

THERE IS HOPE SERMON 7.0

■ (LOGO)

THERE IS HOPE IS THE NAME OF A BRAND NEW SERIES WE START TODAY.

MY NAME'S **RENE**, ONE OF THE PASTORS HERE AT TLC.

- IF YOU HAVEN'T YET, I ENCOURAGE YOU TO DOWNLOAD YOUR MESSAGE NOTES at **tlc.org/notes**

YOU'LL FIND THE **NOTES** FOR **THIS** TALK --**AND QUESTIONS** YOU CAN USE FOR YOUR **OWN** STUDY, OR AS **GROUP DISCUSSION STARTERS**.

I WANT TO **ENCOURAGE** YOU -- SET UP A **HOME** GROUP WITH SOME **FRIENDS**. GO OVER THE **QUESTIONS**, **PRAY** FOR EACH OTHER.

IF YOU'D LIKE **HELP**, **EMAIL** OUR **PASTOR OF CONNECTIONS JIM JOSSELYN** AND HE CAN HELP GET YOU SET UP.

WE **ALL** NEED A GOOD DOSE OF HOPE RIGHT NOW.

- **TIME MAGAZINE'S LATEST ISSUE, COVER** HEADLINE, **FINDING HOPE**. THE **ENTIRE ISSUE** DEVOTED TO THE IMPORTANCE OF HOPE
-

WHAT MAKES THIS SO IMPORTANT **RIGHT NOW?** I WAS ON A ZOOM VIDEO CALL WITH A DOCTOR FROM STANFORD LAST WEEK AND HE TALKED ABOUT

- THE **COVID CURVE** THAT WE'VE ALL SEEN SO MUCH. BUT HE SAID THERE'S ALSO A COVID

■ **EMOTION CURVE** -- THIS ARC HAPPENS IN ANY TIME OF REAL CRISIS, LIKE A DEATH OR A FRIGHTENING DIAGNOSIS.

■ ABOUT **ONE WEEK IN**, THERE'S ALMOST A **MANIC** LEVEL OF ACTIVITY AS YOU SCRAMBLE TO ADAPT. YOU'RE FEELING **MOTIVATED**, SHOWING **INITIATIVE**, BUT AT ABOUT

■ **FOUR WEEKS** THE **MANIC...** TURNS TO **DEPRESSIVE**.

IT'S HARDER TO GET UP IN THE MORNING, YOU FEEL **SLUGGISH**.

YOU'RE STARTING TO **GRIEVE** WHAT WAS LOST.

TO **DESPAIR**-- HOW MUCH LONGER THIS CAN GO ON.

I KNOW I FEEL THAT MORE NOW THAN EARLIER. **THAT'S** WHAT'S HAPPENING **RIGHT NOW**. AND THAT MEANS **THIS** IS THE MOMENT... WE NEED

■ **HOPE**. MORE THAN **EVER**.

HOPE... THAT WE WILL GET THROUGH THIS.

HOPE.. THAT IT WON'T ALWAYS BE LIKE THIS.

HOPE... THAT GOD WILL WORK THROUGH THIS.

HOPE IS **NOT** A LUXURY.

AN ARTICLE IN THE

■ **JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION** TALKED ABOUT THE: **IMPORTANCE OF HOPE**

SUMMARIZED SEVERAL STUDIES SHOWING

■ **Patients with hope** – ALL OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL--

■ **Heal faster,**

- Live longer, THEIR
- Mental health is better

BUT YOU NEED A SPECIFIC **KIND** OF HOPE.

- Effective hope is...

- **Not just wishful thinking** LIKE: I HOPE I WIN THE LOTTERY! THAT'S JUST **WISHFUL** THINKING. "I HOPE THE RAIDERS WIN THE SUPERBOWL NEXT YEAR." THAT'S-- JUST **DELUDED** THINKING.

AND EFFECTIVE HOPE IS

- **Not just an emotion.**

BECAUSE FEELINGS ARE INCONSISTENT. THEY COME AND GO.

SO --WHAT IS **EFFECTIVE** "HOPE"?

EXPERTS SAY IT'S--

- **A perspective stemming from a deeply held world view.**
A perspective ON LIFE-- stemming from a deeply held world view.

