HE WILL ^{re}VEAL HIMSELF IN THE TOILS, THE CONFLICTS
THE SUFFERINGS WHICH THEY SHALL PASS THROUGH IN HIS FELLOWSHIP,
AND AS AN INEFFABLE MYSTERY, THEY S^{hall} LEARN IN THEIR EXPERIENCE
WHO HE IS.

LIVING WATER FROM CHRIST OUR HOPE.