

When Hope Is All Gone, Help Is on the Way

by Greg Locke

The sermon emphasizes that in times of hopelessness, Jesus provides healing and hope through faith.

Duration: 59:54

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 5:1-2, Mark 5:15, Mark 5:19, Mark 5:25-43

Topics: "Divine Intervention", "Christian Hope"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Mark chapter 5 and verse 1 as the text for the night. He highlights that in the 43 verses of this chapter, there are three hopeless situations that Jesus miraculously resolves. The first situation involves a man possessed by the devil, whose daughter has died. Despite the lack of hope, Jesus intervenes and brings the girl back to life. The preacher then shares his personal journey of finding hope in Jesus, despite his troubled past. He emphasizes that Jesus can turn any hopeless situation into something that honors and glorifies his name.

Transcript

I leaned over just a moment ago between the two specials and said this is a wonderful, wonderful Wednesday night crowd. And I praise the Lord for you being here, and it's an encouragement to me to see that your pastor is encouraged. When I was at the Ambassador Baptist College, they taught me, and well so, and I've lived by that the past few years that we've been in evangelism, that when you go to a revival meeting, you do not gauge the success, if you will, of a revival meeting by how big the offerings are, by how big the crowds are, by how many people are saved, by how many converts are baptized, or anything like that, by how many times you preach.

Nothing like that whatsoever. But I was told at Bible College that you gauge the success of a revival meeting by if the pastor is encouraged when you leave or not. Because if the pastor is not encouraged, but rather discouraged, you've done a pretty sorry job as an evangelist, but if you can encourage the pastor who knows his people.

You see, you might come forward and I might think to myself, wow, that's wonderful, but the pastor knows you, he sees you on a weekly basis, he knows those in the congregation who are visitors, he knows those who are faithful, those who are not, and so if I can be an encouragement, and I can uplift his hands as they did Moses in the Old Testament, then I feel that I have done a successful job as an evangelist. And so although I'm here for the entire flock to preach, I'm here to encourage your pastor specifically, because it's often well been said that you are the flock, your pastor is the shepherd, and the evangelist is the

sheepdog that comes in once a year and bites everybody on the ankles. Well, I appreciate your pastor allowing me to come here this week.

I enjoyed my time in May, I've enjoyed my time this week. You've been faithful to the meetings, we appreciate that so very much. You've been responsive, the Spirit's been good, and I praise the Lord for it.

Let's get right into our sermon tonight. I was in the study today asking the Lord to give me something fresh and anew. I saw a few things from Mark chapter 5 that I've never seen before, and certainly the message to go right along with the last song that was just sang, God's Refiner's Fire.

New message to me, new message to you, hoping to be a blessing. Let's stand, please, out of respect for God's Word. You will notice there are 43 verses in this chapter.

Now, don't get afraid, I'm not going to read all of them. As a matter of fact, by way of a text, we're only going to have one verse. But I probably will preach through just about all 43 verses.

You say, Brother Locke, that'll take a long time. I'd like to remind you, we went through four chapters last night in 45 minutes, so I can believe we can handle 43 verses, alright? Mark chapter number 5 and verse number 1 will be our text tonight. Mark chapter number 5 and verse number 1. The Bible says, "...and they," that is a reference to Jesus and His disciples, "...and they came over unto the other side of the sea into the country of the Gadarenes." Tonight, I want to preach a simple sermon entitled, When Hope is All Gone, Health is All the Way.

Thank you very much. You may be seated. Let's bow our heads in hearts and pray.

And let's ask the Lord to bless our time together tonight. When Hope is All Gone, Health is All the Way. Now, Lord, I pray tonight that You would help me as I preach the unsearchable riches of the Word of God.

Father, I plead the blood of Jesus Christ tonight and claim the victory that Your Bible promises that we have. And I pray, dear Lord, that You would help me as I preach the Word of God. You would help feed my friends in this congregation as they listen to the Word of God.

Lord, tonight, as I've often prayed, I often pray and plead with You that You would make me just a little bit like liquid and pour me out upon this congregation. And Lord, I don't want to come with man's wisdom and with powerful speech. Father, as the Apostle Paul said, I want to come in the demonstration of the power and the fullness of the Spirit of God.

And so, Lord, tonight I pray that You would help me as I preach. Lord, You've been with us tonight in our singing and the choir and our fellowship. Lord, we've enjoyed our time together.

Father, tonight I pray that around the Word of God we would have a very, very profitable time. That You would do for us tonight what my sermon cannot do. Father, I'll be careful to give You the praise.

And I know, based upon Your Word, that You will and that You want to do great things. And so I'm asking that You will, and I pray it in faith, trusting that You will. And I ask it tonight in Jesus' name, Amen.

Just yesterday I was watching the news over in the trailer and found out, and you heard I'm sure, that at the Martin Luther High School there over in East New York, there was a young man who walked into a public school and began to shoot up a few people. And thank God nobody was killed that day, but several people were injured. I'm sure you heard today just in your state, in a neighboring town just a few hours

from here, there was a madman who walked into a law school and blew three people out into eternity, one of them being the dean of the school, one of them being one of the school trustees, and one of them being a student, and several other people were injured.

No doubt everybody in this room will remember with antennas going off in your mind just a few years ago when we had Columbine, just a few years ago when we had the deal over in Arkansas. And it seems now that if you begin to read the papers, you'll find out that probably every state in America is in a mess. I just got back from Ghana, West Africa, and I'm telling you there's things over in Africa that I won't share with you, that I won't take time.

And I talked to the missionary, and he told me some of the things that he was struggling with. And I talked to pastors all over this country and around the world, and they tell me of the struggles and the temptations and the trials and the hardships that they have in their churches. Did you know, ladies and gentlemen, statistically, now you can make a statistic, say anything you want to, but statistically, did you know that we as professing evangelical Christians, if you will, have a 75% divorce rate in our churches? In churches, we have a 75% divorce rate.

And I think to myself often, I wonder why in the world America is so messed up. I mean, why are our marriages so shaky and so rocky? Why are our kids serving the devil? Why is it that it seems like there's no hope at all in America? You see, I pray for revival every day. I preach about revival just about every night or every week of my life.

And I do believe, as I said last night, I believe it wasn't a sermon, that it is not that God will revive America. That's not the point. The point is that God can revive America, but I'll be honest with you.

You start reading the magazines and you start watching television, you start flipping through the satellites, you start looking at the computers and you start reading and you start studying, and I'm telling you, you're going to come out with a pretty bleak and dismal picture of the country that we're living in. You think back to September the 11th. Everybody in this room immediately knows exactly where you were and what you were doing that day.

