



Sermon
Rev. Dr. Lang Yang

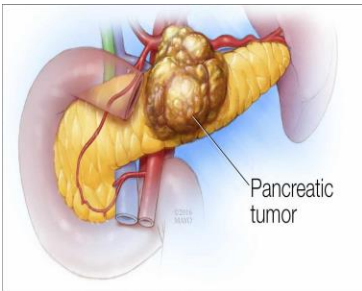
“Hope In God”

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lansing, MI
7-1-18

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! Amen

Lamentations 3:25 *“The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him.”* This is the word of God. (Cross reference – Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 25:9; 26:9)

Illustration (Pancreatic tumor) “Show pancreatic tumor”



Mrs. La Hang, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. As she laid on her hospital bed, many of her relative have come to see her. In the waiting room, everyone were saying these words: “How could this happen to her? Why did she have to have this terrible disease?” She still had a full life ahead of her. When I visited her, I began to notice that most of the relatives who came to see her were hopeless. But La’s faith in our Lord Jesus Christ did not let her down. As I listened to her last words in her room with her husband and her sister. I clearly remembered the words she said to her sister. She said, “Do not worry or weep for

me. I am in good hands. Jesus Christ is my Savior. My hope and faith are in Him. You, who are still living need to have hope in Christ also.” (Mrs. La Hang)

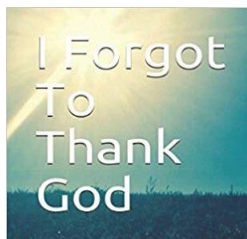


What a comforting word from our dear sister La. A week later, the Lord had called her home. La’s husband and relatives, all knew that her hope and faith are in Christ. Their comments were “One day, we will see her again in God’s kingdom.” Most of the relatives that were hopeless the week before became hopeful again. Instead of sadness in their face, it turned out that it was a celebration of knowing that their daughter, sister, aunt, niece and mother had gone home. She left this world to be with her Savior.

I. How many of us are hopeless? How many time had we ask God for something and He hasn’t answer us then we become hopeless? (Show Thank God)



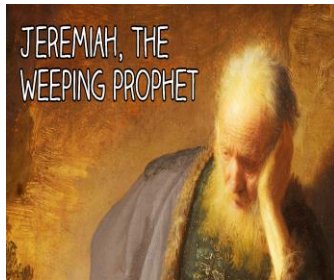
Many time you and I ask God for something and when He did grant our wish, we forgot to THANK Him. **For example:** you have a major headache. You ask God, “God, if you could make my headache goes away, I would appreciated very much. I have a lot of work need to be done and I can’t seem to think straight with this headache?” This may sound unimportant to you but it is a very small simple request. What happen when your headache is gone? Did you remember to thank God? (Show I forgot to thank God)



Most of us don’t remember or even showing the gratitude to thank God for curing our need. With God’s grace, he give you the wisdom of properly making the right choice to find something for your headache so it can be cured. You could take a

Tylenol, Advil, or make an appointment to see your doctor so that he could prescribe you the proper medication for the type of headache you have. Have you ever thought that God provided the gift and talent for the doctor so that they have the wisdom to develop such medicine that could cure your headache. Was your hope in God or was your hope in this worldly thing that have cure you?

The Prophet Jeremiah whom wrote the book of Lamentations, he had predicted and witnessed the devastation in the city of Jerusalem. God had punish the Israelites people in Jerusalem for their disobedient and idolatry. (Show Jeremiah, the weeping prophet)



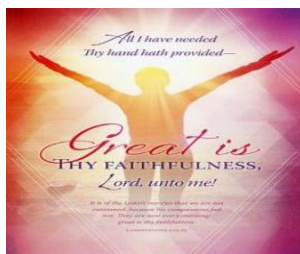
Move deeply, Jeremiah wrote this poem to express his nation's grief. Jeremiah steadfastly recognized that the Lord had not abandoned his people, painful as the present situation was. Jeremiah was called the "weeping prophet", and also called the "prophet of hope" because he foresaw a day when the Lord would reign in the midst of a restored, renewed and reconciled people. Abandonment, sorrow, struggle and pain all are transitory. Wholeness, healing, joy and peace are permanent for they are part of the very nature of God. That is what sustains the believe

through difficult times. Although Jeremiah grieved over Jerusalem's destruction, he knew God would prevail.

II. Most of us at one time or another felt that our love one and the world have abandoned us. (Show lonely)

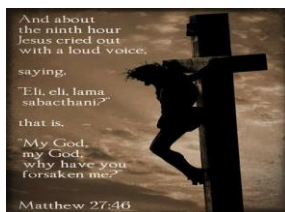


You probably say something like this, "Why do I feel so lonely? Why do sinners seem to flourish? Why am I struggle to support my family? Is it better for me to be poor? Surely there are those who are better off than I who am righteous; Couldn't I be one of them?" (Show Lamentations 3:22-23)



Jeremiah write, "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consume, for his compassion never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22-23). People knew that God promised that all bad things will come to an end; and that what your heart desire will one day receive joy. Until then you just have be content with the blessing you have now and have faith in tomorrow. Jeremiah knew that despite his desperation for his people, his hope was rooted in God's unchanging character.

