

Sermon notes - Need some inspiration?

Use these sermon notes by Brent van Mourik, to help weave Michael and Immaculate's story into your Christmas sermon.

May the God of *hope* fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the *power of the Holy Spirit*.

Romans 15:13

The God of Hope promises hope... for the future.

- One of the key tenets of the Christian faith is hope for the future. Just as Christ could endure the cross because of the joy that was set before Him (Hebrews 12:2) we press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward (Phil. 3:14).
- The promise of eternal peace in God's presence is what keeps us pressing on - it's what helps us to suffer well (Romans 8:18-25; cf. 2 Cor. 4:17-18) and we look forward to it as that time when God will complete the work he has begun doing in us (Phil. 1:6).

"Earth's troubles fade in the light of heaven's hope." - Billy Graham.

The God of hope fills His people in the present with "all joy and peace".

- But we cannot and should not fall into the trap of embracing 'escapist theology'. We don't just suffer the present with gritted teeth, as we wait for God to call us on to our heavenly home. Instead, Paul asks in Romans 15:13, that God would, "fill us with all joy and peace" in (and for) the present.
- The hope we have for the future should fill us with all joy and peace in the present!

● What is Joy?

- Would those around us describe our lives as 'marked by joy'? They should! For we have eternal hope, the promise of eternal life with God in paradise. Not happiness (which is fickle) but abiding joy.
- The joy we exhibit is not our own, it is the joy of Christ shining out from within us (John 15:11).

● What is Peace?

- Because of the certainty we have about our destiny, we should also have an abiding sense of peace in whatever circumstances we face - God has won the day!
- Again, this is not peace that we, ourselves, are responsible, but God's peace that flows out of us (cf. Phil. 4:7). It is through our expression of this abiding peace that others will see the certainty we have about the future. Our sense of peace should challenge those around us!

"When our lives are filled with peace, faith and joy, people will want to know what we have." - David Jeremiah.

The God of Hope enables His people to "overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit".



- Just as our hope fills us with joy and peace, it should also drive us to love and service towards those around us. It should “overflow” out of us by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The hope within us is not fundamentally about us, it doesn't simply exist to improve our wellbeing. Our hope should also encompass those around us, and indeed the world around us.
- The heaven we look forward to is not some ethereal 'spirit' life, but a renewal of this creation, the cosmos in which we now live.

Rev. 21:1-5:

*Then I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”*

- If we take seriously the picture of heaven described in the Scriptures, we will be compelled to not only declare – but demonstrate the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ. Our hope will overflow in the form of many blessings, to those we seek to reach with the Good News.

Let your hope overflow this Christmas. Bless families in Uganda like Michael and Immaculate’s.

- At Christmas, we celebrate the beginning of this grand story of hope for the future, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus came to earth to begin this renewing work, seeking to see humanity restore its relationships with God, with self, with others, and with creation. But the work He began, He has now entrusted to us (2 Cor. 5:19) to pursue on earth by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:13).
- We are to overflow with hope, demonstrating that there is a better world to be had under the headship of Christ.
- This Christmas, we have the opportunity to let the overflow of our hope in Jesus impact the lives of the world’s most poor around the world through the work of Baptist World Aid.
- *Play Michael and Immaculate’s story of hope in dark places. Invite people to give and bless families like theirs in Uganda.*