I was at the Carter's Grove Memorial Baptist Church in Hazel Green, Alabama, just a little tiny place. I was up that morning getting some things done in the office. It was probably about 9 o'clock or so, and I didn't know anything about it.

I hadn't turned the TV on that morning. I hadn't listened to the radio. About 10 o'clock came and then about 10.30 came, and by then it had long since happened.

And so I was in the office doing some things, and I was wondering that morning on the telephone why everybody I talked to just seemed kind of serene, you know, kind of bleak. And I thought to myself, man, nobody's happy about anything today, you know. And so then I called my mom, and I was talking to her just happy-go-lucky, and she said, you hadn't watched the news this morning, had you? And I said, what do you mean watch the news? She said, go back to the trailer.

And I'm telling you, I went back to the trailer, and I turned it on until my amazement. I saw those airplanes fly into those buildings, and immediately I thought about my brother that lived just about 35 miles or 45 minutes or so away from those very powers in the military. And I thought to myself, I wonder how he is.

I tried to call him. You couldn't get through on the line. And I remember that night I thought there'd be about three people show up, and I'm telling you, they packed the doors of that church, and we had a prayer service, and everybody in the entire church came forward, and we got on our face, and we wept and crawled and cried like a bunch of babies over our nation.

And I preached that night from Psalm chapter number 11. Where in the world do we go from here? And we'll never forget the tragic event of September the 11th. And I'm going to be honest with you.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist and a brain surgeon to figure out that there are some things in America that just seem... I remember about a year and a half ago I was preaching in this very state. I'll not tell you where because it was rather close to here. And I was preaching in this state, and the pastor and I went over to a man's house.

And he wanted me to talk to this man about the Lord. You know, sometimes an evangelist comes to town, and they think that he can say things differently than the pastor. And so, every evangelist that's ever been in that church has been over to this guy's house, suddenly to the Christ.

And I'm telling you, he's the reprobate I've ever seen once. I remember I walked in the house, and he was sucking on his cigarettes, watching his wicked television programs. And I mean, he didn't even care.

I mean, the smoke was just abyllum. I mean, that television just trusted 90 miles an hour, but he didn't turn it down. He didn't turn it off.

And I said, sir, I'd like to talk to you about the Lord. I said, would you mind if I walk over and turn the television off? He said, that'd be fine. I walked over and turned it off.

And he was counting up. He went over and put his little cigarette out, and put the little flames out. You know, it wasn't smoking so bad anymore.

And I started talking to him. I pulled my little pocket knife out, started giving my testimony, started telling him about my life. And you could see his tears trickle after that man died, dribble down his face.

And you could tell he was trying to hold it back. And so I began to talk to him. And I got to the bottom root of the whole issue.

I know why he acted the way he did. I know why he wouldn't listen to what any of the preachers said. You see, about two or three years earlier, he had a real, real bad run-in with his wife, who would steal his wife.

They were not divorced. They were separated. And she removed from him their two little boys and one little girl, and that broke his heart.

He blamed it on God, and he didn't want to have anything to do with God, the church, the Bible, the preacher man, or anything else that even smelled of remission. So I remember I looked at that man, and I was talking with him, and I said, sir, and I called his name. I said, would you mind that before we leave, I said, would you mind if I got on my knees right here beside this couch and prayed for you and your son? And I'll never forget in a million years what he said.

He said, Brother Lawrence, he said, I wouldn't mind a bit if you did that. He said, but I don't really see what the need is. He said, just to be honest with you, I believe my family situation is just a little bit too hopeless for God to handle.

And you know, if you study Mark chapter number five, everybody preaches on the maniac of Judea, and I'm going to mention it tonight. But did you know, ironically enough, in my study today, I saw something I've never seen before in these 43 verses. Did you know there are three situations in one chapter? We always hear about the one, the guy who was crazy and sold me the mouth, and was running around naked every day.

But we always hear about the one, but did you know in 43 verses of Mark chapter five, there are three hopeless, dismal, and horrible situations, and Jesus stepped on the scene and took care of every single one. I want you to look at your Bibles, number one, if you would, please. Mark chapter five.

Go to verse number two, would you? Mark chapter number five and verse number two. If you're taking notes for sake of an outline, I want you to see number one. The first situation was hopeless because of the devil.

It was hopeless because of the devil. Look, please, in verse number two. And when he, that Jesus, will come out of the ship, immediately, if you study the Gospel of Mark, you will find out that 72 times in 16 chapters, the word immediately or straightway is used.

It is a book of expedience. It's a book where Jesus got things done very rapidly. And so it says, when He was come out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs.

A man with an unclean spirit had His dwelling among the tombs, and no man could bind Him. No, not with chains. Why? Because He'd been up and down with fetters and chains.

And the chains had been plucked asunder by Him. And the fetters broke it in pieces. Neither could any man tame Him.

Verse five. And always, notice that word in your Bible, and always night and day, He was in the mountains and in the tombs crying and cunning Himself with stones. You know those stories very well.

Matter of fact, the last time I was here, the first service I preached on the man who got the devil preached out of Him. And if there was ever a man who heard a message that got the devil out of Him, it was this man right here. Here's a crazy lunatic of a man.

Now, there's several things I do know, but I'll be honest, there's several things I don't know about this gentleman. I don't know, number one, how old he was, and I don't think it really matters. I do not know, number two, how long he had the demon, and I don't think it matters either.

But I do know, by way of context, that he had Him for a long time. Say, preacher, how do you know? Because according to the Bible, everybody knew this man to be this way. Everybody had washed their hands.

He had been kicked out and ostracized from society. And nobody wanted to be around Him whatsoever. And you can see that town thinking to themselves, you know what? There's no hope for that dirty rat right there.

Let me tell you a few graphic things about this man. Here was a man, the Word of God says, was filled not with one, not with a hundred, study your Bible, but at least a thousand demons. And more than likely, it was a lot more than that because the Bible says whenever the demons came out of his body and went into

the hall, the Bible says there were 2,000 of the swine.

2,000 pigs. And so here's a man. Every thought, every action, everything he did, every place he went was completely dominated, controlled, directed and dictated by one person.

It was the very man himself. It was the devil. And he was under the dominance and he was under the control of the devil until Jesus Christ stepped on the scene.

But you see, the devil made this man do some very, very interesting things. Can you imagine a man who had thousands of demons in and out of his body? Controlling his mind. Controlling his actions.

And Luke tells us that this man ran around, excuse me, but it's what the Bible says, he ran around naked. He ran around with no clothes on. Profaned himself in front of the men, in front of the women, in front of the little boys and the little girls.

