

**1/7/2024—Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 15:13—Bringing God’s Healing and Hope to the World**

**I. A world that is broken and despairing**

- a. Mental health crises in U.S. and elsewhere
- b. 108.4 million displaced worldwide from their homes
- c. Human trafficking—27.6 million people worldwide
- d. Cultural markers of hope have declined in U.S.

**II. There is a longing for healing and hope.**

- a. Consider when a crisis hits, people often search out spirituality (not always Christian)
- b. Studies indicate religious communities are common sources where people turn to hope (but we cannot stop at some generic religious experience for hope, but looking for something real)
  - i. However, most recently since COVID fewer people are looking to the Church
- c. In times of crises—we can turn to God or to other kinds of idols for consolation.

**III. Healing and hope found in the gospel of Jesus**

- a. *1 Corinthians 15* (covers the core message of the gospel of Christ)
- b. Recognize ourselves and Jesus in the midst of the larger story
- c. Human sin brought about the mass human and worldly mess
- d. The need for forgiveness is at the heart of the process of healing
- e. Ideologies and institutions have always blamed others outside of ourselves for the problems of this world; The gospel calls us to humbly look within
- f. Jesus’ death and resurrection brings about the forgiveness of sin and sets us on a course toward comprehensive healing
- g. The greatest enemy, death, has been swallowed up in victory (vv.54-57)
- h. In contrast: (1) cling to wishful thinking with little or no grounds; (2) v.32-live for now and try to forget your sorrows

**IV. Bearers of this healing and hope**

- a. This new reality affects how we live (*1 Cor. 15:30-34*)
- b. We do not live for the moment; we labor for Christ’s kingdom—offering healing and hope to those in despair

**V. So what?**

- a. As a church:
  - i. Focus on our foundation—Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture
  - ii. Being a community of belonging
  - iii. Being a community of shared mission
  - iv. Invite others into our community of belonging and mission
- b. Consider one person/family you can invite into our community in 2024
- c. Reflect personally on how the gospel has brought hope and healing to your broken world. How has it sustained you and changed you?