

HARVEST ROCK CHURCH

RESURRECTION HOPE

EASTER SERVICE

Dr. Ché Ahn

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TEXT: 1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

INTRO: I want to talk about Resurrection Hope. According to our text, **the resurrection of Jesus is the foundation for all true hope in life.** We are born again to a living hope. This hope is alive within all believers.

Today, the world is in desperate need of this living hope especially in light of the devastating coronavirus, or COVID-19.

We are in an unprecedented time in the history of the world. This is a global crisis. 184 nations have been infected with this virus. The whole world has been locked down. Sadly, the number of lives lost globally is over 90,000 and counting. The number of U.S. deaths is over 15,000 and counting. Over 17 million have filed for unemployment in the USA alone. Never in the history of the world have we gone through something like this.

If you are like me, you may have been fighting despair and discouragement, but I want to give you hope. I want to help you to renew your mind that God has given you this living hope. It is supernatural. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we too have hope for tomorrow.

I. THE GOD OF HOPE

A. **1 Corinthians 13:13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.** The greatest is love, but hope is up there with love and faith.

1. What is hope? **Hope is the confident expectation of good from a good heavenly Father.**
2. James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

B. WE SEE GOD GIVING HOPE IN TIMES OF DESPAIR

1. **Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” (NLT)**
2. The psalmist says three times in two back-to-back Psalms, Psalm 42:5,11 and Psalm 43:5:
3. **Psalm 43:5 Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again, my Savior and my God! (NLT)**
4. **You have to make a choice to hope.** You can choose to be in despair, or you can choose to be positive and have a confident expectation of good coming from a good heavenly Father.

II. RESURRECTION HOPE

A. **BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT LOVE AND MERCY FOR YOU, YOU CAN BE BORN AGAIN**

1. **1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**

2. “According to His great mercy.” We don’t deserve it.
- B. BECAUSE JESUS LIVES, WE ARE BORN AGAIN TO A LIVING HOPE**
1. Unbelievers hope to be in heaven, but they are not sure. Because we have a living hope, we can be sure. We call this the assurance of salvation.
 2. In Acts 23:6 Paul talks about how he was on trial for the “hope of the resurrection from the dead.”
 3. We have confidence that as God raised Jesus from the dead, and because we have experienced the power of His resurrection by being born again, we know that we will be raised from the dead. We too have eternal life.
 4. John 16:33b In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.
 5. **Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.**
 6. God is giving us grace to become more Christlike. He is developing our character. We need to choose to be positive and stay grateful.
 7. Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
 8. Greatness is measured by how you handle adversity and difficulty in life. Every great person went through a trial, or a dark time, but was able to persevere.
 9. Through much tribulation, we will enter the Kingdom (Acts 14:20).
 10. Colossians 1:27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
 11. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 12. God saved me from an immoral lifestyle and drug addiction as He called me out of darkness into His glorious light. He supernaturally delivered me from drugs—because of His great mercy!
 13. Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.
 14. **The greatest defense for the resurrection of Jesus is transformed lives.**
- C. This year, we might get the closest taste to what that first Easter was like!**
1. In John 20, John describes the very first Easter. The disciples were afraid they were going to be arrested. They wanted to believe the good news they heard from the women, that Jesus had risen. But it seemed too good to be true. They were living in a time of such despair and such fear. Very much like our season with COVID-19. **If they left their homes, their lives and the lives of their loved ones might be at risk.**
 2. Then Jesus appeared to them supernaturally. He walked through the walls. C.S. Lewis believes that the molecules of the wall parted, like the Red Sea, as Jesus walked through.
 3. **John 20:19 So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”**

4. **The resurrection of Jesus changed their lives. They went from fear to faith. From despair to hope. From depression to a sense of destiny.** Jesus gave them their marching orders, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” God the Father sent Jesus to preach the Good News, heal the sick, cast out demons, and raise the dead. They left their “quarantine” and they went out as bold witnesses, and most became martyrs for their faith.
5. This year, we are experiencing a taste of what that first Easter was like, still in our homes daring to believe that hope is on the horizon.
6. I see the light at the end of the tunnel. I believe that it will soon be safe to gather together, proclaiming the good news that God brings life even out of death, that love always has the final say!

CONCLUSION: PRAY THIS PRAYER

Jesus, I ask You to forgive me for all my sins. I repent. I give You my life, my heart. I ask You to be the Lord (Boss) over my life. I surrender all. By God’s grace I will obey You, follow You, and trust You no matter what. In Jesus’ name I pray.