

1. We are going to continue this morning with our series "Hope Dealers".
2. As believers in Jesus Christ, we were never meant to live hopeless lives.
3. Because of our faith in Jesus Christ we are never hopeless.
4. Now the circumstances surrounding us may seem hopeless, but because of who Jesus is we are never hopeless.
5. And as believers in Jesus Christ, we have been called to be carriers of that hope to a lost and hopeless world.
6. We have been called to be hope dealers.
7. Now more than ever our world needs us as believers to step up and stand up and walk in the hope that we have in Jesus.
8. I believe we are living in a season of great opportunity. Because when things are uncertain all around, then the certainty of our faith in Jesus shines all the brighter.
9. So in the first two weeks we have been defining what this hope is.
10. In week one we said that hope is not a thing, hope is a person.
11. Hope is found in Jesus and only in Jesus.
12. If our hope is placed in a thing, then when we have the thing we have hope, and when we don't have the thing then we are hopeless.
13. Our hope must be placed in the one who never changes. The one who is constant and true and the only person that fits that criteria is Jesus.
14. Last week we discovered that this hope, in the form of Jesus, is not a hope that is outside of us, it is a hope that is inside of us.
15. **Philippians 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
16. The phrase rejoice in indicates that our rejoicing is based on something we have or possess.
17. Something that is internal and not external.
18. The bible is full of scripture that points to the fact that as followers of Jesus, Jesus lives inside of us through the person of the Holy Spirit.
19. **1 Corinthians 3:16** Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? (ESV)
20. The hope that we have in Jesus Christ lives inside us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

21. That means that hope is not something I have to go looking for, hope is something that continually lives inside me.
22. Jesus is our living hope, living on the inside of us.
23. But however, we need to understand that our enemy, Satan, doesn't want the hope we have in Jesus Christ to live inside of us unchallenged.
24. Satan will use whatever means he has at his disposal to try and crowd out the hope that we have in Jesus.
25. Let's go back to Philippians chapter 4.
26. I am going to move down to verse 6, and I am going to skip verse 5. The reason for that is basically what we have here in this chapter are several stand alone statements that Paul makes as he closes out this letter to the Philippian believers.
27. Man, many hundreds of years ago divided the bible into chapters and verses.
28. But originally this was one long letter written by a man.
29. And the 4th chapter consists of Paul closing out his message to them with what we would consider some final direction.
30. Kind of like a parent might say to a child as they are leaving the house.
31. No don't forget your coat.
32. Did you get your homework?
33. Do you have your lunch box?
34. Make sure and let me know when you get to school.
35. How many get the idea.

TEXT: **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

TITLE: **Hope in times of trouble.**

INTRO:

1. Just to repeat, Jesus Christ is our hope, and as believers in Jesus that hope lives inside us.

2. But Satan our enemy doesn't want the hope of Jesus living inside of us by itself. Because if we ever get full of Jesus and the hope that he brings, then we will be virtually unstoppable.
3. So in order to attempt to crowd out the hope we have in Jesus, he tempts us to allow other things into our lives that are contrary to our hope in Jesus.
4. In verse six we see that one of those contrary things he desires us to have inside us is anxiety.
5. **Anxiety, and hope in Jesus cannot inhabit the same space**, because anxiety and hope in Jesus are diametrically opposing forces.
6. Anxiety robs us of hope, and of course Jesus' desire is to overwhelm us with hope.
7. Before we go any further, I want to make something abundantly clear.
8. This message has nothing to do with laying a guilt trip on our lives if we find ourselves today, or any other day for that matter dealing with feelings of anxiety.
9. Even though Paul says to not be anxious about anything, the reality is that none of us are perfect at keeping anxiety at bay all of the time.
10. In fact, if your life is anything like mine, at times anxious thoughts can come seemingly out of nowhere.
11. At other times anxious circumstances present themselves seemingly out of nowhere.
12. I'm going along minding my own business and, in a flash, I will become anxious about something. And I don't know where it came from, and I didn't see it coming.
13. To be clear. You are not being disobedient to this command just because you experience anxiety at times in your life.
14. Our goal is not to try and avoid anxiety, our goal is to not let anxiety go unchecked in our lives.
15. You will have anxious thoughts and anxious moments in your life.
16. Let's be perfectly clear. We are living in some extremely anxious times.

