

Summary

This sermon begins a new series on 1 Peter, focusing on the living hope believers have in Christ despite suffering. Pastor explains that First Peter addresses three key questions: what hope do we have, why do we still face suffering despite this hope, and how should we live in light of our hope while facing trials. The sermon provides context about Peter's life as a disciple who experienced both great spiritual highs and devastating failures, yet was restored by Jesus. Written around 64 AD from Rome to scattered believers facing persecution, this letter offers practical guidance on maintaining hope amid suffering. The pastor outlines four foundations of Christian hope: who our hope is in (Jesus Christ, not ourselves), what our hope is for (something that cannot perish or fade), the worth of our hope (greater than any suffering), and the warrant for our hope (fulfilled prophecies and Christ's resurrection).

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather today to discuss the living hope we have in Christ, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to Your truth. Help us to see beyond our current circumstances and trials to the unshakable hope we have in Jesus. Guide our conversation today, Lord, and reveal to each person exactly what You want them to learn. May this time together draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What's something you hoped for as a child that you eventually received? How did waiting for it make you feel?

Key Verses

1. 1 Peter 1:3-4
2. 1 Peter 1:6-7
3. 1 Peter 1:8-9
4. John 21:18-19

Questions

1. How would you explain the difference between worldly hope (which is more like wishing) and the living hope Peter describes?
2. The pastor mentioned that our hope is in who Jesus is, not in what we do. How does this truth change how we approach difficult circumstances?
3. Peter writes that trials come to prove the genuineness of our faith. Can you share a time when suffering actually strengthened your faith?
4. How does knowing that our inheritance is "incorruptible and undefiled" affect how we view the temporary things of this world?

5. The sermon mentioned that Peter had to be corrected multiple times even after his restoration. How does this encourage you in your own spiritual journey?
6. What's the difference between asking God to transform our circumstances versus asking Him to transform us through our circumstances?
7. The pastor said, "Our hope is not in any of the places or people of this world, but in Jesus Christ alone." Where are you tempted to place your hope other than in Christ?
8. How can we maintain an "irrational confidence even in impossible circumstances" as mentioned in the sermon?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of suffering or challenge in your life. Instead of simply praying for God to remove it, intentionally ask Him what He wants to teach you through it. Each day, spend time journaling about how God might be using this difficulty to refine your faith and transform you more into the image of Christ. Then, look for one practical way you can use this challenge as an opportunity to share the living hope of Jesus with someone else who may be struggling.

Key Takeaways

1. Our hope is in Jesus Christ alone, not in ourselves, our good works, or any worldly power.
2. The Christian hope is for something that cannot perish, spoil, or fade - unlike everything in this world.
3. Suffering is not wasted but serves to refine our faith like fire refines gold, removing impurities and making us more like Christ.
4. Our hope in Christ is not blind faith but is warranted by fulfilled prophecies and the historical reality of the resurrection.
5. We are called to allow God to transform us through our suffering while participating in His work of transforming the world.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the living hope we have in You - a hope that stands firm even in the midst of our greatest trials. We confess that we often place our hope in things that will perish, spoil, and fade away. Forgive us and redirect our hearts. Help us to see our suffering not as punishment or meaningless pain, but as opportunities for You to refine us and make us more like You. Give us the courage to allow You to transform us through our difficulties rather than just asking for them to be removed. And Lord, use us as bearers of Your living hope in a world desperate for something real and lasting. May we live this week with irrational confidence in You, even in impossible circumstances. In Your powerful name we pray, amen.