

Hope, a new way!

I. Introduction-

A. The series

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Rom 15:13

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Jn 14:6

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. Jn 15:13

Hope; (*elpis*) expectation of good, hope

in the Christian sense- joyful, confident expectation of eternal salvation

Hope: to cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen be true

Way; thoroughfare for travel from place to place

Love; (*agape*) benevolence, disposition to do good

B. A new way- Jesus is the way-

Our need for hope- You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Our hope in God- But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

God's mercy, His grace and His love God offers to raise from death and to make us alive with Jesus

A new plan- and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Eph 2:6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. Eph 1:3

Plan and purpose of God= a thought, a plan, a purpose

what God has intended, initiated, is doing and will become reality

Plan; (webster) a method for achieving an end a detailed formulation of a program of action an orderly arrangement of parts of an overall design or objective

II. The way is by God's grace and not our works-

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Eph 2:8

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Jn 14:6

Grace; *charis*, the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ

Faith; *pistis*, Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen

Gift; *dōron*, a present offered in expression of honor

Workmanship; *poiēma*, the works of God as creator

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8KC8iKia_Y

A. If Christ is in us, who can be against us?

If Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. Those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Rom 8:10 & 30

If; a primary particle of conditionality; if, whether, on the assumption or condition that

Justified; just as if we never sinned

Glorified; to impart glory to something, render it excellent

B. The foundation of truth-

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof,

for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God

may be complete, equipped for every good work. II Tim 3:16

The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules

endures forever. Ps 119:16

Inspired: breathed by the Spirit of God

Inerrant: free from error

Immutable: not capable or subject to change

Truth: the body of real things, events, and facts

<https://crossroads-ridgecrest.org/brochures-guides>

Am I heaven ready?

https://cdn.subsplash.com/documents/74GPWZ/_source/765974d3-6dda-4181-a64a-775b53324daa/document.pdf

C. The diagnosis-

You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— Eph 2:1

For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. Rom 3:22

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. I Jn 1:8&10

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. II Tim 4:3

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Mat 7:15

D. The lies of false prophets and who encourage us diagnose ourselves:

We feel that we are good people and entitled to heaven

Many ways to Heaven and God I can choose my own

My way is easy and free from pain

We trust in ourselves and our wisdom

We feel entitled to Heaven because Jesus died for our sins

Life is about my happiness and being blessed by God not looking at negative evidence

I am to seek to fulfill my wants/desires

I want to follow what is popular and makes me feel good about myself

I am to love myself and my high self-image

Spoke Sinner's Prayer* once

*A "Sinner's Prayer" that is prayed to God in order to get benefits such as forgiveness, blessings, or entrance into heaven is often motivated by selfishness and does not acknowledge the sin in our lives or encourage us to turn from them.

The assumption is that Jesus died for the sins of the world including mine do I can go to heaven.

Hear them all the time- promising all the benefits with any cost to us

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? "I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds. Jer 17:7

For the wages of sin is death. Rom 6:23

E. God offers us a new heart-

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. Ezk 36:25

The Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more. Heb 10:15

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jn 3:1

III. God so loved the world that He sent His only Son-

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Jn 3:16

God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. Rom 5:8

A. Jesus, the Son of God, comes in humility-

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isa 9:6

Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. Lk 2:10

C. Jesus came to die-

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we

esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. Isa 53:3
He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. I Pet 2:22
If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. That is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. II Cor 5:17

IV. The good news of Jesus has become old news-

A. The way of Jesus is narrow and hard, and few follow it -

Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Mat 7:13

Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. II Cor 4:3

The Dominant Worldview Embraced by American Adults:

- Biblical Worldview 6%
- Secular Humanism 2%
- Postmodernism 1%
- Syncretism 88%
- Biblical Christianity in the general population 2% (1% under 30, 0% under 20)

Syncretism: the combination of different forms of belief or practice

<https://www.arizonachristian.edu/culturalresearchcenter/research/>

B. Selfish salvation-

You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jam 4:2

You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. Mat 15:7

Sinner's prayer seeking the benefits and blessings of God without love for God and Jesus

Christians in name only- CINO-

He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Ps 23:2

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. Ex 20:7

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Mat 7:23

C. Why following Jesus' way is hard and few choose it-

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Gal 2:20

He said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. Lk 9:23

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. I Cor 1:18

God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. Col 2:13

Repentance; a change of mind, or direction in life

Repent; to heartily change one's mind for better, with abhorrence of one's past or present sin

Abhorrence: something regarded as repugnant or disgusting

V. Am I heaven ready?

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind (attitude) among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Phil 2:3

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Ps 51:3&16

A. Examine ourselves to see if we are of the faith-

Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! II Cor 13:5

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. I Cor 11:27

1. Basic biblical test-

Wide Path of the World

We feel that we are good people
Many ways to Heaven and God
My way is easy and free from pain
We trust in ourselves
We feel entitled to Heaven
Life is about my happiness
Seek to fulfill my wants/desires
Follow what is popular
Love myself, high self-image
Spoke a Sinner's Prayer* once

Result: Destruction, Hell

**Depart from Me, I never knew
you Matthew 7:23**

Narrow Path Following Jesus

We confess our sins
Jesus is the only way to God
Jesus's way requires self-sacrifice
We trust in Jesus alone
We don't deserve God's grace
Life is about being holy
We seek to love and serve Christ
Follow Jesus, who is not popular
Love Jesus, humble self-image
Walk with Jesus daily

Result: Life, Heaven

**Well done, good and faithful
servant Matthew 5:21**

2. Evidence of salvation in our lives-

<https://cdn.subsplash.com/documents/74GPWZ/ source/c19c95f2-bbf6-49c5-9765-57580d865267/document.pdf>

1. We will have a growing love (agape love) for God.
2. We will have a growing love for others.
3. We will strive to obey God's commandments.
4. We will know we are going to heaven when we die.
5. We will have a desire to connect with God through reading the Bible and praying.
6. We will have a desire to serve God and others for His glory.
7. We will have a desire to tell others about God.
8. We will have a growing awareness and abhorrence of sin in our lives.
9. We will grow in maturity.
10. We will want to fulfill our purpose here on earth so that our lives will count for eternity.

C. Staying heaven ready-

Daily heart check

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting! Ps 139:23

For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. Rom 7:22

Daily heart check- on website

<https://cdn.subsplash.com/documents/74GPWZ/ source/75f7fae3-8cb0-4731-a05b-0d0cb434c39c/document.pdf>

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. Rom 8:1

D. Keeping our first love-

I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Rev 2:4

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. Rom 5:8