

# Advent: Hope in the Gospel

Romans 4.13-5.2

## Do you believe the Gospel has the power to affect every aspect of your life?

- Are there places in your life where you do not believe in God? Where your HOPE lies somewhere else?

## 2 Gospels of Hope

### 1. Works & Obedience

- underlining current= I am a "good person".

### 2. Faith

- underlining current= I am NOT good
- we stand BROKEN before our creator knowing full well that all we deserve for Christmas is punishment.
- But we trust that even though we deserve punishment, God will extend to us GRACE

## The Gospel (for every part of our lives)

### Sin

- We are all guilty. "Law brings transgression" —> Wrath
- Because of our sin we are Dead and our bodies are enslaved

### Separation

- God is holy and cannot be connected to sin
- There is a gap (no matter how small) that you cannot fix, no matter how "good" you are

### Sacrifice - not yours, but Jesus'

- Jesus, Son of God, came down and lived a sinless life. He became the punishment (meant for us) on the cross. He is raised to life to proclaim victory over sin & death

### Surrender

- We must then, turn from the way we are living
- AND believe in faith

## Identifying The Promise

### Abraham's Promise [Genesis 12]

- God asks him to leave the place he was living (Surrender)
- In return: Abraham will become a great nation and his name will be great
- God will bless Abraham and bless others through Abraham

### THE Promise [Genesis 3]

- Adam, Eve, & the Serpent are cursed because of their disobedience
- The Serpent will continue to tempt and there will continually be enmity between her offspring and him.
- ONE DAY there will be one who crushes the head of the tempter. He makes all things right.

## HOPE

### Confidence in the promises of God, rooted in the work of Christ

- Remembering God's redemptive acts in History ('calls into existence')
  - What are the things that God has done in your life? your family? the church?
  - How are you reminding yourself of these things?
- Trusting His plan in the present
  - What do you do when things are not going as they seem?
  - How are you trusting in the promises of God right now?
  - Have you identified the Promise?

## Small Group Questions

*NOTE: The promise question that is identified with (\*\*) is the main question that we want you to talk about in small group this week. So if you feel like it will take your entire time, only do that question. If you feel like the other questions would be helpful to prime the pump for the final question, then do them in that order. Many in your group will struggle with the question, but that doesn't mean that they have not been given a promise from God. BUT do beware of the name it and claim it theology that has infiltrated our Baptist belief. Just because someone wants something to be a promise from God, does not mean that it will be. Also, if it goes in opposition to what the Bible says to be true, it is probably not a promise from God.*

We identified 2 Gospels of Hope that our culture has: 1. Works & Obedience 2. Faith. Obviously we want to land on the 2nd one most often, but what are the factors that cause you to drift to the 1st?

- What are some spiritual practices that you find yourself neglecting during this drift?
- How do you snap out of it?

Abraham was called by God in Genesis 12 and given a promise. The promise of Isaac was not fulfilled until Genesis 21. Spend some time as a group looking through those 10 chapters and identify characteristics of Abraham and Sarah's faith - both positive and negative.

- How do you resemble some of these faith characteristics?
- What would it look like for you to have a faith like Abraham.

(\*\*)Abraham was given a specific promise from God and that fueled his faith. Many of us do not feel the same way. We do not feel as if there is any specific promise that God has given to us, individually. We feel as if God has given promises to many people around us, but not to "me and my family." Look back on your spiritual journey. What are some things that God has done that may be identified as Promises?

- Now that you have identified some from your past, what are some promises that God still has for you and your family?
- Where/When did God reveal to you these promises and how have you held on to them?