LET'S TALK ABOUT **PERSPECTIVE** FOR A SECOND.

I **LOVE OPTICAL ILLUSIONS**. IN MY **DAILY VIDEO DEVOS** THIS WEEK I'LL BE SHARING SOME **MORE**. LIKE--

- **HERE'S ONE-- WHAT DO YOU SEE? MOST PEOPLE SEE AN OLD LADY, YOU SEE HER LARGE NOSE, HER EYES, HER HAIR UP IN A SCARF. BUT FLIP YOUR PERSPECTIVE**
- **180 DEGREES—AND NOW—IT'S A PRINCESS. WEARING A CROWN.**
- **SAME EXACT PICTURE—YOU JUST CHANGED YOUR PERSPECTIVE.**

AND THE SAME IS TRUE FOR **LIFE—ESPECIALLY FOR SUFFERING.**

■ **Your perspective changes your perception.**

IN THIS NEW SERIES --

WE'RE GOING TO LOOK AT A STORY IN THE BIBLE EVERY WEEK, OF SOMEONE IN A SEEMINGLY **HOPELESS** SITUATION.

AND HOW THEY **KEPT HOPE ALIVE**. AND IT **ALWAYS** COMES DOWN TO THIS, THEIR PERSPECTIVE.

THAT'S THE BIG IDEA FOR THIS SERIES—

- SO **TODAY** I WANT TO **START** THE SERIES-- WITH A **BIBLE** PASSAGE THAT **SETS UP** THE BIBLICAL **PERSPECTIVE** THAT YOU'LL SEE COME TO **LIFE** IN ALL THOSE STORIES.

THE HOPE PERSPECTIVE.

IN ROMANS CHAPTER 8 VERSES 18 THRU 28.

I **CANNOT OVER-EMPHASIZE** HOW IMPORTANT THIS IS FOR YOU AND ME TO GET THIS.

THIS WILL MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE AS TO HOW YOU HANDLE TOUGH TIMES.

AND THIS IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EVEN A LOT OF CHURCH GOING PEOPLE

LITTLE BACKGROUND: THE **AUTHOR** OF THESE WORDS,

- THE APOSTLE PAUL,
WAS AN **EXPERT** ON SUFFERING. LISTEN TO HIS RESUME:
- HE'S BEEN TORTURED, IMPRISONED, LEFT FOR DEAD,
SHIPWRECKED, TARGETED BY ASSASSINS, DISEASED. AND –

■ HOPEFUL

PAUL WAS NOT A MORBID GUY. HE **OVERFLOWED** WITH **HOPE**.

HOW?

WELL, YOU GET A PEEK INTO THE WAY HIS MIND WORKED.

■ HIS **PERSPECTIVE**. IN THESE VERSES.

THIS IS FROM HIS LETTER TO THE ROMANS--

ROMAN CHRISTIANS-- WHO ARE ABOUT TO BE **INTENSELY**
PERSECUTION UNDER **NERO**.

EVERYONE CAN SEE WHICH WAY THE WIND'S BLOWING.

SO THEY NEED THIS. DESPERATELY.

AND HE GIVES

■ FOUR TRUTHS ABOUT SUFFERING

THINK OF THESE AS **FOUR SIDES** TO A **FRAME**.

HE'S SAYING, FRAME THE PICTURE **THIS** WAY.

FIRST—

■ 1. **THIS IS TEMPORARY**

THIS TOO SHALL PASS.

I HAVE TO SHOW YOU THIS. ON WEDNESDAY NPR HAD AN
INTERVIEW WITH--

■ *(PIC)* THIS MAN, JOE NEWMAN.

HE'S 107.

LIVES IN A SENIOR COMMUNITY IN SARASOTA, FLORIDA. GET THIS—THAT'S HIS **FIANCÉE**, ANITA.

SHE'S **100. THEIR COMBINED AGE IS 207.**

JOE HAS MEMORIES OF THE LAST PANDEMIC IN 1918. HE WAS FIVE.