And people couldn't even go down to Walmart and over to Kroger's and down to Ryan's and down to Shoney's because they were scared that man was going to come streaking, running through the streets naked. And they didn't know what in the world they were going to do about it. And so they got 9-1-1 and they called the sheriff and they said, Sheriff so-and-so, you're going to have to do something to incarcerate this wicked man.

And so they put fetters on his legs. They put shackles and fetters on his hands. They put a muscle on his mouth.

And they threw him in the drunk tank. They threw him in jail overnight. But by the power of the devil, he would break those chains.

He would break those fetters, bend those bars and go screaming and crying like a wild lunatic. A wild crazy man. Back up into the mountains.

And the Bible says he lived in the mountains and in the tomb. I don't know about you, but I don't have a whole lot of friends that live in cemeteries. And if you've got a bunch of friends that live in graveyards, I'll tell you one thing you need before tomorrow morning comes up, friend.

I'll tell you what. You need some new friends is what you need. If you've got friends that enjoy hanging around death and enjoy hanging around darkness and blackness, you need some new friends.

This guy right here had no friends. He was up for all by himself. He'd jump up on a gravestone and the moon would be full and he'd howl like a wild coyote on the back side of the desert somewhere.

He'd foam at the mouth and had long, greasy, stringy hair. His beard was all full of mucus and I'm telling you, he'd had a bath in weeks and months. And I mean, he sunk to high heaven and his eyes were bloodshot.

He was the most wicked, vile, ungodly man in all the countryside. And so I can imagine, they know all the trustees and all the people of the county got together one morning over a cup of coffee and they said, you know what, we're going to have to figure out how we're going to help this man. And so his chef said, well, you know, I've already tried to incarcerate the dirty bum and he can't get incarcerated.

He's got some kind of weird supernatural strength. You know, he goes into a phone book, he's got an answer on his chest and he can break through the bars and all that kind of stuff. And so he's got some kind of Superman strength and so I don't think there's anything I can do.

And if anybody's open for suggestions, I'm willing just to take a few. And so all of a sudden, Dr. Bottle Stopper raised his hand and he said, you know what, I bet if we put that guy on Ritalin, that'd help him a little bit. I bet if we got him a prescription and we took him down there to the psycho ward, I bet if we put him in a straitjacket for a little while, I think we could probably help him.

And he said, well, Dr. Bottle Stopper, Mr. Psychiatrist, if you think you can help him so much, why don't you go out there and try to diagnose his problem. And so I can see Dr. Bottle Stopper, he gets his little glasses together, you know, and he gets his little suit and tie and he gets all fit, shined and polyestered up and he grabs his little fold-up couch. You know, this guy can't talk to anybody unless they're laying down.

So he took his couch with him and he tucked it up under his arm and he started climbing up the mountain. And finally, he gets up to the top of the mountain and he pulls out his little pen and he pulls out his little paper and he makes sure he gets his little watch just right. You know, those fellas get paid by the hour and they're not going overtime, that's for sure.

And so he lays his little watch down and he says, now Mr. Crazy Man, there's one thing I don't want you to do and that's have one of your little spells. Don't spit on me, don't salivate on me, I don't want you to say anything stupid and I want you to just sit there on that little couch and tell me all of your problems. And I know, Mr. Wild Man, everybody thinks you're crazy, but you know what, it's probably because your daddy used to be a smoker when you was younger and you know, you probably got that smoke still in your head or something like that.

I bet your mama spanked you one or two times when you was a kid and it probably warped your mind and I know a bunch of kids that had a good warped mind, that's for sure. And you know what, you know your daddy probably said something to you one time or maybe your Sunday school teacher said something that really upsets you one day and so I understand why you act like this. And I understand why you fall with the mouth and why you run around naked and why you act like a crazed lunatic and I know the rest of the world doesn't understand this, but let me just write you out a little prescription and I believe I can put you on some medication that'll help you.

And so the guy said, Mr. I'll tell you what, I won't help more than I can see straight and if you think you can help me, let's do it. He picked up that cot, put it under his arm, he walked down hand in hand with that psychotic and they take him over to the store and I mean they seal him up on every kind of drug you can imagine. He takes a pill in the morning, he takes a pill at night, he takes a pill to eat, he takes a pill to keep that down which he just ate, he takes a pill to go to sleep, wakes up at three in the morning and takes another pill so he can go back to sleep.

And I mean he's popping pills for about three weeks and all of a sudden a crazy man's pill comes on him again and he realizes, hey, Dr. Bottlestopper couldn't help me at all. So they pull that big group back together and he says, listen, I'm open for suggestions. Dr. Bottlestopper and the Ritalin crowd couldn't help him.

Somebody's gonna have to figure out something to do with this man. So all of a sudden the Grand Master of the Masonic Temple raises his hand and he says, you know what, I bet I can help him. I bet if I can get

him up there to sell a bunch of candy for crippled children I bet that would help him.

That would get his mind off of his problems and get his mind off foaming at the mouth and running like a naked man and if we can get him down there at the stoplight to stop people and wear a Shiner's hat then I think that'd probably do some good. And so he puts his little apron on and he gets his little billy goat and he comes riding up there and he's got his funny little trash can hat on with a broom sticking up the side of it and he walks up there and he says, now Mr. Crazy Man, don't have one of your little sales. He says, don't have one of your little fits.

He said, me and the brotherhood down on the bottom of the mountain want you to know that we want you to become an honorary member of the Masonic Temple. What we'd like you to do is come in here and go through all your little rituals and all your little routines and all your little religions and you know, put a little sword to your chest and all that kind of stuff and you know, wrap a little mask around your head. You know what I'm talking about.

Some of you have probably been in that before. And so you go through all this little ritual and you go through all this little routine and he said, well okay, I'll try. And so they get down there and you know, he gets a little Masonic Bible and they give him a little Masonic ring and they tell him one day when he dies they're going to toss the drain on either side of the grave and they go put him in a Masonic grave and they talk about him being a member of the brotherhood and they pat him on the back and they say, now you're a Mason.

But all of a sudden about 24 hours later he throws another fit and he goes nuts and he goes running through the Masonic temple and tears everything they got up and they said, hey pal, we don't want you in here anymore. So they couldn't help him either. And so the sheriff gets back down there and he calls another meeting one morning and he says, fellas, I'm open for suggestions.

Dr. Bottle Stopper couldn't help him and the Grand Master of the Masonic Lodge couldn't help him. And he said, we're going to have to have some help sometime. And so all of a sudden this little squirrely figure stands up in the back and says, my name's Norman Vincent Peale and I do believe I can help this fella because I wrote a book on the power of positive thinking and if we can get this guy not to focus on his problems rather to focus on everybody else's problems we can make this guy realize that life is worth living.

