

HOPE

Part 3

52 - Ephesians: Rise Up & Walk
Church on the Park Live | Sunday, 19 April 2020

Text: Ephesians 5:1-2 & Galatians 6:7

Theme: You will abound in hope when you hear and obey God.

Intro: How can you live with abundant and abounding hope? (Romans 15:13). Last week, we saw that Jesus is the Father's seed. Jesus was **SELECTED** by the Father before time. Next, he was **EXHIBITED** by the Father in time. Then, Jesus was **ENSHROUDED** and **ENTOMBED** through his crucifixion. Lastly, he was **DELIVERED** from **DEATH** by his glorious resurrection. The seed that the Father buried in the ground, sprung to life and is now bearing fruit throughout the world. It is through this seed that we have hope because this seed is the mustard seed that will eventually take over the world (Matt. 13:31-32; Rev. 20-21). See if you can find all the acronyms or mnemonic devices in this message. There's at least five. I'll give you part of one: **HOPE**.

OBEY (Ephesians 5:1-7; Genesis 26:1-6, 12-14).

1) Open yourself to the Father's way (Eph. 5:1-7; Gen. 26:1-6, 12-14).

- The Father's way is the way of the **seed**—it is the way of **sowing**.
 - **Before God created** the world, this way of sowing and reaping was in the Father's heart. The Father's way of sowing and reaping reflects the way of the cross and the way of love.
 - Jesus became the **grain of wheat** that fell to the ground and died—but then sprouted to life (John 12:20-28).
- Watch out for the **danger of fanaticism**.
 - A fanatic expects to **reap** even though there has been **no seed sown**.
 - **Imagine** a farmer said, "I'm believing God for a miracle. I'm believing God for an abundant crop."
 - And then someone asks, "What have you sown this year?"
 - And the farmer answers, "Oh, I haven't sown this year. I haven't done any work. I'm just believing. Oh, God is a good God and he has good gifts in store for his children."
 - Any reasonable person can see that there is something very **strange** about the farmers faith. He **expects** to **reap** even though he hasn't **sown**.
- The Father **blesses** you as you **obey** him.
 - At first, you reap the benefits of **Christ's obedience**. (And not just at first but all throughout your salvation). But then, God calls you to follow in **Christ's footsteps** and live obedient to the Father.
 - **See obeying** the Father as **sowing seed**. And see **disobedience** also as **sowing seed**. Disobedience is sowing **bad seed**; while obedience is sowing **good seed**.
- In Ephesians 5:1-7, Paul warns us to **not be deceived**: the Kingdom of Christ and of God is **not** for the **disobedient**.
 - Therefore, we see that obedience to the Father and Son is the **normal Christian life**.
 - It's not some **special thing** for the **super-saint**. Instead, it is the normal thing for every believer.
 - There's **no hope without obedience**.
- Now let's look at **Isaac** (Yitzchak) in **Genesis 26:1-6, 12-14**.
 - Isaac is **blessed** because of his **Father's obedience**.
 - But he is also blessed because of his **own obedience**.
 - **Multi-generational obedience** yields **multiplication of blessings**.
 - And this is good news for us because we have so many generations that have come before us and been obedient.
 - We've been grafted into this amazing ancient tree.

- And now we are at the time of **exponential growth**—if we would just follow in their footsteps.
- Isaac is **blessed** a hundred fold because he **STAYS** and **SOJOURNS** where God **SHOWS** him (Sow).
- Isaac is blessed because he **OBEYS** God's **ORDERS** (sOw).
- Isaac is blessed because he **WATCHES** in expectancy and protection over his harvest (soW).

2) Believe that you are blessed (Gen. 26:3-14).

- When Anna and I were going through a dark time, our pastor **Dennis Hodulick**, came to visit us.
 - He said something that we would always remember, "**Why wouldn't God bless you?** You are his children doing his work."
- Live with a **mindset** that you are **blessed** and that God will **keep blessing you**.
 - Watch out for a **victim mindset** or a **cursed mindset**—a mindset that says **everything is against me**—'I have no favour, no blessing, nothing good.'
 - Now, if you are **stubbornly disobedient** to God, **don't be deceived** that you will be blessed. That's the warning the Paul gives us.
- But even if you make **mistakes**, God will still **bless** you by **correcting and protecting** you.
 - We see this with Isaac and his **wife Rebekah** in Genesis 26:6-11.
- Our goal is that **our whole life and orientation** is **obedience** to **our Father** and **his Son**.
 - Yet, even when we **fail**—and cracks in our character are revealed—our heavenly **Father is still on our side**.
 - Yes, Isaac was still like his father Abraham in regards to deception—but the Lord still fought his battles.
- **God's blessing** means his **supernatural power and presence** is **added** to our **natural lives**.

3) Expect to abundantly reap what you sow (Gen. 26:12-14).

- Look how **abundantly** Isaac **reaps** a harvest, even though it was **against all odds**.
 - He reaped an amazing harvest, even though others were not reaping—it was a **famine**.
- **God's blessing** means we **rise above** the **law of sin and death**.
- **God's blessing** also means we live by **his Kingdom economy** and not the world's economy.
 - The world's economy may be **crashing**, but God's Kingdom economy is **crescendoing**.
- **What has God called you to sow?**
 - 1 - **God's Word** (Luke 8:11)
 - "The seed is the word..."
 - 2 - **Righteousness** (Hosea 10:2)
 - *What is righteous?*
 - It means doing the **right thing**. In other words, obeying God is sowing righteousness.
 - 3 - **All Your Life** (John 12:25)
 - Don't try to save your life. Instead, sow it into God's ground like Jesus. It may look lost for a time, but then it rises to bear much fruit.
 - 4 - **Money & Possessions** (2 Cor. 9:6-11)
 - Money and possessions are like seeds to be sown. And the Father sees all these seeds sown, even if your accountant can't see it.
 - **GRAM** - comes from the Greek, gramma, meaning a 'small weight.'
 - Yes, a seed is a small weight, but the Father adds a multiplication effect on all you sow.

4) Yield your harvest to God (1 Chron. 29:14-19)

- You will yield a harvest, but **never** make **the harvest about you**—always make the harvest about **worshipping** God like **David**.
- Remember, **Abraham offered his seed, Isaac**, to God on the altar.
- **Tithes and offerings** are all about yielding your harvest to God.
- Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 again.

Conclusion: Abundant hope is yours as you follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, the God of hope.