



## **PLOTting A POSITIVE COURSE FOR THE FUTURE!**

### **Introduction:**

- A. **(Slide #2)** Mankind NEEDS Hope!
  - 1. “Hope is an anchor for today and a boost for the future!”
  - 2. “Hope helps you get out of bed and gives you reason to live!”
  - 3. “Lack of hope breeds pessimism; hope breeds optimism!”
- B. Sadly Many Folks Do Not Have REAL Hope!
- C. God Talks To Us About Being Able To Face The Future With A Bright Outlook.
- D. Many Who Seem To “Have It All” And “To Have The World By The Tail” Really Dread The Future!
  - 1. Many “successful” people are miserable!
    - a. Freddie Prenz
      - 1. Handsome young Hispanic man; at age 20, on top of the world!
      - 2. He was the star of “Chico and the Man” TV show.
      - 3. He was so popular -- he was on the cover of People Magazine, US Magazine and Rolling Stone
      - 4. He was swamped with adoring fans, women throwing themselves at him, and Quaaludes.
      - 5. He married and had a son; however, his wife divorced him and put a restraining order against him.
      - 6. The next morning he began making a series of “Goodbye calls”; he told his mom in a call and then his ex-wife, “I can’t go on. I need to find peace.”
      - 7. Using 380 Astra Constable pistol, he shot himself in the head.
      - 8. This guy who “had it all” was dead at age 22.
      - 9. He left a note, part of is said, “I must end it. There’s no hope left. I’ll be at peace.”
      - 10. Later some realized he had attempted suicide at age 17 when a girlfriend broke up with him.

- b. Vincent van Gogh -- a painter whose work has had great impact on 20th-century art. He lived from March 30, 1853 - July 29, 1890; he suffered from psychotic episodes and delusions throughout his life. During the last decade of his life he created about 2100 artworks, including around 860 oil paintings, most of them in the last two years of his life; he killed himself by a self-inflicted gunshot. Few knew or appreciated his work at that time. But look at it now, 125 years later.
  - #30 most valuable painting -- Peasant Woman Against a Background of Wheat -- original price -- \$47.5 million; adjusted price -- 63.1 million.
  - #21 most valuable painting -- Vase with Fifteen Sunflowers -- original price -- \$39.7 million; adjusted price -- \$74.5 million.
  - #16 most valuable painting -- A Wheatfield with Cypresses -- original price -- \$57 million; adjusted price -- \$84.1 million.
  - #10 most valuable painting -- Portrait of Vincent Van Gogh -- original price -- \$71.5 million; adjusted price -- \$93.5 million.
  - #9 most valuable painting -- Portrait of Joseph Roulin -- original price - \$58 million; adjusted price -- \$99.7 million.
  - #7 most valuable painting -- Irises -- original price -- \$53.9 million; adjusted price -- \$101.2 million.
  - \$4 most valuable painting -- Portrait of Dr. Gachet -- \$82.5 million; adjusted price -- \$134.6 million.
- c. Many young people and young adults feel life is not worth living:
  - 1. Depression
  - 2. Psychosis
  - 3. Impulsive
  - 4. Crying out for help
  - 5. Been let down and hurt
  - 6. Experimenting with danger
  - 7. Struggling with illness
  - 8. So no value in life; see nothing positive for the future.

D. (Slide #3) What Can Help Us Plot A Positive Course For The Future? What Can Help Us Have Hope?

**I. (Slide #4) Last Week's Sermon -- Realize Who We Are And How Valuable We Are!**

**II. (►) Learn Who God Is!**

- A. Realize His Care For You; Understand His Desire For You To Be Blessed And To Be With Him For Eternity!

- B. See The Love Of Christ And What He Gave Up For You To Have Hope!
  - 1. Jn. 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
  - 2. Rom. 5:6-8 “For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup>For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. <sup>8</sup>But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- C. (►) Comprehend His Promises! (Rest Of Sermon!)

### III. (Slide #5) Promises To Seekers!

- A. Is. 55:6 “Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.”
- B. Heb. 11:6 “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”
- C. Lk. 12:31 “But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.”
- D. Life Can Harden People Against God And Caring About Spiritual Things!
  - 1. Aging can cause you to be hardened against seeking Him! Ecc. 12:1-6 Thus Solomon’s advice was, “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, ‘I have no pleasure in them’.” 12:1
  - 2. False ideas can harden your heart against God! I Tim. 4:2 “speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,”
    - a. False teachings.
    - b. Vain philosophies
    - c. Misguided lifestyles
  - 3. Sin can harden your heart!
    - a. Rom. 2:5 “But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,”
    - b. It offers instant and immediate gratification; however it is destructive and enslaving!

1. Moses knew sin offered pleasure; however, he wanted God! Heb. 11:25 “choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God **than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,**”
2. II Thess. 2:12 “but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”
  - a. God gives us freedom of choice to plot terrible courses for our lives!
  - b. However, judgment awaits those who live that lifestyle.
  - b. II Thess. 2:11,12 “And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, <sup>12</sup>that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”
3. Even people of God can be caught up by sin’s enticement. Lk. 8:14 “Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.”
4. Weakness.
  - a. As we see our weaknesses, we can feel SO worthless and lifeless.
  - b. “I am weak, but Thou art strong!”