17. We are living in times of the great unknown. I have read multiple articles over the past six months that tell us that our mental health in America, as a result of the events of the last 18 months, is at a very unhealthy level.
18. Worry, fear, anxiety, struggle, and trouble are at extreme heights.
19. People around us are struggling, and if we will be transparent, we are struggling as well.
20. I know I'm struggling. I am facing some of the greatest unknowns I have ever experienced in my life.
21. However, the Lord doesn't want us to deny, or ignore, or turn a blind eye to those feelings of anxiety and trouble.
22. Neither does he want us to feel guilty for having feelings of anxiety.
23. He gives us wonderful instruction on how to deal with the anxiety so that hope can have its full place in our hearts.
24. So let's break down the answers to anxiety that Paul presents to us here.
25. **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
26. Jesus wants to live on the inside of us so we can have hope.
27. But Satan wants anxiety to live on the inside of us so that hope doesn't have space to impact our lives.
28. Rather than internalizing the hope we have in Jesus, Satan wants us to internalize anxiety.
29. I believe, over the last several days, that the Holy Spirit has been making very real to me the importance of what we internalize.
30. What does it mean to internalize something.
31. I am going to give a very simplistic definition. **To internalize something means to take something that is outside of us, like a value, a pattern, a belief, or behavior, and to incorporate it so that it becomes a part of our lives.**
32. We take something, weather consciously or subconsciously, from the outside of us, and we make it a part of who we are on the inside.

33. Some of the things we internalize are positive and healthy for our lives, and other things we internalize are negative and unhealthy for our lives.
34. For example. Let's say I read a passage of scripture about Abraham. **Hebrews 11:8** By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.
35. So. God told Abraham to do something, and Abraham obeyed, even though he wasn't sure exactly where he was going or how it would turn out.
36. Abraham exercised great faith.
37. We might read that and go, you know what. That is really awesome.
38. I want to be a person of faith. I want to get to a place where I will obey the Lord even when I don't understand it all.
39. That is internalizing. I want this faith that I see in Abraham (outside of me) to be a part of my life (inside of me).
40. Suppose we read a passage of scripture about David. **Acts 13:22** After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'
41. We might read that and think, David was considered a man after God's own heart because he was willing to obey whatever the Lord told him to do.
42. Wow! What a great quality. I want to be a man or woman after God's own heart, so I am going to set my heart on obeying the Lord in whatever he tells me to do.
43. That is internalizing. I want what I see in David (outside of me) to be a part of my life (inside of me).
44. Am I making sense to anybody?
45. However, **we can also internalize negative and unhealthy things in our lives.** And some of those things can lead to anxiety.
46. This is an example of unhealthy internalizing.
47. Someone doesn't acknowledge or speak to me at the store. I start thinking. Is something the matter? Are they mad at me? Did I do something wrong?

48. The behavior (not speaking) happened outside of me, but I internalize that by worrying about what all of this means.
49. Something of value breaks down. The car. An expensive appliance. Etc.
50. And I begin to think. Oh no. Not this. I wasn't expecting this. This is going to cost a lot of money. We are still reeling from the affects of a pandemic. I might not even be able to get a new appliance for 6 months, or they may not be able to get the part for the car for a long time.
51. The breakdown is outside of me. I am still healthy. I am still safe. I was not diagnosed with some terminal illness, something outside of me just broke down.
52. But I internalize those things, I start to worry about them, which causes me to experience anxiety.
53. Am I still making sense?
54. So, here is the question I want us to consider. What is the process for internalizing? In other words, how do we internalize things?
55. What I have found in my life is that I generally internalize things, whether good or bad. Positive or negative. Healthy or unhealthy, by having a conversation with myself.
56. You say pastor, do you talk to yourself? You better believe I talk to myself. In fact, I talk to myself more than I talk to any other human being on planet earth, because I am the only one who is always with me.
57. Guess what? You talk to yourself too. You are constantly having conversations with yourself.
58. And it is those conversations that we have with ourselves that determine what we internalize.
59. When the person doesn't speak to you at the store, you start having a conversation with yourself about what happened and why it happened.
60. You are not physically or verbally talking to someone else, you are having a conversation with yourself.

