

Our Hope is in a Relationship with Jesus

Some thoughts on Kelvin's sermon (29 March 2020) for Journey Groups
by Rodney Entwistle

Perhaps start by having one of your group read aloud the following thoughts

By his personal conversion testimony and life experiences in dangerous times in Israel, Kelvin reminded us last Sunday (thanks Kelvin!) that through Jesus and His provision of salvation for sinners, we have a sure hope (Heb 6:19), and hence God-given peace (Phil 4:7) – regardless of the situation and circumstances in which we find ourselves. He reminded us of that “our eyes must always be upon the Lord for He, and He alone, saves us”.

Did you notice that Kelvin was looking for (and praise God found) “real hope” and “genuine hope”? There are indeed false hopes – false because they are founded on untruths or man-made thoughts. Our “genuine” hope is a result of the truth of the gospel (Jn 14:6). Jesus *is* our real hope because He *is* the truth and we *know* our future. To God be the glory!

The panic-stricken disciples, who were well-experienced with the Sea of Galilee, implored Jesus to help them (this storm was clearly extraordinary and deadly) and when Jesus “rebuked the wind and the sea”, they “marveled” at His authority. Jesus then, *as now*, has complete authority over the physical creation.

The peace of God is given freely to believers – those who are ‘In Christ’ (Jn 14:27). Kelvin recounted and gave witness to the God-given peace that he and Lexie experienced within the thick of serious danger and strife.

It is very common for people whom Jesus is calling to notice ‘a difference’ in a Christian acquaintance. Kelvin saw it in the demeanor of his fellow kibbutznik. At this time, which Kelvin observes is “unparalleled in modern history”, he exhorts us: “We don’t seek for people to marvel at us, or be amazed at us – BUT our desire is that people will see Jesus in us, and will marvel and be amazed at Him”.

Do you agree with this bullet point summary of Kelvin’s sermon?

(Try to add one additional scripture to each bullet point to further support the point from scripture. Add additional points that you think result in a better summary.)

- Jesus revealed to his disciples, and to us, that he is in total control of the physical world (Matt 8:26).
- Kelvin sought hope. [Additional thought: All humans seek, and actually need, hope. (One of the points used frequently by Ravi Zacharias in his presentations.)]
- True genuine hope is found only in Jesus and our redemption by Him. (Ps 130:5-7)
- In light of the true hope, God gives peace – even in the ‘storm’. (Rm 5:1, Ph 4:6-7)
- We need to experience God afresh each day (Mt 6:11) and understand our status before God (Rm 8:1-2).
- Our challenge is to (i) trust God through Jesus, (ii) know that our hope is founded solely on Him who has authority over the winds and over the sea.

Here are some questions for you to discuss within you group

1. Kelvin drew our attention to Jesus being sovereign over the physical world – the wind and the seas obeyed His wish! You might also read Is 40:9-31.

List several ways that a greater understanding of God's sovereignty will help you to trust Him and His perfect timing.

2. If God is sovereign, and you are actually a part of Christ's body (Paul's "in Christ"), what knowledge will lead us to be at peace while experiencing a 'storm'?
3. The demeanour of Kelvin's Christian kibbutznik friend within a crisis was noticed - and still recalled all these years later. In our own times of crisis (such as now!) can our own demeanour be a powerful witness to unbelievers of Christ's peace and the certain hope he gives us?

Bonus material!

Since this A4 page has a space here, I'll include one of my favourite stories about the Christian's witness through demeanour in times of stress. It is recounted by B.B. Warfield (1851 – 1921).

We have the following bit of personal experience from a general officer in the United States army. He was in a great western city at a time of intense excitement and violent rioting. The streets were over-run daily by a dangerous crowd. One day he observed approaching him a man of singularly combined calmness and firmness of mien, whose very demeanor inspired confidence. So impressed was he with his bearing amid the surrounding uproar that when he had passed he turned to look back at him, only to find the stranger had done the same. On observing his turning the stranger at once came back to him, and touching his chest with his forefinger, demanded without preface: "What is the chief end of man?" [the first question in the Westminster Shorter Catechism] On receiving the countersign, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever"[the Catechism's answer] – "Ah!" said he, "I knew you were a Shorter Catechism boy by your looks!" "Why, that was just what I was thinking of you," was the rejoinder.