

## **Keep Hope Alive** (Rev. Anthony Menzel, June 6, 2021)

Today we are having a special prayer for Memorial Day...

We decided to have that prayer the week after Memorial Day instead of the week before so that we can dedicate as much time as possible to honoring those who have given the ultimate sacrifice to protect us all...

Many traditions come from God...

He wants us to remember our blessings

Exodus 12:14-17

**14** ‘So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. **15** Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that [d]person shall be [e]cut off from Israel. **16** On the first day *there shall be* a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that* which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. **17** So you shall observe *the Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for on this same day I will have brought your [f]armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.

I believe that Memorial Day in the United States is a godly tradition because on Memorial Day, we remember those military personnel who died to protect the freedoms which the United States represents to many...

John 15:13

**13** Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

When we remember the fallen troops on Memorial Day, we honor the greatest demons of love, and we strengthen the loved ones that these fallen heroes left behind...

Dad-Special Prayer, elections

No matter what country you are from, you should appreciate the people that work hard to protect the nation..,

Those could be firemen, police, medical personnel, military personnel

I want to pray for all military, emergency, and medical personnel...  
Strengthen the honest ones, be with their families and the families of those that have sacrificed their lives, and cancel the impact of those who are corrupt and give a bad name to those who are honest...

If you have the privilege to vote in fair elections, show the Lord Jesus that you are grateful for that opportunity by participating in those elections:

Remember

Psalm 33:12

Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the Lord,  
The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

In addition to the special prayer at the beginning of the service, we have some additional words from the Lord...

Keep Hope Alive

Going back to at least the Rev Jesse Jackson, different people have used this phrase...

After I got this word from the Lord this week, I looked it up and remembered that others had used this phrase...

But I received this word first from the Holy Spirit...

I believe that He gave it to me because these are dark days for many:

Rev. 21:1-8

**21** Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. **2** Then I, [a]John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. **4** And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

**5** Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said [b]to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

**6** And He said to me, “It[c] is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. **7** He who overcomes [d]shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. **8** But the cowardly, [e]unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

We know what is going to happen in the end...

The devil may win some battles, but in the end, the Lord Jesus and all of us who remain faithful to Him win...

I am here to encourage you today...

Some of you may be losing your hope...

Some of you may have lost hope...

I want to encourage you that there is hope in Jesus Christ, and it is a real hope that no one can take away from you.

Romans 5:1-5

**5** Therefore, having been justified by faith, [a]we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **3** And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces [b]perseverance; **4** and perseverance, [c]character; and character, hope. **5** Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

The most important thing we can have and the most important thing we can pray for is for salvation and spiritual well being.

Every other blessing is secondary to salvation and spiritual blessings.

1 Thessalonians 4:**13-18**

**13** But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen [b]asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. **14** For if we believe that

Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who [c]sleep in Jesus.

**15** For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are [d]asleep. **16** For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. **17** Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. **18** Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Some people believe that passages like this indicate that the dead are asleep, which does give some hope regarding our Christian loved ones that have passed away...

However, the Bible gives us even more hope about our loved ones who have passed away...

2 Corinthians 5:6-8

**6** So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. **7** For we walk by faith, not by sight. **8** We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

\*\*\*You may be battling with poverty, but remember that if you have the Lord Jesus,  
you are rich...

Revelation 2:8-11

### **The Persecuted Church**

**8** “And to the [d]angel of the church in Smyrna write,  
‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: **9** “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a [e]synagogue of Satan. **10** Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

**11** “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” ’

If you have the Lord Jesus, you have the greatest riches and riches that can never be destroyed...

Matthew 6:19-21

**19** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; **20** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

\*\*\*For those who are facing difficulties in your families...

Maybe you have unsaved loved ones...

Maybe you have loved ones who are rebelling against God in different ways...

Remember promises like

James 5:16-18

**16** [j]Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, [k]fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. **17** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. **18** And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Keep praying for and sowing love into the lives of your loved ones until they give their lives to the Lord Jesus.

Salvation should always be our first and foremost prayer for loved ones who aren't following the Lord Jesus...

Physical health and financial prosperity are not as important as salvation...

**Luke 9:23-26**

**23** Then He said to *them* all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [b]daily, and follow Me. **24** For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. **25** For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? **26** For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and *in His* Father's, and of the holy angels.

\*\*\*If you are struggling with health issues or even if things are stable but you just feel bored with your life, remember that you have hope, real hope...

In the name of Jesus Christ, you have access to everything you need...

John 16:23-24

**23** “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. **24** Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

If you stay faithful to the Lord Jesus, you will have the victory, sooner or later...

2 Corinthians 2:14

**14** Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us [d]diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

Just keep seeking the Lord Jesus...

Even if it's in heaven, He will give you a victory that's real and permanent...

Hebrews 11:35-40

**35** Women received their dead raised to life again.

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. **36** Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. **37** They were stoned, they were sawn in two, [k]were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— **38** of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in* dens and caves of the earth.

**39** And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, **40** God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Whatever problem you are facing, the key to keeping hope alive in your heart and life is to keep your focus on the Lord Jesus...

Hebrews 12:1-4

**12** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking unto Jesus, the [a]author and [b]finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**The Discipline of God**

**3** For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. **4** You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.

One of the main ways to stay focused on the Lord Jesus is to pray:

1 Thessalonians 5:17

**17** pray without ceasing,

Another main way to stay focused on the Lord Jesus is to make your soul's refuge the Word of God...

Not only by reading It but also by applying It to your life...

Joshua 1:8

**8** This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you[c] shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.