And so Norman Vincent Peale and his bad toupee goes crawling up to the top of the hill and he walks over there and he says, Mr. Crazy Naked Lunatic Man. Now don't have one of your spells and don't jump out on me and don't lash on me and by the way, here's a man the Bible says cut himself with stones. Nobody told that? They don't have to do that.

Here's a guy who cut his body. He was bleeding like a stuck pig. He was naked.

He foamed at the mouth. Long greasy stringy nappy hair. Here is a crazy man.

And so Mr. Peale says, well you know what? You probably had a bad childhood. You probably have bad dreams at night. You probably have to still sleep with a night light.

Do you have that kind of problem? And he probably bowed his head and said, you know what Mr. Peale? I do still have that problem. Although I live up here in darkness and I live up here in the dungeons and the tombstones. I'll tell you, to be honest with you really, I still have to have a night light you know? And you

know, I think really what my problem is Mr. Peale is you know, up until the time I was 27 years old I was a bed wetter and so because of that I've got a warped mind and so I'm not able to think right and so that's why I run around naked and that's why I'm wicked and it's a day in wrong and that's why I'm undone.

And so Mr. Peale says, now listen, don't focus on your problems. Focus on what's wrong with everybody else. See the good in you.

See the inner self. See how wonderful you are. See what a great dynamic person you are.

Look into the mirror. Give yourself a big cheesy grin and say, Mr. Wild Man, there's nothing wrong with you. It's the world that has the problem, not you.

And so for a while it seems real good. He reads through the book Norman Jensen Peale, The Problems of the World. The power of positive thinking.

It seems like that power has been real positive in his life and all of a sudden about two weeks goes by and the wild man has another crazy thing. And I mean, he just hits the foeman at the mouth, rips his clothes off again, runs around like a wild man and a lunatic and the crowd says, listen, there's no hope for this guy at all. We don't want him at church.

You can't keep him in jail. He can't keep a job. His family don't want him.

There is no hope for this man. So they call another counselor. And they get around in there and everybody gets together this time.

They're all putting their noggin together. They said, you know what, this man probably needs a good dose of religion. This man needs something to focus in on that's kind of God like.

And so when these liberal, modernistic, new evangelical preachers stands up and he says, you know what, I believe I can. I believe down at my church we've got just what he needs. So it's okay if you think you can help him.

And so, you know, he goes back to the house and he comes back as little Don Juan suave hair dude. He gets his nice little outfit on and, you know, those guys don't believe in wearing ties. And he gets his little backwards collar on.

And he gets his little nice pretty cross necklace and he puts it around his neck with his nice little bracelet and his little ankle, you know. And he goes walking up there with his NIV Bible and he walks up to the top of the hill and he sees that little crazy man over there and he says, hey, Mr. Crazy Man, I noticed you don't have any clothes on. He said, well, they don't make you feel bad because most of the people in my church don't have any clothes on either and so you'll fit in real good at our Baptist church.

And he said, so you can just come on down and you can just kind of sit right in. You can kind of sit in the back row. Everybody else does and so it's not a real big deal.

And there's not a whole lot of red hot preaching down there. You know, you can live any way you want to and you can do what you want to, act like you want to, run around with who you want to. You can still holler and scream and act like a wild animal for all I care.

It doesn't make any difference, but I do believe if I could get you down there, I'll tell you what. How about on Sunday morning, you come walk in the aisle and he says, when you walk the aisle, I'll put you through the baptismal dunking booth and I'll dunk you down. He said, I bet the whole town will show up to see you get baptized.

He said, I'll tell you what let's do right now. He said, how about let's get down on our knees. Would you like Jesus to save you? Oh, I'm telling you what, sir.

I'd love for somebody to do something for me. I need some help. I'm tired of not getting any sleep at night.

I'm having all kind of problems and I tell you, my life just seems like it's hopeless and I don't mean to have these fits and I don't mean to have these spells and I don't mean to run around like a drunken lunatic and like a wild animal with no clothes on and so I need some kind of a help. And so he says, well just repeat after me. Dear Lord, dear Lord, I know I'm a sinner.

I know I'm a sinner. Come to my heart and save me. Come to my heart and save me.

In Jesus name, amen. In Jesus name, amen. And so the preacher goes back down to his nice little little church and on Sunday morning all of a sudden he gets up down the back road.

Mr. Naked Man comes walking up and he comes walking all the way down the aisle and the preacher takes him by the hand and he says, today we're going to baptize Mr. whoever you are. And so they take him up there and some of the other churches across town put out early because they heard he was going to get baptized. And so they all come in there and they put that old wild, stringy, greasy hair up in that banditry and they dip him down and everybody shouts the victory and everybody's always so excited.

He says, now if you just learn to give a little bit of money in the offering plate and if you just learn to sing every now and then when we open up a hymn book and we don't open the Bible much around here but if you learn just to drunk every now and then when I say something good from the newspaper then you'll fit in just right and I do believe a little reformation will help you. And it did for about six weeks. He sits there in that church and every time the plate came by you know, he had a few nickels and dimes that he scratched up out of the graveyard and somebody ran up on his visitors and did ten folks and so he picked it up and he threw it in the plate and made him feel real good about himself.

Man, made his heart just feel like it was swelling on the inside. After about six weeks one morning he was sitting in church and man, he had one of them spells and he come unglued in that little church and they never heard anybody shouting until he got up and ran down the aisle. I mean, he was slipping like a ball in a circus clown.

He jumped up in a baptismal booth. He jumped all over the place. He ripped up the songbook.

He foamed at the mouth, pulled his clothes off right there in church and everybody couldn't believe this. Wow, man. He said, you know what they said? He said, go back up there in your mouth.

Psychiatrists tried to help you, wasn't any help for you. Priests tried to help you, no help for you. Grandmaster of the lodge tried to help you, no help for you.

All these people tried to help you and the sheriff tried to help you. Everybody wants to help you. You don't want no help, mister.

Go up there. And he started saying to himself, you know what, I still would like to have somebody help me. I still would like somebody to put their arms around me and love me and have concern for me and care for me.

And he walked up there and so all day long the whole crowd got together and they began to bump ideas around and finally they couldn't come up with anything. So they put up some ticket signs, got some big old poster boards and big old black letters. They wrote, no help for the crazy man.

And they put them outside their churches. They put them outside their capital buildings. They put them outside their public schools and their private schools and their places of pure repute and they put them outside their not respectable grocery stores.

