
The Heartbeat of Hope:
“True Hope for Real Life”
John 10: 7-10 and 1 Peter 1: 3-12

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“People who believe in the resurrection, in God making a whole new world in which everything will be set right at last, are unstoppably motivated to work for that new world in the present.” – N.T. Wright

“For centuries, philosophers, theologians, novelists, and artists have described the human predicament and then prescribed a cure, or at least a salve. They have then estimated the likelihood that the prescription will work. That is, they’ve offered a prognosis. Hope is the reach of our hearts for the cure. It’s the reach of our hearts toward what we think will fulfill us, secure us, save us – and not just us, but also the whole world. To be a Christian is to participate in this very common human enterprise of diagnosis, prescription, and prognosis, but to do so from inside a Christian view of the world, a view that has been constructed from Scripture and that centers on Jesus Christ the Risen Savior.” – Cornelius Plantinga

“ O Israel, hope in the LORD!” – Psalm 130:7

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- Where is “real life” encroaching, complicating, exhausting you right now?
- John 10:10 gives voice to the reality of thieves and enemies breaking in, stealing, destroying the life Jesus created and is redeeming.
 - What actual or spiritual opposition are you facing?
 - What is it doing to you?
- How is the “true hope” of the gospel (John 10:10 and 1 Peter 1:3) connecting to the “real life” you are confronting?
 - What relief are you experiencing in the midst of it all?
 - What relief would you like to be experiencing in the midst of it all?
- “True hope” also signifies that there are false hopes and approximations of “life abundantly”. The brokenness of “real life” can push in those directions.
 - What strategies to counteract the brokenness of life are you susceptible to? What approximations do you settle for? What, besides the LORD, are you hoping in?
 - How are they working for you?
 - What is attractive about them?
- Real life has the other meaning, too p the life that is to come because of Jesus’ victory and reign.
 - What is the hope/basis for hope Peter and Jesus describe in these passages?
 - Where is that “real life” breaking into the present for you? How are you helping?
 - What/who needs the foretasted of the real life to come in your life?