HE SAYS—

■ THIS OUTBREAK IS JUST ANOTHER PROBLEM --

HE SAYS, QUOTE:

■ "OVER 107 YEARS I'VE FACED A LOT OF OTHER PROBLEMS. **LIVING** IS A PROBLEM.
■ YOU CAN ONLY DO... WHAT YOU NEED TO DO... TO HANDLE THE PROBLEM THAT'S IN **FRONT** OF YOU **AT THIS MOMENT**,
■ AND **THIS** MOMENT IT'S A **VIRUS**. BUT **YOU WILL** ALWAYS HAVE SOME PROBLEM."

SO

■ "DO WHAT YOU CAN TODAY. AND THEN JUST HOPE FOR ANOTHER DAY TOMORROW."

AND THEN IN THE INTERVIEW, HIS FIANCEE SAYS,

■ "AND NOW I THINK IT'S TIME FOR OUR NAP."

WELL... PAUL IS SAYING SOMETHING SIMILAR.

LIVING IS A SERIES OF **PROBLEMS**—BUT-- **THIS IS TEMPORARY.**

■ ROMANS 8:18: **I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.**

THE WORD

- (HIGHLIGHT) “**CONSIDER**”. IS KEY.

IN THE GREEK, THAT LITERALLY MEANS,

- (GREEK BOX) **CALCULATE OR ANALYZE**. IT'S ACTUALLY THE WORD FROM WHICH WE GET OUR WORD "COMPUTER". IT MEANS **DO THE MATH**.

PAUL IS SAYING, YOU KNOW WHAT, **I DID THE MATH**. AND OUR PRESENT SUFFERINGS AREN'T WORTH **COMPARING** WITH THE GLORY THAT WILL BE REVEALED IN US.

-
- **MOTHER TERESA** HAD A FAMOUS LINE.

SHE'D SEEN A LOT OF SUFFERING.

- SHE SAID, “**COMPARED TO THE GLORIES OF HEAVEN, ALL OUR SUFFERING HERE ON EARTH WILL FEEL LIKE ONE NIGHT IN A BAD HOTEL.**”

PAUL WOULD AGREE,

HE SAYS --

- **For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Romans 8:19 NLT**

AND IT'S LIKE PAUL STOPS AT THIS POINT IN HIS LETTER, AND GOES, "OH... MAYBE YOU **ROMANS** DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M **TALKING** ABOUT."

-
- SO IN THE NEXT 8 VERSES PAUL KIND OF EXPLAINS THIS—HE SUMMARIZES THE BIBLICAL WORLD VIEW TO THESE ROMANS. KIND OF CLIFF NOTES ON THE BIBLE.
-

HE SAYS, POINT TWO:

■ **2. THE WORLD IS BROKEN**

WHY DO WE HAVE SO MUCH SUFFERING? BIG PERSPECTIVE?

VERSE 20:

■ **Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse.**

NOW IT'S NOT THAT GOD DID SOME HARRY POTTER LIKE CURSE WITH HIS WAND. IT JUST MEANS THAT SIN WEAKENED ALL OF CREATION LIKE A DISEASE.

IT'S LIKE THIS.

■ **(PLANET PIC) GOD CREATED THE WORLD **PERFECT**.**

BUT WAY BACK WHEN HUMANS FIRST REBELLED AGAINST GOD, AND SINNED,

■ **IT BROUGHT A CURSE ON THE WORLD. GOD'S PERFECT CREATION **CRACKED**, AND NOW IT DOESN'T **WORK RIGHT**.**

AND

■ **(OVER PIC) We live in a beautiful, yet broken world.**

ALTHOUGH WE CAN STILL SEE GOD'S **BEAUTY** – FORESTS AND FLOWERS, OCEANS, THEY'RE ALL SO BEAUTIFUL, BUT THEY'RE ALL **SUBJECT TO DEATH AND DECAY**.

WE LIVE IN A **BROKEN WORLD**.

ANOTHER TRANSLATION PUTS IT THIS WAY—ALL CREATION IS IN

■ **(SHOW VERSE) **BONDAGE TO DECAY**.**

FLOWERS **WILT**. FORESTS DON'T **LAST**.

YOU KNOW WHY YOUR BACK ACHES WHEN YOU GET UP IN THE MORNING IF YOU'RE OVER 40? IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE IN BONDAGE TO DECAY.