People started walking around carrying ticket signs. No hope for the crazy man. No hope for the crazy man.

No hope for the crazy man. You know what, believe anything you want because I think they probably made him believe that. Here's a man who sat up there lonely in solitude he wanted some help but could have none And the whole crowd washed their hands clean with this fella and said there's no hope for you whatsoever.

But you know what, ladies and gentlemen, when it seems like you've come to the end of your rope, and it seems like there's no compassion, there's no concern, and there's no care from anybody else, I'd like to remind you there's a little boat that's on its way to that town called Gadara, and there's somebody inside that boat named the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and when that town said no hope, help was just now on the way. Because look what your Bible says, please, in verse number 7. In verse 7 the Bible says, and cried with a loud voice and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not. For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.

And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion, for we are many. And he besought him much that he would not send him away out of the country. And there was nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.

And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine that we may enter into them. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out and entered into the swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea.

There were about two thousand that were choked in the sea. They that fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

And they come to Jesus, I love this verse, and see him that was possessed with the devil. And had the Legion sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid.

Why were they afraid? Because they had never seen him. And what the Masons couldn't do, and what the Redmond couldn't do, and what the Prozac couldn't do, and what Dr. Bottlestopper and Norman Dinson Peale, and what the rest of that crowd couldn't do, in one simple conversation with the eternal Son of God, took care of every problem this man ever had, and he got saved by the glorious grace of God. He got the same salvation.

He was washed in the same blood. And he exercised the same faith that I did on April the 17th of 1992. And I'm going to tell you something, pal.

You're looking at a young man right now, 25 years old, left behind the ears, got a lot to learn, a lot of growing up to do. But I'm going to tell you something. I'll never forget the days that that judge leaned over to my mother and stuck his finger right in her face and said, Ma'am, he said, Lady, your son is a menace to society.

And if you don't do something for him, if you don't place him somewhere, then the Tennessee Department of Corrections for Juvenile Delinquents is going to place him somewhere. And I'm telling you, my public school teacher said, There's no hope for that brat. I'm telling you, I believe my mama got to the place where she started believing there's no hope for him.

In my heart, I started believing there's no hope. People in town said there's no hope. I mean, I had more friends in that town than I knew what to do with, but none of the mamas would let me play with them.

I mean, I was a wicked little brat. All I cared about was myself. I didn't care about you.

I didn't care about God. I didn't care about church. I can remember going to church, sitting on the back row laughing at the preacher.

And I'm telling you, if you could look back 10 years, ladies and gentlemen, you could talk to person after person after person who would say, You know what? There is no hope for Gregory. Well, I tried to be a good person. I went with my friends to the Catholic church.

I've been to an abundant life fellowship. I grew up in a Southern Baptist church. I knew the Romans rose, and I could quote a verse or so in church.

Yet, my life was in so much shambles, and my life was in such a wreck, such disarray. I can imagine that in my heart as I would walk by, I can imagine what the people must have been thinking. My family saw no hope for him.

The judge saw no hope for him. My attorney that I had six different times probably thought to himself, No hope for him. No hope for him.

I'll be honest with you. After a while, I started believing in him. Is there really anything more to life than fun? Is there really anything worth living for? I'm glad to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, because I heard an old-fashioned man of God get in the pulpit one night and open up the Bible, and he began to preach Christ's crucifixion.

He began to tell me not that I was a good person and needed to look at my inner self, but he began to tell me that I was a wicked, vile person, and I was wicked all the way through, every bit of me intrinsically. And he told me there was only one person that was holy. It was the lovely Lord Jesus Christ, who died for me, was buried for me, and three days later on resurrection morning, he got up out of the grave, he defeated sin, death, and hell, and ladies and gentlemen, that night I got saved by the glorious grace of God.

And I'll tell you, there were people that looked at me and said, there's no hope for him, there's no hope for him, there's no hope for him. And you know what? In this world, there was no hope at all. But thanks be unto God, when I had no hope, and when I came to the end of my rope, and when it seemed like there

was nothing worth living for, Almighty God said, you know what happened to me the night I got saved? Same thing happened to this crazy man.

God did something for me. You see, God gave me a key. God gave me a joy, and a satisfaction that wicked living could never give me.

And there was a time in my life, and I just like to tell him, by the way, I don't care if you were a Sunday school teacher when you got saved, or if you were cooking a dog's hind legs, we were all under the condemnation. Here's a man who had a hopeless situation, because of the devil. But hurriedly tonight, would you please look at Mark chapter 5 and verse number 24.

Mark chapter 5 and verse number 24, because the second situation was hopeless because of a disease. The first one was hopeless because of the devil, but notice please, the second was hopeless because of a disease. Mark chapter 5 and verse 24.

And Jesus went with him, and much people followed him, and brawled him. That's a fancy word of saying. There was a lot of people there wanting to talk to him.

And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood 12 years, and had suffered many things of many positions. And it's been all that she had, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse. She had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind him, and touched his garments.

She said, if I may touch but his clothes, I shall be cold. And straightway, there's that word of expedience again, and straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up. And she felt in her body, that she was healed of that plague.

And Jesus noticed the word immediately, knowing in himself that virtue, that word means power, had gone out from him, turned him about in the press, and said, who touched my clothes? The disciples said unto him, thou seest a multitude thronging thee. And saithst thou, who touched me? He looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace, and behold of thy slave. Jesus came to town, and as everywhere Jesus went, people always knew that he was coming. Now I know they didn't have tabloids, and black and white newspapers, extracts to read all about it, and Time magazine, and all that, but you know, they had something comparable to that in the little regions round about Jerusalem, because everywhere Jesus went, his name proceeded.

And the people thought to themselves, you know what, we've got to see this miracle work in man. Matter of fact, if you read Luke chapter number 19, you'll find out there was a midget tax collector, who was so excited that Jesus came to town, that he skimmed up a tree, and sat down to wait for Jesus to come by. Everywhere Jesus went, he caused a great stir.

You see, there was a time, if you read the Beatitudes, you'll find out that Jesus is preaching the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5, 6, and 7, he starts the Sermon on the Mount with his disciples. He ends the Sermon on the Mount with a great multitude being there.

Everywhere Jesus went, throngs of people followed him. And so it was no different here in this town. Jesus, by the way, has now got back in his boat.

He is no longer in Gadara. The way to be a good shepherd is to know who to cast the load on. And with a very shy manner and fashion, reaches out and touches him, and the Bible says, immediately she knew.