61. When the car or the fridge breaks down, and you start thinking about all the other things that could go wrong or how much money it could cost you, you are having a conversation with yourself.
62. So something happens outside of us. That thing is troubling. It troubles our thinking.
63. So we begin to talk to ourselves about this troubling situation, and the result is that we become anxious.
64. Why does talking to ourselves about troubling situations or events in our lives lead to anxiety?
65. Because **we were never intended to have all of the answers inside of ourselves or by ourselves.**
66. If we had all of the answers we ever needed within us. If we could just have a conversation with ourselves and figure everything out all nice and neat, we wouldn't need God.
67. We would be our own God.
68. And, if we could just have a conversation with ourselves and figure it all out, we wouldn't need hope. We would just hope in ourselves.
69. But we are not gods and we do need hope outside of ourselves so our conversations with ourselves about troubling things can lead to anxiety.
70. Which is exactly what the enemy wants for us. Because as we said earlier, anxiety, and hope in Jesus cannot inhabit the same space, because anxiety and hope in Jesus are diametrically opposing forces.
71. Anxiety robs us of hope, and Jesus' desire is to overwhelm us with hope.
72. So what is the Lord's solution to anxiety's desire to crowd out the hope in our heart?
73. We have to stop talking to ourselves, and instead start talking to God.
74. **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
75. Are you seeing that? Don't be anxious. Talk to God about it.
76. It turns out that old Southern Gospel song that was kind of quirky had it right all along.

77. VIDEO – Just a little talk with Jesus.

78. let us have a little talk with Jesus.
79. Tell him all about our troubles.
80. He will hear our faintest cry.
81. And he will answer by and by.
82. When you feel a little prayer wheel turning.
83. You will know a little fire is burning.
84. You will find a little talk with Jesus makes it right.
85. **What is the solution to anxiety that is brought on by troubling times? The solution is to talk to God about it.** Because talking to God about it pushes the anxiety out and makes room for hope.

Conclusion:

1. One of the reasons why our world is facing such hopelessness right now is because everybody is talking to everybody else, and not many people are talking to God about it.
2. People all over the world are talking to themselves about all the troubling problems in our world, and that is causing great amounts of anxiety.
3. Then one anxious and troubled person talks to another anxious and troubled person, and together they have more anxiety and more trouble than they started with.
4. Then those anxious troubled folks get on Facebook or social media, and then others get on the nightly news, and on and on it goes until everybody is anxious and everybody is troubled, and nobody knows what to do.
5. But I am here to remind you this morning that you do know what to do.
6. Stop talking to yourself about it.
7. Stop talking to everybody else about it.
8. In stead talk to God about it.
9. And as you begin to talk to God about it with prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving, you will find that there isn't much room for anxiety in your heart, but the hope starts bubbling all over the place.
10. And when hope starts bubbling out of you, others won't be able to help but notice and wonder, what in the world is going on with them.

11. While the rest of the world is going nuts, they have peace, they have joy, and they have hope.
12. And when they start asking those questions you and I become really good hope dealers.
13. It is not wrong, nor is there anything wrong with you if you are experiencing troubling times.
14. It is not wrong, nor is there anything wrong with you if you are experiencing anxiety.
15. The question is what are you doing about it?
16. Who do you talk to the most about your troubles and anxiety?
Yourself or God?
17. Maybe it's time we have a little talk with Jesus.
18. Call people to a place of prayer.