YOU KNOW WHY YOU NEED GLASSES TO READ? YOU'RE IN BONDAGE TO DECAY.

ALL OF US--NEWS FLASH--WE ARE IN BONDAGE TO DECAY.

BECAUSE SIN ENTERED THE WORLD. AND EVERYTHING'S BEEN UPSIDE DOWN SINCE.

-
- *(RESTORE POINT)* NOW WHY IS THIS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE?

BECAUSE IT MEANS SUFFERING IS **NOT** ALWAYS **DIRECTLY YOUR FAULT** -- OR -- GOD'S **DIRECT** PUNISHMENT —

YOU KNOW, I LOVE THOSE OLD CALVIN AND HOBBS COMICS.

- THERE'S ONE WHERE HOBBS IS TALKING TO CALVIN – SAYS, “YOU THINK THERE'S A GOD?”
- CALVIN THINKS ABOUT IT FOR AWHILE THEN SAYS, “WELL **SOMEBODY'S** OUT TO GET ME.”

IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN? **GOD'S MAD AT ME**. OR-- **I MUST HAVE MESSED UP** –

-
- PAUL SAYS, NO, GOD'S NOT OUT TO **GET** YOU. AND IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T PRAYED HARD ENOUGH OR SOMETHING.

WE JUST LIVE IN A **BROKEN WORLD**. BAD STUFF HAPPENS.

THESE EPIDEMICS—ARE BOUND TO CIRCULATE OCCASIONALLY. THE 1918 FLU. MEASLES.

THEY ARE AS INEVITABLE AS **EARTHQUAKES**-- AND AS **UNPREDICTABLE** AS EARTHQUAKES. THANKFULLY NOT AS **FREQUENT**.

YOU DIDN'T **DO ANYTHING BAD**. THEY ARE JUST PART OF LIFE...
ON THIS BROKEN PLANET.

BUT— HERE'S THE **GOOD** NEWS:

NUMBER 3:

■ **HEALING IS PROMISED.**

GOD HAS A PLAN.

REST OF THE VERSE:

- **But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. Romans 8:21**

- **For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Romans 8:22 NLT**

IT'S INTERESTING, THE WORD

- **"GROANING" -- APPEARS SEVERAL TIMES IN THESE VERSES.**

HERE IT SAYS **ALL CREATION** GROANS.

NEXT VERSE

- *(SHOW ALL OF VERSE 23) SAYS:*

And we believers also groan,

PAUL IS NOT SOME RELENTLESSLY UPBEAT, ANNOYING, “HEY, JUST LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,” PERSON.

SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT’S THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTIANITY— ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, NEVER BE DOWN. AND THEN WHEN THEY FEEL DOWN-- THEY FEEL LIKE **BAD CHRISTIANS**.

PAUL SAYS “HEY, NO, LIFE IS HARD. EVEN FOR **WE BELIEVERS**— ”

WE GROAN --

- **even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. Romans 8:23a NLT**

HE’S SAYING, HEY, YOU CAN **BE** A BELIEVER-- HAVE THE **SPIRIT --** AND **STILL** GET DOWN, STILL GRIEVE.

THAT’S OK.

BUT HE SAYS— UNDERNEATH THAT GRIEF, WE HAVE THIS **HOPE**:

- **We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. Romans 8:23b NLT**

NEW BODIES. LIKE-- JESUS HAD-- AT THE RESURRECTION.

THIS IS SO COOL: THIS “FUTURE **GLORY**” IS NOT GOING TO BE A **SPECTATOR** SPORT, WE’RE NOT GONNA SIT UP IN SOME COSMIC GRANDSTAND IN HEAVEN AND WATCH SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL UNFOLD IN THE UNIVERSE -- THAT GOD IS DOING-- IN WHICH YOU ACTUALLY HAVE NO PART.

YOU ARE GOING TO BE **PART** OF IT.

- C. S. LEWIS WHO WROTE THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA PUT IT LIKE THIS:

- We are to shine as the sun. When we see a sunrise or a beautiful forest now, we do not want merely to see beauty, though God knows even that is bounty enough –
- We want something else which can hardly be put into words -- to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.
- And one day... that door... on which we have been knocking all our lives will open at last.