She knew without hesitation, the Bible says, that the fountain that was in her, this blood problem, this issue of blood that she'd had for 12 years, immediately dried up within her, and she knew it. You see, she'd been around a lot of doctors that said, well, you got this problem, and you know you got this problem, and you got this problem. And they told her every problem in the world, but the problem was, they couldn't diagnose the real problem.

They didn't know, they were just simply practicing medicine. And so they were using her to practice, and they still use her, but nonetheless. She was saying that, I need some help, I can't figure out what this problem is, it bothers me.

And they said, well, you know, perhaps if she just wanted to try this medication, and so she blew a little bit of the life savings. And they said, no, that didn't work, why don't you try this medication. So she blew the rest of the life savings.

And they said, well, that didn't work, so she sold her car. And they said, well, that didn't work, so she sold her house. And she suffered many things, of many physicians, and was none the better, get the phrase, but rather grew.

It didn't get any better, as a matter of fact, it got to the place where, when there was no help for this lady at all. There wasn't a physician in the whole land. There wasn't a doctor in the whole land that could diagnose what this woman's problem was.

And they told her, they said, well, you know what, this is something you're going to have to live with for the rest of your life. It's just something we're going to have to fix, you know, with medication, you know, a little dab will do you, a little here, a little there, eventually we'll get it regulated, we'll get that thing fixed. And for 12 years, this woman had a problem that would not get fixed.

And it bothered her, and it breathed her in her body every single day, until Jesus came to town. And Jesus came to town, and the people were thronging Him, the red, the yellow, the black and white, they were everywhere. He was healing the blind eyes, and doing all of these great and mighty miracles, and we'll see one more miracle that He just performs here at the end of the chapter.

But yet this woman sneaks up behind Him, and she reaches out, and by faith says within herself, if I could just touch it a little bit, the hem of His clothes, the hem of His garment, I know by faith He has the power to heal me of the disease that's in my body. And so after all that helpless situation, what am I talking about 12 months, what am I talking about 12 years? With no peace, with no help, with no satisfaction, but continual pain for 12 years. And she reaches out and touches the hem of His garment, and immediately the Bible says she realized in her body that she was healed.

I want you to look in your Bibles if you would, please, here at Mark chapter number 5. Notice the little phrase, if you would, in verse 29, would you? Mark 5, 29, and straightway, notice this, the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. I began to study that little phrase there historically, and I began to study it there in the application, the context, the setting that it's placed in in Scripture. That little phrase, the fountain of her body and the plague that she was in, I studied that.

You know what, it happened to ladies, that's just kind of the way that they phrase it in the New Testament, the obviously phrase nowadays, and I'm going to do my dead level best not to be graphic at all, and so I'm not even going to give all of the illustration and everything that I read, but basically it deals with ladies that have problems in pregnancy. It deals with a lady that had problems whenever she was birthing a child, and it would cause a problem, whereas hemorrhaging would set in, and great pain and stress and duress would be upon the body, and usually there was a certain amount of days that they would give that young lady to be healed of that problem, but yet this lady for 12 years had not yet been healed. And she had had this problem for 12 fallen years.

The doctors told her, hey, you can keep coming, you can keep spending your money, you can keep wasting two or three hours a day in the doctor's hall, and you can sit there and you can make visit after visit after visit, and we can examine you, and we can give you all types of physical examinations, and we can tell you this and we can tell you that, but we're just guessing. We are just estimating your problem. We're guesstimating your problem.

We're trying a little here, a little there. We're hitting, we're missing, and basically they sent her out the door, and every time she went home she said within herself, you know what, there is no hope for the problem that I have, but you know what, when hope's all gone, or hope's all gone, help's on the way. Because somebody came to town named Jesus.

And Jesus came, and you know, He didn't have some great big flamboyant crowd that was following Him because He was some great big filthy rich evangelist that, you know, would walk around and heal people by the top of a handkerchief, you know. He wasn't one of these Benny Hinn troops, and Rod Parker, and Kitty Jakes, and the rest of these bunch of guys on television. You know, my wife always tells me, she says, you know what, every week of your life you've got to say something about Benny Hinn.

Now you know what, if I've got one little rabbit trail that I run, and I preach it, if I've got one thing that I really like to preach on, and I like to preach it on every sermon, it's that dirty crook Benny Hinn. I mean, I'm telling you, if there's ever a dirty crook in the world, I believe Benny Hinn is a dirty crook, and his brother David Chicken. But nonetheless, here's this guy, you know, he says, put your hand on the screen, and you'll get a feeling.

So you put your hand through the screen, you'll get one a whole lot quicker, I promise you that right now. I had one of these nuts one night, I was watching him on TV, it's the honest truth. If I've ever told you the truth on the pulpit, I'm telling you right now, just as sure as you can hear me, I was watching this guy on television, it was about 11.15, 11.30 at night, ain't nothing good on TV that late anyhow, but I was sitting in the hotel room, and I was watching this guy, and he pulled a wallet, it's the honest truth, he pulled a wallet out of his back pocket, and he opened it up, and he said, you know, he started pulling out a little money out of the back of it, you know, and I ain't got but a little bit, but he started pulling out some money, had it all hanging out there, you know, he said, if you send me \$19.95, 20 bucks, okay, if you send me a \$20 love offer, here's what he said, I will send you a wallet, that is so blessed by God, you can't send the money, and sure as that carpet's red, that's exactly what that man said, I didn't make it up, I ain't lying about it, it's the honest truth, before God, that's exactly what he said, if you send me \$19.95, I will send you a wallet, like this one, that you cannot send the money out of, that is how God will bless you by sending \$20, now you know what, I'm not real smart, but I'm sorry, I'm not real stupid either, I've got enough sense to know, if that man's got a wallet, but he can't send the money out of, bless God, the last thing he needs is my \$20, you know, Jesus didn't come to town with that man, he didn't come to town

begging people for money, he didn't come to town saying I'm going to have his healing crusade, he didn't have to set up a pub kit, man, the people following him everywhere he went, and so Jesus is there, this woman hears about it, she touches him, he turns around and asks an unusual question, who touched me, by the way, who knew he touched me, that's kind of like in the Garden of Eden, you know, some of these liberals say, well looky there, God said Adam, where art thou?

As if he didn't know, he's just playing this shit a little game for a little while, he knew exactly where Adam and Eve was, he knew exactly who touched him, but he wanted to see what this young lady's face was, so the disciples kind of rebuked him, if you can imagine that, the disciples, the followers of Christ rebuked the disciple of Christ himself, and they said, Jesus, now you see all these people following you and you're going to ask this silly question, who touched me, and she said, knowing, and the Bible says, she, knowing what was done of herself, came and fell down before the Lord and told him all the things that had happened to her, and Jesus said, notice what he told her in verse 34, he said unto her, Daughter, for those comforting what are theirs, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace and be whole of thy plague, that word whole is the greatest word in all the story, you know why?