E. He Promises Hope To The Weak!

1. Ps. 27:14 “Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!”
2. Ps. 119:28 “My soul melts from heaviness; Strengthen me according to Your word.”
3. Heb. 12:12,13 “Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, <sup>13</sup>and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be *dislocated*, but rather be healed.”
4. Ps. 6:2 “Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I *am* weak; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled.”
5. Ps. 41:4 “I said, ‘LORD, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.’”

IV. (►) Promises To Youth.

- A. Pr. 3:1-10 “My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; <sup>2</sup>For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you. <sup>3</sup>Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart, <sup>4</sup>And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man. <sup>5</sup>Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup>In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your

paths. <sup>7</sup>Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. <sup>8</sup>It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones. <sup>9</sup>Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; <sup>10</sup>So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.”

1. The charge -- Remember God and His teachings! 1
  - a. Bind mercy and Truth around your neck; never lose them! 3
  - b. Write them on your heart! 3
  - c. Trust Him with all your heart! 5
  - d. Avoid haughtiness and pride! 7
  - e. Listen to Him; He will guide you in the right way! 6
  - f. Give back to Him generously!
2. Blessings from remembering them:
  - a. Length of days and long life.
  - b. Peace.
  - c. Favor with God and man.
  - d. Your possessions will overflow!

B. Eph. 6:1-3 “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup>*‘Honor your father and mother,’* which is the first commandment with promise: <sup>3</sup>*‘that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.’*”

C. Mt. 5:5 “Blessed *are* the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.”

1. Ps. 25:12,13 “Who *is* the man that fears the LORD? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses. <sup>13</sup>He himself shall dwell in prosperity, And his descendants shall inherit the earth.”
2. Ps. 37 is a WONDERFUL Psalm about serving the Lord and not fretting when evil people flourish!
  - a. 8-11 “Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret--*it only causes harm.* <sup>9</sup>For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth. <sup>10</sup>For yet a little while and the wicked *shall be no more*; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it *shall be no more.* <sup>11</sup>But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”
  - b. The wicked, seeking more and more will die in their greed by the sword.
  - c. Those who serve God and control their desires will ultimately outlast the wicked and will live in peace on the earth!

**V. (►) Promises To The Burdened.**

- A. “Come And Seek Me!”
- B. Mt. 11:28-30 “Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”
- C. Ps. 55:22 “Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.”
- D. I Pet. 5:7 “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”
- E. You May Feel No One Cares; He Does!
- F. You May Feel No One Understands; He Does!
- G. Does Jesus Care? O YES HE CARES!
- H. WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS!

**VI. (Slide #6) Promises To Backsliders.**

- A. Mal. 3:7 “‘Return to Me, and I will return to you,’ Says the LORD of hosts. ‘But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’”
- B. Ps. 34:18 “The LORD *is* near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.”
- C. I Jn. 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

## **VII.(►) Promises To The Obedient.**

- A. I Jn. 5:13 “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God.”
- B. Js. 1:12 “Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”
- C. Heb. 4:16 “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
- D. II Tim. 4:8 “Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”
- E. Jn. 14:1-3 “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup>In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.”

## **VIII. (►) Promises To The Persecuted.**

- A. Mt. 5:10-12 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup>Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”
- B. II Tim. 2:12 “If we endure, We shall also reign with *Him*.”

**(Slide #7) Conclusion:**

- A. Do You Struggle With Meaning And Purpose For Life?
  
- B. **(Slide #8)** Turn To Him; He Will Guide Your To True Life; He Will Give You Hope! “My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less Than Jesus And His Righteousness!”
  
- C. One Final Passage:
  - 1. I Pet. 3:10-12 “For *‘He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. <sup>11</sup>Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup>For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.’*”
  
  - 2. Do you want to have a life that you love? Do you want to see good days?
    - a. Then live your life for the Lord!
    - b. “Take a little honey!” Gen. 43:11 (Jacob told his sons to take it to Egypt as they sought food)
      - 1. Life a life so you can have a genuine smile and a happy disposition.
      - 2. Life a life where you smile comes from a happy heart!
      - 3. Pr. 17:22 “A merry heart does good, *like* medicine,”
    - c. Set your priorities right!
      - 1. Mt. 6:33 “seek first!”
      - 2. As you love God and appreciate His promises, develop a character that emanates [springs forth] from have a purpose for life -- to glorify God!
      - 3. You have a purpose, a cause that is bigger than your own life!
    - d. Serve others!
      - 1. Mt. 23:11 “But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.”
      - 2. Ac.20:35 “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
    - e. Be energetic and optimistic!
      - 1. Enjoy serving the Lord!
      - 2. It will help you enjoy life!
      - 3. Paul in prison could say, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
    - f. Have unwavering commitment to His Cause!
      - 1. Pr. 23:23 “Buy the truth, and do not sell *it*, *Also* wisdom and instruction and understanding.”
      - 2. NEVER compromise His Will; be loyal with all your heart!



3. Hear Peter:
  - a. Have a pure tongue -- refrain from evil and deceit!
  - b. Flee from evil; do good!
  - c. Seek peace and pursue it!
4. In doing this, you will allow God to provide hope and if you have been on the wrong course, to fix your hope!

D. Back To One Of His Promises:

1. Mk. 16:16 "He who believes and is baptized will be saved."
2. Come to Him with an eager heart, believe in Christ, repent of your sins, confess your faith in Christ, be baptized to be saved by His Blood, thus immediately plotting a course for your future -- to live faithfully unto death and to be with Him in Heaven forever!