

High Hopes Session 4 – What Has Your Attention?

I. Introduction/Review

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) – *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

Jeremiah 29:11 (GWT) – *I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD. They are plans for peace and not disaster, plans to give you a future filled with hope*

A. Review

1. The Lord has thoughts about me and my future.
2. Hope is a necessary part of every life, saved or unsaved.
Hope keeps me moving forward.
3. Two Dimensions of Hope
 - a. Hope that is connected to this world/natural hope.
 - b. Hope that is connected to the unseen world/ spiritual hope.
4. **Against the Wind**
 - a. **Wind** = opposition/emblem of instability – The winds blow into your life to cause you to become unstable – lose direction
Goal – To get you off course and keep you from getting where you are supposed to be.
 - b. Back to the story of the disciples in the storm

II. Adjust Your Attention

A. Proverbs 4:20-27 (NKJV) – ²⁰*My son, **give attention to my words**; Incline your ear to my sayings. ²¹Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; ²²For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. ²³Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. ²⁴Put away from you a deceitful*



mouth, and put perverse lips far from you. ²⁵Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. ²⁶Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. ²⁷Do not turn to the right or the left; remove your foot from evil.

1. Give Attention to my Words

Indicates that we have a choice regarding what gets our attention.

2. Vs 23 – Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life – *Many of the issues of life come from within the heart.*
Indication = What you give attention to will affect your heart – the heart is connected to the issues of life – or our response to the issues of life.

3. VS 25 – Let your eyes look straight ahead.

a. Other Versions: *Let your eyes look forward*

b. **Proverbs 4:25 (MSG)** – *Keep your eyes straight ahead; ignore all sideshow distractions.*

4. VS 27 – Do not turn to the right or the left.

a. There will be opportunity to turn to the right or the left to *get off course.*

b. The only thing that can get you off course is for you to allow the distractions of the hour to consume your attention.

5. What has your attention?

What has your attention – has your heart – Your heart is leading you.

6. The Hope/Attention Connection

What you give attention to – either builds hope or steals hope

B. Peter’s Attention on the Wind

Matthew 14:25-32 (NKJV) – ²⁵*Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out for fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Be of*



*good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”²⁸ And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”²⁹ So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.³⁰ **But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”**³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.*

The Presence of the Wind working against Peter, kept him from finishing his water walk of faith.

C. Peter put his attention in the wrong place.

1. He began with his focus on the Words of Jesus, “COME”.
2. Then he focused on the wind.
3. **Matthew 14:30 (NKJV) – But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”**
4. **Boisterous** = Strong – *Contrasting, Hostile Winds, Forcefulness*

Boisterous – of a person/ noisy, energetic, cheerful or rowdy
Noisy and expressive

5. The Wind was expressing itself to Peter.
6. The Wind was speaking/shouting/ screaming at Peter.
7. Peter allowed the wind to change to attract his attention.
8. Peter shifted his attention from the words of Jesus to the voice of the wind!

9. When we allow the voice of the wind to re-focus our view/what we see/what we perceive, we lose hope, begin to sink and are thrown off course.
- 10. Satan is an expert at attention diversion.**
*He works to divert our attention from God/His Word.
Attending to His Word – Life/Health/Medicine to all of our flesh.
Attending to other things – could be death/sickness/failure/defeat.*
- 11. God is the supreme expert at redirecting our attention.**
God diverts our attention from Satan and circumstances to allow his Supernatural power to work in our lives by faith.
- 12. God cannot move for us if until we re-focus our attention on Him/His Word/His promises.**
Get your eyes off of the problems and re-focus on Jesus.
- 13. Spiritual A.D.D. – Attention Deficit Disorder.**
One major issue of A.D.D. – Inattentive – lack of attention or lack of paying attention – attention is easily re-focused to other things.
NOTE: Many in the Church have an issue retaining attention on the right things.
- a. **The tragedy of Israel missing the promised land.**
- Focused on Giants Vs God
 - Their attention was given to the giants – diverted from God’s Promises.
 - We know where their attention was – by the words of their own mouth.
 - God could not divert their attention from the giants.
 - God could not help them.
- b. **Often when we ask the Lord to help, his help will include a diversion – *diverting our attention from the circumstances to Himself.***



III. Shift your Attention.

A. Lift Up Your Eyes

Genesis 13:14-15 (NKJV) – ¹⁴And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: **“Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ¹⁵for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.**

1. Lift up your eyes from where you are.
 - a. **Look intentionally – re-direct your attention.**
 - b. **Look from the place where you are.**
Right where you are, look up to something different.
 - c. **Adjust your attention to something different.**
 - d. **MSG – Open your eyes, look around**
Many have their eyes so focused on one thing, they haven’t noticed the others things that are around them.
 - e. **STRIFE with Lot had become the main focus of Abraham.**
 - f. **God needed Abraham to move beyond the attention given to Lot’s strife.**
 - g. **The answer = re-focus – *lift up your eyes and look – take a different look – a different viewpoint – a different perspective.***
 - h. **HOPE is revived when we take another look and re-direct our Attention/Focus.**

2. Other Scriptures

Isaiah 40:26 (NKJV) – Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power; not one is missing.

Lift up your eyes and see

*Sometimes the key to your victory is to LIFT UP YOUR EYES AND SEE!
See something different!*

If your viewpoint is filled with hopelessness – Lift your eyes and see



HIM and HE will fill you with hope.

Psalm 121:1-3 (KJV) – ¹*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. ²My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. ³He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*

Luke 21:28 (NKJV) – *Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”*

IV. Conclusion:

A. When do I need to shift attention?

1. When I am confronted with extreme negative circumstances.
2. When my mind is consumed by negative thoughts and emotions.
3. When I have lost my dreams and vision for my future.
4. When my mind is mostly centered around earthy things with little thought given to spiritual/eternal things.
5. When hope seems lost

B. Steps to Attention Re-direction

1. I will be SELECTIVE with what gets my attention.
I don't need to be consumed with everything in the news.

Jeremiah 51:46 (NIV) – *Do not lose heart or be afraid when rumors are heard in the land; one rumor comes this year, another the next, rumors of violence in the land and of ruler against ruler.*

Jeremiah 51:46 (CEV) – *Don't be afraid or lose hope*

Jeremiah 51:46 (MSG) – *Don't lose hope. Don't ever give up when the*



rumors pour in hot and heavy. One year it's this, the next year it's that - rumors of violence, rumors of war.

2. I will be selective of WHAT gets my attention.
3. Hope stealers are on the bottom of my list.
4. Think God
5. Think Forward! *God is thinking good about my future.*

Mark 13:7 (KJV) – *An when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled for such things must needs be, but the end shall not be yet.*

Troubled = alarmed = panic = disturbed = frightened
MSG – Keep you head – Don't panic

6. Think Possibility – All things are possible.
7. Never lose attention on the eternal perspective.
I will look unto the Lord who is my help.
I will keep my eyes on the Lord who is my strength.
I will give my attention to His word above the words of all others.
I will give my attention to those things that give me hope.
I will have high hopes in the Lord who is the strength of my life!