AND ALL DISEASE AND DEATH WILL BE NO MORE.

PAUL SAYS,

- We were given this hope when we were saved.

NOW WATCH THIS.

If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently. Romans 8:24,25

WHAT'S HE SAYING? HE'S SAYING THIS **FUTURE** EVENT, THE **RESURRECTION**, IS **PART** OF THE PACKAGE OF YOUR **SALVATION**.

“We were given this hope when we were saved.”

IN OTHER WORDS. IT'S A **DONE DEAL**.

HAVE YOU FELT THAT WEIGHT LIFT WHEN YOU KNEW YOUR SINS WERE FORGIVEN?

HAVE YOU BEEN DRAWN IN LOVE TO JESUS?

WELL, JUST AS SURELY AS YOU HAVE **THAT** PART OF YOUR SALVATION—

YOU WILL HAVE THIS PART. YOU **WILL BE** RESURRECTED.

LISTEN-- IF YOU'VE BEEN SORT OF DISTRACTED UP TO NOW I WANT YOU TO HONE IN ON THIS.

WHAT YOU CHOOSE TO BELIEVE IS **AHEAD** FOR YOU-- **IN YOUR FUTURE**-- MAKES **SUCH** A DIFFERENCE TO HOW YOU LIVE NOW.

LET ME TELL YOU A TRUE STORY ABOUT THAT. HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE TOWN OF

- *(PIC 1)* FLAGSTAFF, MAINE?

DOESN'T **EXIST** ANYMORE. **WIPE OFF THE MAP.**

IN THE **1940S**, THE STATE OF **MAINE** DECIDED TO BUILD A **DAM** AT THE END OF THE VALLEY. AND THEY TOLD THE **PEOPLE HERE**, YOUR **WHOLE TOWN** WILL BE **UNDER WATER** IN **20 YEARS**.

- *(PIC 2)* AT THE **TIME**, FLAGSTAFF WAS A **LOVINGLY MAINTAINED** NEW ENGLAND **VILLAGE** WITH **TIDY HOMES** -- CUTE **SHOPS**.

THE STATE SAID— “WE WILL BUY ALL YOUR HOMES—AND—YOU CAN STILL LIVE IN THEM—**MORTGAGE FREE, RENT FREE**, FOR THE NEXT **20 YEARS**—UNTIL THE DAM IS BUILT.”

YOU'D THINK—GOOD DEAL, RIGHT?! WELL --

- *(PIC 3)* A REPORTER VISITED THE TOWN, WHERE HE HAD GROWN UP, JUST **ONE YEAR** AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT, AND TOOK PHOTOGRAPHS.

AND SAID—IT WAS ALMOST UNRECOGNIZABLE.

- *(PIC 4)* IT HAD FALLEN TO **PIECES**, EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE **DECADES** BEFORE THE DAM WAS FINISHED.

ALL **REPAIRS** STOPPED.

■ (PIC 5) BROKEN **WINDOWS** WEREN'T FIXED, **LITTER** WASN'T PICKED UP, **YARDS** WERE OVERGROWN.

■ (PIC 6) AND HE WROTE THIS GREAT SUMMARY LINE TO HIS STORY.

■ “Where there is no faith in the future, there is no power in the present.”

“Where there is no faith in the future, there is no power in the present.”

ALL THEY HAD TO LOOK FORWARD TO—WAS **DESTRUCTION**.

AND THAT'S WHAT IT'S LIKE TO THINK OF YOUR FUTURE AS HOPELESS.

YOU LAPSE—INTO-- DESPAIR--

■ (RESTORE POINT) BUT—IF PART **YOUR** PERSPECTIVE IS—**HEALING IS PROMISED**—YOU MOVE FORWARD WITH HOPE —

“WE'RE NOT ENDING UNDERWATER. WE'RE ENDING—**EMERGING** FROM THE DEEP—”

AND YOU ARE NOT ONLY GOING TO BE MORE HOPEFUL—YOU ARE GOING TO BE ACTIVE.