Jesus used it two times, the word whole means inwardly, you see, this woman had a physical problem, but Jesus did not just meet her physical problem, he met her spiritual problem as well, she was not just cleansed externally, but by her faith she was cleansed internally as well, and Jesus said, Daughter, your faith hath made thee whole, you are clean on the inside, you are clean on the outside, and the doctor said no hope, and God said help from the Lord, but please look if you would, if you would back up just a few verses, so Mark chapter 5 in verse 21, Mark chapter number 5 in verse 21, the first hopeless situation dealt with the devil, the second hopeless situation was because of a disease, but the third hopeless situation in Mark chapter 5 was because of death, and it does not get much more hopeless than that, Mark chapter 5 in verse 21, and when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him, and he was nigh into the sea, and behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jarius by name, and when he saw him, he fell to his feet, and besought him greatly, saying, my little daughter lieth at the point of death, I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live, notice verse 24, and Jesus went with him, and much people followed him and thronged him, then is when you have the story of the lady coming, while Jesus was actually not going for her, that was kind of a by-product miracle, it was a parenthesis miracle, if you will, the reason Jesus was going that way is because he was following a man, a ruler of the synagogue by the name of Jarius, because his daughter lay well nigh unto death, and she was fixed to be as dead as four o'clock in the morning, and he falls down before the Lord and says, you've got to follow me, you've got to lay your miracle-working hands on my daughter, I believe that you can heal my daughter, and so Jesus goes, and he heals this lady of her plague, everybody thronged him, and then the story again picks itself up, if you will, in verse 35, did you look there, Mark chapter 5 and verse 35, while he yet faked there came one from the ruler of the synagogue's certain which said, notice, thy daughter is dead, that's pretty plain, thy daughter is dead, why troublest thou the master any further?

He said, don't even make Jesus walk to the house, took off the respirator, you know, she slipped into a coma for a few moments, but she's dead, and there's no use in bothering Jesus, trouble the master any further, verse 36, as soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, be not afraid, only believe, and he suffered no man to follow him, saith Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James, to come unto the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saith unto them, them that wept and wailed greatly, when he was come in, he saith unto them, why, why make you this a

deuce?

He said, what's this big stir all about? Why make you this a deuce? And weep, the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth, so he saith, and they laughed him, by the way, he says it the same, they laughed him to scorn, but when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entered in where the damsel was lying, and he took the damsel by the hand and said unto her, Talitha Kuma, which is being interpreted, damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

Well, here's the word again, and straightway, the damsel arose and walked, for she was of the age of twelve years. But no doubt, you talk about a very helpless situation, I mean, we could probably maybe even come up with a hint of help in the first place. You know, we could probably come up with a real hint of help for this lady, you know, some type of medication we could give her, some type of support group, and the second source.

But, you know, there was no hope at all for the third source. She was dead. That young lady's breath had gone from her body, her brain waves had stopped working, her heart had stopped beating, no more pulse pulsating through her body.

She was dead. Jesus knew that, but he wanted to show how great his power was. He was not known as the son of God, he was the very God of God in the world.

God in the flesh! Darius said, you've got to go and heal my daughter because I know that you and I are going to be So in the course of events, we see that the other story took place. Finally, one of the rulers of the synagogue came and said, Darius, don't even bother. Don't even bother the master.

As heart-breaking and as heart-wrenching as it is, your daughter's dead and there's nothing she, you, me, or anybody else can do about this terrible hope thing. So Jesus gets there and he sees all these people and he says, I want all of you to get out. He says, y'all sitting right here crying.

He said, there's no need to be crying. There's no need to be making this a do. He said, don't make no funeral preparations, no arrangements.

Get the flowers out of here. He said, Peter, James, and John, you're the only ones I want in the room. He said, she's not dead, she's sleeping.

And the people chuckled and laughed at him themselves and they said, she's sleeping? She's dead. She's not talking, she's not walking, she's not moving, she's not breathing, she's dead. And Jesus said, she's sleeping.

Get out of here. So they left. He got Peter, James, and John.

He got the mother, he got the father, and those who were the closest associates or relatives probably. And the Bible says that he brought them into the room and he comes to this little girl and he says, Talitha, keep straightway here. That young lady got up off that bed and Jesus looked at those people and said, give her.

You talk about a hopeless situation. You talk about something doctor, I mean to never wake up. Here is a young lady who just died literally, physically, clinically dead.

And Jesus walked in, laid the foster and said those little interesting words and she gets up, she opens her eyes and she begins to breathe again and she can hear and she can see and she begins to talk 90 miles

to nothing and Jesus says, give that little girl something to eat. She's got to have something to eat. And the Bible makes the interesting little analogy, the interesting little phrase.

She was of the age of 12 years old. Now I've heard some historians say, take this for what it's worth. It doesn't make any difference.

It's not doctrinal. It's basically philosophical. Some people believe this.

I don't know if I do or not. But it certainly makes a good point. Words in the Bible do mean something I'd like to remind you of that.

And we do know that the lady who had an issue of blood had that for exactly 12 years and we do know historically and we do know because of the problem more than likely it was because of the birth of a baby. Now here's a young lady who the Bible tells us who was exactly 12 years old in the very same context, in the very same town, who just had a problem. Jesus went and raised her from the dead.

And maybe, just maybe, some Bible historians believe that the woman who had the problem for 12 years and the little girl who was 12 years old were basically mother and daughter. I don't know if that should be the case. Take it for what it's worth.

But nonetheless, in all three cases Jesus did something that he couldn't do. In all three cases Jesus did something that none of these people could control. They could not help the crazy lunatic.

No hope for the crazy man. No hope for the crazy man. Sorry ma'am, you're just gonna have to go back to the house.

Keep spending your money. We're gonna keep telling you this, we're gonna keep telling you that, but there's not a whole lot we can do. There's no hope for you.

There's no hope for you. There's no hope for you. But you know, when I was just studying this, and it probably blessed me more than it blessed anybody in the room tonight, but I'm gonna be honest with you.

I studied this. I got a hold of this. I thought to myself, you know, that's a beautiful book.

In one chapter of the book, in 43 verses, there were three overwhelmingly hopeless situations that Jesus, very calmly, very serenely, and very, very quickly took advantage of, took control of. He turned the tables, and he turned those hopeless situations into something that honored and glorified and magnified this blessed holy name, and in all three cases, people were there for him. That's a miracle working title.