Jesus knew of this paradox between abandonment and hope. (Show Matthew 27:46)



In the midst of his suffering and death on the cross, he cried, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" - which means, My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). Yet he also knew that he would be resurrected on the third day, opening the gate of eternal life to all believers. The despair of the cross now has become the gift of life to perishing sinners.

There was a women name Anne. She was abandoned by her mother at the age of three. Anne grew up and never have any news of her mother. (Show Mother)



She got marry and had a child of her own. As she laid her child to the crib, she murmured to her child, "I will never abandoned you, little one, I will always make sure you know that I'm glad you were born." A short time later, the door bell rang. Anne opened the door and the postman handed

Anne a bulky package. Her heart leap at the returned address. She had never received anything from her mother's address. Her throat squeezed and tears threatened. If she had cried for her mother long ago, she didn't remember it anymore. All she felt was empty place. When she slowly opened the package she saw a worn, somewhat a faded baby quilt. Pinned to it was a note that read: "This was made for you when you were born, by my mother, your grandmother. I want you to have it for your new baby. Signed..... Mother" Looking at her own child, she remembered that someone did care about her. No one is unwanted by God. (Show Psalm 33:11)

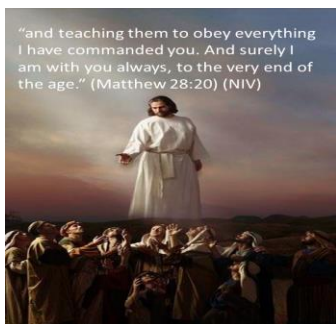


God knew you and His love for you is constant and never fails. David write, "*But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generation.*" (Psalm 33:11) Because the Lord is the Creator, whom by his power imposed his order on the creation, no power or combination of powers can thwart his plan and purpose to save his people. Like the story of Anne, when we felt that the Lord has abandoned us, the Lord said, "*Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.*" (Lamentations 3:31-33)

III. Those of you who knew of the Hmong history may be familiar with what I am about to tell you. After the Missionary came to Laos in the early 1940's and 1950's some of the Hmong have become Christians. When Laos fell to the communists' ruling in 1975 after the Vietnam war era, they were target for persecution because they have helped the United States fight against the communism. (Map of Laos)



Many of the Hmong people have to fled to a nearby country. Many Christians at the time, they felt that God had abandoned them. Laos is their homeland. They were born here and they will die there. Why did God had forsaken them? Driven some of them out of their homeland into a foreign land that their lives will forever be changed. They will never have the freedom and liberty that they once have in Laos. They become hopeless. (Show Matthew 28:20)



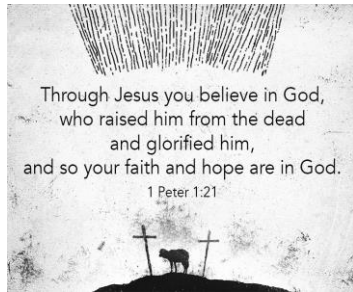
But God have his purpose for bringing the Hmong out of Laos. As Jesus said "... *I am with you to the very end of the age.*" (Matthew 28:20). The Hmong Christians that are in the United States and other third world country understood that it is God's purpose for the Hmong to be here in the United States. If they were in Laos, they would not have the opportunity to educated their children, the freedom to worship the Triune God. Because of God's purpose the Hmong are now in a land that they can produce the fruits which will nourish their growing faith in Christ. They will teach their children in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they will

have other opportunity to help, encourage and support those that are still in oppression. They could give hope to the hopeless that are still in persecution. (Show Hebrews 10:16-17)



Brothers and sisters in Christ, today we are living in a world that the devil and sin continuously tempted us and make us abandoned our faith in Christ Jesus. We know that hope can come in many forms. There is a grudging hope, reluctant hope, and, even doubtful hope. In our human nature of hope, even when hope had failed, you will continue to hope again. But the love of Christ, through his grace, mercy and love that He have for us even though we have sinned by not keeping our trust, faith and hope in God's during our frail time, God will not abandon us. Through Jesus Christ, He offers us a "lively" hope, a hope that never disappoints

or fails us. Human hopes turns to dust, God hopes abides. God's covenant in **Hebrew 10:16-17** *"This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their heart, and I will write them on their minds."* Then he adds: *"Their sins and laws less acts I will remember no more."* God is just and he lets our sin be carried by His sinless Son, Jesus Christ to the cross for our inequity and transgression. He cleansed us by His precious blood so that we could be reconciled back to the Father.



How are we to keep our hope in God, if we don't see a miracle or something that will convince us, that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life? Jesus said in **Acts 1:7** *"It is not for you to know the time or dates the Father has set by his own authority."* We are to put our hope for the unseen and not of this earthly thing. **1 Peter 1:21** *"Through him you believe in God, Who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God."* Believing and put all your hope in Christ Jesus. (**Show Lamentations 3:25**)



When you have a heavy burden, what ever the case may be, look to the cross that Christ had carried that heavy burden for you already. Even though, we are in this world that is carrying the heavy yoke, God promised us that he will not abandoned us. Our hope for the greater joy is not of this earth but it is in God's heavenly kingdom where we will have eternal life. Even we are hopeless, He gives us hope. He said, *"The Lord is good to those whose hope is in Him, to the one who seeks him."* (Lamentations 3:25). Amen.

Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your heart and mind through Christ Jesus. Amen.