YOU'RE GOING TO FIX THOSE BROKEN WINDOWS.
YOU'RE GOING TO VOLUNTEER, YOU'RE GOING TO HELP PEOPLE,
AND **THIS** IS WHY YOU AND I NEED TO KEEP **PREACHING THE GOSPEL TO OURSELVES** OVER AND OVER.

BECAUSE--

■ THIS IS PART OF THE **GOSPEL**, WE WERE GIVEN THIS HOPE WHEN WE WERE SAVED.

OF COURSE THAT BEGS THE QUESTION—**AM** I SAVED?

WELL, PAUL HE HAS JUST FINISHED 7 CHAPTERS IN ROMANS EXPLAINING—THE **FREE GIFT** OF GOD IS LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A GIFT? YOU SIMPLY **RECEIVE** IT. **ACCEPT** IT. BACK TO THAT IN A MINUTE.

FIRST: THE FOURTH AND FINAL SIDE OF THE FRAME:

HEALING IS PROMISED AND IN THE MEANTIME. EVERY DAY--

■ 4. GOD IS WORKING

GOD IS WORKING, RIGHT NOW..

HOW? COUPLE WAYS PAUL MENTIONS:

■ VERSE 26: **And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. Romans 8:26a**

AND THEN HE GIVES AN EXAMPLE.

■ **For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us...**

EVER BEEN IN A SITUATION WHERE THERE IS **SO MUCH HEARTACHE** -- THAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW **HOW TO PRAY?**

I HAVE.

YOU'RE NOT SURE HOW TO **PRAY** ANYMORE.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN SURE WHAT YOU **BELIEVE** ANYMORE.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN SURE THERE **IS** ANY HOPE.

BECAUSE YOU'VE ALREADY ASKED GOD LIKE, 20 TIMES, AND IF YOU'RE LIKE ME YOU SOMETIMES THINK,

"OKAY, GOD, WHY AM I ASKING FOR THIS AGAIN? WHY AM I ASKING FOR THIS PERSON TO BE HEALED AGAIN? WHEN YOU DIDN'T KEEP HER WELL TO BEGIN WITH? I DON'T KNOW HOW TO **PRAY** FOR THIS. I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO **THINK** ABOUT THIS."

AND GOD GOES, " YOU ARE NOT BEING A **BAD** CHRISTIAN..."
I'LL PRAY **FOR** YOU. _____

- But the Holy Spirit prays for us... ...**with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.** Romans 8:26
-

GOD SAYS, "I WANT YOU TO **KNOW THIS . . .**

"IN THOSE MOMENTS WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE MAYBE YOU DON'T EVEN **BELIEVE** IN ME -- I'M PRAYING FOR YOU.

"WHEN YOU MAY FEEL YOU HAVE LOST FAITH IN ME. I'M STILL **INTERCEDING** FOR YOU."

- **And the Father, who knows all hearts, knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. Romans 8:27 NLT**
-

THIS MEANS GOD ISN'T WAITING FOR YOU TO USE THE **RIGHT FORMULA** BEFORE HE WILL ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS.

"DIDN'T SAY "IN JESUS' NAME AMEN", I'M NOT LISTENING."

I KNOW A WOMAN HERE AT TLC, AFTER THE BIRTH OF HER SECOND BABY SHE SAYS SHE WAS DROWNING IN POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION. HER THOUGHTS WERE SO SCATTERED MOST DAYS SHE COULDN'T EVEN PRAY.

SHE TOLD ME FOR MONTHS THIS WAS HER PRAYER: "**HELP! HELP! HELP!**" ONE WORD. REPEATED OVER AND OVER. "HELP."

AND SHE SAYS, I **KNEW** GOD GOT IT.

AND HE **DID** HELP.

SHE SLOWLY CAME OUT OF THAT. AND SHE SAYS I LEARNED SO MUCH DURING THAT TIME.

-
- AND THAT BRINGS ME TO ONE OF THE **GREATEST VERSES** IN THE **WHOLE BIBLE**, ROMANS 8:28:

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

WALK THROUGH THIS WITH ME.

- *(HIGHLIGHT)* “**we know**”.