Now, I'm gonna tell you something. You live the Christian life for four days, or you live the Christian life for 45 years, and it's not gonna take you long to figure out that you're gonna be back to those corners that feel like a pretty hopeless situation. I mean, you know, we were joking today, you know, Pastor and Brother Robertson and myself about the old adage, the check's in the mail, and we were joking around how we're still waiting on some of them from several years, but sometimes you'll get some bills, and you'll think to yourself, oh, the check's gonna have to be in the mail, the check's gonna have to be in the mail, and you're always amazed how God pays the bills, and David always pays the bills.

Sometimes we get back into a corner, and we think to ourselves, there is no way God is gonna be able to deliver me out of this situation. There's no way He can turn this around for my good and for His glory. There's no way He can fix this.

There's no way He can heal this problem in my body. There's no way He can fix this financial trouble. There's no way He can heal the problems in my marriage.

There's no way He can help my kids. They're living for the devil, they're living for themselves, and they're living for the devil, and they're and they're living for the devil, living for the devil, and they're living for Here's a man who was brought through the ringer, friend, I mean, God put the chokehold on him. And it seemed like a pretty helpless bush.

And all the way through that bush when you get through here you find out that the whole time you think of the apostle Paul. The apostle Paul had night and a day in the deep being tossed around like a toothpick in a bathtub had to be let over a wall in a bathroom. I mean, here's a man, he said, I've suffered perils of nakedness, perils of hunger, perils of thirst, perils of my own countrymen, perils of water, perils of this, perils of that.

I mean, perils of everything! Left for dead in the city of Lystra! But yet you study the life of the Apostle Paul, and I'm telling you, he was in some pretty hopeless and helpless situations. But every time you see him, why is that? I tell you, God wants you to get to a place where you don't trust Him. God wants to bring you to a situation where you don't trust Him, or whoever it may be.

God wants to completely strip you of all of your self-righteousness and your selfishness. And He wants to boil you down and get you to the place where you're backed into a wall where you say to yourself, no hope, no hope, no hope. When you get in those situations where there's nothing on the way, and you tonight could be going through a vice grip Christian experience.

You could be going through an experience right now with your kids, with your spouse, in this church, on your job, and I'm telling you, it seems like there's no way in the world you're going to get out of it. It seems like there's no way in the world you're going to get out of debt. It seems like there's no way in the world you're ever going to be able to fix this problem.

And you know what? You're not going to be able to fix this problem. And God's going to get you to a place where you say to yourself, no hope, no hope, no hope, no hope. And when there's no hope, that's when it ends.

I remember just a few weeks ago, I was preaching in a little town called Mason, West Virginia. This is one of the most interesting pastors I've ever been with in my life. Every visit we made, we made a ton of them that week.

Every visit we made, he sang to the people. He'd just sing, he'd sing them these little songs. He made us, you know, about the Lord.

If they had a piano in the house, he'd go over there, get up a couple of chords, you know, he'd play a little chord deal. He'd sing them some little songs about the Lord. I mean, you talk about an encouragement.

I never met a man who was so much of an encouragement in my life. His name was Herb Capehart. He'd get up in the meeting, and he'd lead singing.

He'd lead singing down on the front of the platform with his little old guitar, and he'd just sing these little old songs. I mean, he was just the cutest little old man that you'd ever seen in your life. I mean, he was a freaky machine, too.

I never even heard him preach an actual sermon, but, I mean, he'd preach the announcements. He'd preach the prayer. He'd kick his little leg up.

I mean, he was just a cute little old country church, about 35, 40 people. And I'll tell you, we had a wonderful, wonderful meeting. But, I mean, everywhere we went, that guy would encourage people, encourage people.

I mean, we went to visit this little old lady in her house. She's all by herself. Her husband had died years and years and years earlier.

She was 98 years old. You know, that's a pretty season long. She'd been saved for 75 years.

I mean, saved and walking with God for 75 years. That's 50 more years than I've been alive, amen. That's a lot.

And so, here, a 98-year-old lady, I mean, crippled up with all flash. I mean, couldn't hardly move. You know, the home health care nurse would come in and help her, you know, fix her food or breakfast, lunch, and dinner, help her get into bed, you know.

I mean, everything had to be helped by this lady. She could do anything for this lady. Her health, you know, wasn't the greatest, but it wasn't the worst either.

I mean, she could see okay, you know, respectively. She could hear pretty good if you got down close and talked loud enough. Ninety-eight years old and she's in that house, and I'll never forget in a million years what that lady asked that preacher and what he said.

She said, Brother Capehart, she said, can I ask you a question? She said, don't thank me, I'm spiritual. He said, Brother, I won't thank you, I'm spiritual. He didn't call her name.

She'd been a member of his church for years, but she couldn't get out. She couldn't ride for me. She said, can I ask you why God sent me here for a million years? He said, I'm in a big hospital.

Whoa, I never heard her like that before. She said, I'm ready to go to heaven. She said, I'm always hearing people talk about heaven and preach about heaven and sing about heaven.

I hear it on TV and preachers I watch and the people I listen to on the radio talk about heaven, and they always say they're ready to go, but not on the next train. She said, preacher, I'm ready to go on the next train. She said, I've been ready to go on the next train for 20 years.

She said, could you tell me why God would leave a little old 98-year-old lady in here that somebody's got to change and somebody's got to shower and somebody's got to feed and somebody's got to tuck into the bed like a little bitty kid? She said, would you mind telling me why God would leave somebody here like this with crippling arthritis and, you know, I can't see as great as I'd like to, can't hear as good as I'd like to, I can't get out, I can't minister for the Lord. Would you mind telling me why God would let the 98-year-old lady leave? And that preacher looked at that little old lady and he said, can you say, praise the Lord? And she put her hand on her hip like this and she said, don't be silly. He said, well, say it.

She said, right now? He said, right now. He said, that's exactly why God's left you here with crippling arthritis. So you can praise.

I'm going to tell you why you go through some hopeful situations sometimes, man. So you can praise the Lord. So when you get to the other side, you can understand and realize that you didn't see your way out of this one.

We're pretty good at putting up a pretty good concoction sometimes of getting ourself out of a mess. But every now and then, God's going to put you in a mess you can't get out of. Every now and then, God's going to put you in a mess that your buddies and your friends and your places can't get you out of.

You're going to have to get to the place where God backs you to the point where you say to yourself, no hope, no hope, no hope, no hope, no hope. And when God brings you out on the other side, you can say to yourself, praise the Lord. I was reading it today.

I'm telling you, when hope's all gone, selflessness is gone.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0422.mp3>

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