

Restoration Church Core Value: Hope of the Gospel

God's kingdom will ultimately settle as a heavenly city upon an earthy ground. (Isaiah 40:3, Genesis 1:28, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Act 7:46, 2 Samuel 7:5, etc.)

— Believers in Jesus have actually have been awakened by the Spirit and given the ability influence the greater movement of God in the tiny spheres that he has given us jurisdiction. Like God we bring an ordered peace to chaos. (Jeremiah 10:12, Genesis 1:1-2, Job 38:4-7, Psalm 33:6-9, etc.)

— When we don't see our Christian activity as moments of off and on, but a calling that fills and elevates even our most mundane corners of life, then we can begin to fathom with greater wisdom the call to seek the lost, care for the orphan and widow, bring justice to the weak. We have a message to share that ignites and empowers the broken - "You are an image bearer!!" We get to tell them the good news, "the Kingdom of God is at hand and Jesus has made a way for you. Come and prepare a way for Him." (Psalms 82:3, Micah 6:8, Proverbs 21:3, Isaiah 1:17, Acts 7:48, etc.)

IV. The Hope of the Gospel

— This is the good news: That despite all the sin and brokenness of humanity, God still wants to dwell with his people and because of the death and resurrection of his Son, the Spirit of God works in us to make that possible. (Revelation 21:3)

— We were broken and he made us whole. We were empty and he filled us. We were enemies of God and through his own death, Jesus brought us near. We were downing in a sea of never-ending toil and monotony and he restored our purpose. (Romans 5:10, Romans 12:1-2)

— Where we were blind but the Spirit has given us sight to see his Kingdom that is here in part but coming in full! (Revelation 11:15)

V. Establishing Hearts

— First and foremost the Bible says before we believed in Christ we were dead in our spirit. Dead people don't have a heart to establish. Belief in Christ is to be made alive. (Ephesians 2:1-10)

— An established heart looks like a tree planted by a river whose leaves do not wither (Psalm 1:3). Jesus teaches that our hearts are like types of ground that His word grows in. Thus we tend to the soil of our hearts (Luke 8:4-15)

— To aid us in this work God has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 1:3)

— What you sow you will reap. Examine your loves. What you love will bear fruit in your lives. (Galatians 6:7-8)

— Enrich the soil of your heart knowing that God is good and that he's establishing a kingdom of peace where believers in Jesus will be made whole— and this will all take place on our beloved home, a renewed earth. (Revelation 21, Isaiah 65:17, 2 Peter 3:13)

— With God's hand over ours we embrace our Genesis call to work the garden and we cultivate and subdue our own hearts— pulling out weeds and sheltering baby seedlings. (Philippians 2:12-13, John 15:1-5) We humble ourselves and invite others in, show them the places that for whatever reason bear no fruit. Little by little you will learn to love the light. This is our hope. May we establish our hearts and prepare the way for him.

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"Part of our unique assignment is to prepare the body of Christ for the return of Jesus and establish hearts in the hope of the Gospel. Like John the Baptist, we want to "make ready for the Lord a people prepared" and ultimately hasten the day of His coming Kingdom. (Luke 1:17, 2 Peter 3:12, Isaiah 40:3)

I. What is the return of Christ?

Essentially the second coming is the belief that Jesus will one day come back to fully establish His Kingdom on earth and on that day he will completely wipe out sin and death for ever and ever. And the Bible pleads with us to be ready for that day.

II. A People Prepared for His Coming

1. Blood on the door

— *A people prepared is like the blood on the door. (Exodus 12:1-28) As the Israelites ordered their days around that coming (liberation from Egypt), so we order our days around His return (liberation from all sin and death). In the same way that the Israelites put the blood of a lamb on a door, we put the blood of Jesus on our hearts. (Ephesians 1:7, Romans 5:9)*

2. Know his voice, know your context

— *When God said, I am coming, be prepared, they didn't hesitate to respond because their day-to-day reality fit into a larger context of a promise to a people through Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). In the same way, our reality also has context in the greater story of God. The context you live in grounds your faith and helps you to become the kind of people who will flourish in the kind of kingdom God is establishing. (Romans 8:5)*

— *Do we know of the promises of God that have already been fulfilled so that we can wait with confidence for the coming ones? — especially for the days when the Kingdom does not feel like it's coming and it certainly doesn't feel at hand. Those are the moments that what you have fed your faith matters and enables you to stand on a story that is larger than your bad day/year.*

— *In Jesus' coming alone we have well over 300 fulfilled prophecies. Of these that have been fulfilled in part, the hope of the gospel is that he will return and they will be fulfilled in full.*

III. A People Preparing for His Staying

— *The inner desire of our heart actually moves the heart of God. We prepare a way for the Lord through our anticipation of His coming. We are not preparing out of fear of judgment, or fear of death. We are compelled by love and belief that life with Jesus is the only life worth living. (Isaiah 66:13, Isaiah 49:15, Psalm 34:17, Exodus 3:7, Psalm 40:1, Isaiah 65:24, 1 John 5:14, etc.)*

— *Not only are we a people prepared for his coming but we are a people who are preparing for his staying. (2 Peter 3:11-12)*

— *The Genesis call to expand the dwelling place of God among his people still remains today. From Genesis through Revelation we see God's commitment to the idea of dwelling with His people. From an ark, to a tent, to a temple, to the hearts of his people,*