PAUL’S GOING, “I’M TELLING YOU, I **KNOW**. I’VE **LIVED** ENOUGH TO **KNOW**. I’VE READ THE HEBREW **SCRIPTURES** ENOUGH TO KNOW. I’VE EXPERIENCED THIS AGAIN AND AGAIN IN MY **OWN** LIFE --

AND HERE’S **WHAT** I KNOW:

- ‘**that in all things—**”

REALLY? ALL THINGS? **ALL** THINGS.

IN **DEATH** HE WORKS. IN **SUFFERING** HE WORKS. IN **JOY** HE WORKS. IN **PAIN** HE WORKS.

WHEN THINGS WORK **OUT**, HE WORKS. WHEN THINGS **DON’T** WORK OUT,

- “**God works.**”

GOD.

HE WORKS.

HE'S THE HERO OF THE STORY.
HE'S THE ONE WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN.
HE'S THE ONE WHO TURNS IT AROUND.

HE'S THE ARTIST.
HE'S THE POTTER.
WE'RE THE CANVAS.
WE'RE THE CLAY.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO UNDERSTAND **HOW** OR **WHEN** HE'S GONNA
PULL THIS OFF – **GOD** WORKS--

■ **for the good.**

ALL THINGS FOR **GOOD**.

HE DOESN'T SAY THAT **ALL THINGS** ARE GOOD.

PAUL'S **NOT** THE GUY GOING, "IT'S ALL GOOD."

IT'S **NOT** ALL GOOD. THERE IS A LOT OF **BAD** IN THE WORLD.

YET, GOD TAKES EVEN THE **BAD** THINGS,

AND USES THEM **FOR** THE **GOOD**.

■ **... OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM, WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED
ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE."**

NOT **MY** PURPOSE. NOT **YOUR** PURPOSE. WE DON'T GET EVERYTHING
WE WANT.

HIS PURPOSE-- WILL **NEVER** BE THWARTED—NOT EVEN BY A
PANDEMIC.

THINK OF THE **SYMBOL** OF OUR FAITH:

■ *(CROSS PIC)* A **CROSS**.

SOMETIMES I WANT THE SYMBOL OF OUR FAITH TO BE A **FLOWER**
OR A **BEACH IN HAWAII**.

BUT-- IT'S A **CROSS**.

WHY?

GOD TOOK THE **WORST** THING EVER AND TURNED IT INTO THE
BEST THING EVER.

JESUS DIED ON THE CROSS –

AND WHAT HE **DID** ON THE CROSS WAS TAKE THE **PENALTY** OF
OUR SIN -- SO WE COULD RECEIVE **PARDON** FOR THE **PAST**
AND **POWER** FOR THE **PRESENT**
AND **PROMISE** FOR THE FUTURE.

AND THEN **ROSE** AGAIN. AS A PREVIEW OF OUR HOPE.

I MEAN-- FOR THE **CROSS** TO TURN INTO A SYMBOL OF **HOPE?**

THAT PROVES

■ THIS VERSE.

THERE IS **NOTHING** GOD CAN'T TURN **INTO** GOLD.

SO-- THINK BACK OVER THIS AMAZING PASSAGE.

■ *(4 POINTS)* GOD SAYS, "I KNOW IT'S TOUGH RIGHT NOW.

■ "BUT MY CHILD, THIS IS TEMPORARY.

■ AND THIS IS HAPPENING BECAUSE YOU WERE BORN INTO A
WORLD THAT IS BROKEN. BAD STUFF SOMETIMES HAPPENS.

- BUT HEALING IS PROMISED, I AM GONNA FIX IT ALL.
- AND IN THE MEANTIME, I AM **ALWAYS** ACTIVE, **ALWAYS** WORKING. TO BRING GOOD. EVEN OUT OF THE BAD.

THAT IS THE HOPE PERSPECTIVE.

I'LL CLOSE WITH SOMETHING THAT BROUGHT THIS HOME FOR ME IN A VERY PERSONAL WAY.

LAST MONTH-- MY COUSIN-- SENT ME AN **OLD HOME MOVIE** I HAD **NEVER SEEN BEFORE.**

- (MOVIE) AN MOVIE OF... **ME**, MY LITTLE SISTER **HEIDI**, MY **MOM**, AND MY AUNT PIA. TAKEN RIGHT AFTER MY **DAD'S FUNERAL.**

I'VE MENTIONED TO MANY OF YOU HOW – WHEN I WAS ABOUT 4– MY DAD DIED. AT AGE 36, OF CANCER.

AND SEEING THIS BROUGHT IT ALL BACK.

THIS WAS MY LITTLE WORLD BACK THEN.

NOW-- I WANT TO READ YOU SOMETHING MY MOTHER WROTE... **THEN.**

SHE WAS **34**, A WIDOW WITH THOSE TWO LITTLE KIDS, AND SHE WROTE THIS POEM I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU. SHE NEVER SHOWED THIS TO ME, I FOUND THIS LATER IN SOME OF HER PAPERS. DATED WINTER OF 1965.

-
- **When my husband died I cried out to God,
I am so lonely**

-
- **You took my very dearest
My best friend
My lover
My husband**

- The father of my children
- Just take me too.
 - then Jesus said:
 - “I know your pain
I too shed tears.
I too was separated from my father
And I did it all for you.
 - Give me your sorrows
Your pain, your fears
I will carry them for you.
I will also be your husband
And father to your children
 - And something else I will give you
 - My peace –
 - a peace the world
Does not understand because they don’t know me
 - Take my hand and
We will walk together.
Believe in me.

I'M HERE TO TELL YOU. YOU MAY NOT KNOW **WHAT** TO MAKE OF ALL THIS CHRISTIAN STUFF.

BUT I SAW IT. I **DID**. I SAW MY MOTHER... **FRAME** HER SUFFERING WITH THIS **PERESPECTIVE**.

AND I SAW HER **WALK TOGETHER WITH JESUS...**

AND I **KNOW** JESUS IS HERE TODAY TOO.

AND HE SAYS TO **YOU**:

EXACTLY... **THAT. TAKE MY HAND. WE WILL WALK TOGETHER. BELIEVE IN ME.** IT REALLY IS **THAT SIMPLE.**

■ LET'S PRAY.

LORD, I PRAY THAT TODAY WE WOULD **ALL** TURN TO YOU IN THIS MOMENT..

NOW-- **YOU** PRAY. IF IT REFLECTS YOUR HEART, SAY, "DEAR JESUS CHRIST, TODAY I'M CHOOSING-- TO TAKE YOUR HAND. SO WE WILL WALK TOGETHER. I BELIEVE IN YOU.

HELP ME TO REMEMBER-- THIS IS TEMPORARY --THE PAIN OF THIS BROKEN WORLD IS NOT GOING TO BE FOREVER.

HEALING IS PROMISED. AND YOU ARE **ALWAYS** WORKING.

NOW-- HELP ME TO **REACH OUT** WITH **YOUR** LOVE TO THOSE WHO ARE HURTING AROUND ME --

AND LORD WE PRAY FOR THOSE ON THE FRONT LINES OF THIS CRISIS.

DOCTORS, NURSES,
THE FIRST RESPONDERS, FIREFIGHTERS, EMERGENCY
RESPONDERS, LAW ENFORCEMENT,
WE PRAY FOR THE RESEARCHERS, THE SCIENTISTS,
AND OF COURSE FOR THE VICTIMS, FAMILIES. THE UNEMPLOYED.
THOSE IN FINANCIAL CRISIS.

GIVE THEM YOUR STRENGTH, AND HELP **US** TO HELP **THEM** IN YOUR NAME.

IN **JESUS'** NAME, AMEN.

■ *(OFFERING AND PRAYER SLIDE)*

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE PRAYER TODAY OR THIS WEEK.
PLEASE GO TO TLC.ORG/PRAYER.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU –

WE ARE GOING TO RECEIVE OUR OFFERING NOW, IF YOU WOULD
LIKE TO PARTICIPATE, YOU CAN FIND OUT HOW BY GOING TO
TLC.ORG/GIVE.

THANK YOU SO MUCH..

NOW LET'S HEAR A NEW SONG FROM TRENT AND ELIZABETH THAT
DOVETAILS PERFECTLY INTO THE SCRIPTURE WE STUDIED
TODAY...