



# REDEEMING HOPE

## The Rescuer

[Advent, 2020]

### Series Overview

*"As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered...I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak." (Ezekiel 34:12,15,16 ESV)*

Within the world around us there is pain, evil, suffering, and fear. We are born into it, are surrounded by it, and struggle against this brokenness our entire lives. We have all experienced someone hurting us in some way that leaves a lasting mark, and if we are honest we have all inflicted lasting wounds onto others.

In response to this brokenness, some of us seek to rise above it by becoming successful, important, wealthy, powerful, or outwardly religious in order to combat this brokenness by our own achievements and "picking ourselves up by our bootstraps". Others are overwhelmed and overcome by this turmoil, living in a state of constant depression and disintegration while feeling the crushing nature of the world and our inability to change it. This approach causes many to lash out at others, live in sadness, or even seek to take their own life. Others seek to distract from this brokenness by self-medication. This can be the abuse of substances, sex, or attempts at self-actualization to simply push away the feeling that things are not how they're supposed to be.

What it boils down to is that we are all looking for a rescuer, someone or something to rescue us from this evil around us and within us. We're constantly looking for "home", but rarely know how to articulate what "home" really is. So vain attempts at self-help, succumbing to depression, or attempting self-actualization still leave us right where we started. But like a bungee cord, these distractions inevitably reach their end and pull us back into this cycle of sin and suffering with even more force.

But our Heavenly Father sees this, and has anticipated it since humanity rebelled against Him in the Garden of Eden. And in that Garden, millenia ago, our Father gave us a promise of a Rescuer, someone who would come to set the world right again. Someone who would come to crush this brokenness permanently, completely, and totally. And for thousands of years the people of God waited as He kept promising and we kept hoping.

2,000 years ago The Rescuer arrived in the miraculous birth of Jesus! Jesus is God incarnate, the second Person of the Trinity, the fullness of God, yet He also is completely human. The Creator enters into His own creation, and He begins to work this long-awaited plan to rescue His people. He lives a perfect life, He teaches, He heals, He models, and He prepares. His entry into the world is an act of war against the pain, evil, suffering, and fear that has plagued humanity. And God's rescuing act reaches completion at the substitutionary death the miraculous resurrection of Jesus. He takes the punishment we deserve, rescuing us from the clutches of evil and bringing us into an entirely new way of living that is rooted in healing, goodness, restoration, and rest.

Now, the entire world is in the midst of a transformation, away from the pain of evil and into this new way of living called the Kingdom of God. As this rescuing story continues, God's redeemed people can play a part in spreading His message of hope, believing that one day Jesus will come again and will set the world right once and for all.

The Rescuer has come, is coming, and will come. He is bringing His people back to Himself and then sending them out in the world to invite others into this healing, goodness, restoration, and rest.

Will you join The Rescuer?

## \*Specific Background for Series\*

Most often, pain, hurt, or suffering goes untouched and un-talked about in Clarksville. People experience relational and spiritual brokenness in their marriages, relationships, with their kids, and the holidays seem to bring up this pain in a unique way. Many attempt to fix this hurt on their own or cover up in order to appear "put together". People rarely share while they are processing through something difficult, but only share how they "used to" have a difficulty and now they have overcome it. The narrative is almost always one of overcoming through personal grit, without appearing to struggle at all, making them their own personal rescuer. **We want to address this culture of self-reliance by looking at our need for The Ultimate Rescuer and Savior outside of ourselves to save us from the true hell: separation from God**

People in Clarksville look outside of themselves for a rescuer for their hurts, pains, and difficulties. Many turn to relationships for affirmation, vocations for personal validity, and ministry within the church for means of self-validation and security. **We want to address these vain attempts at personal validation through external means by looking at the inability of anything or anyone apart from Jesus to rescue us from the deep incompetency we feel when separated from God.**

There is a deep hopelessness present in our city. Often masked and almost never acknowledged, people live life by simply showing up, without thriving and without true joy or lasting enjoyment of others. This hopelessness over time is dehumanizing and it saturates our culture with cynicism and pain. **We want to address this hopelessness by looking at the ultimate hope, the promise of God fulfilled in Jesus, who rescues us from hopelessness into meaning, purpose, significance, and joy that we are fully known and fully loved.**

## Occasion, Purpose, and Message

### OCCASION

*What prompted the writing of this series?*

We all are looking for a rescuer, a Savior. Jesus compels us to either reject Him, or turn to Him in faith.

### PURPOSE

*What does this series hope to accomplish? What was the expected outcome?*

We want people to acknowledge where they look to themselves, to others, or to distractions to solve their own brokenness, and turn to Christ.

## Major Theological Concepts

Redeem/Redeeming/Redemption

Redeemer

Kingdom

Idolatry

## Thematic/Timeline Outline

12/6/2020	The Promise of a Rescuer
12/13/2020	The Hope of a Rescuer
12/20/2020	The Rescuer Arrives
12/24/2020	The Rescuer is for You

Artistic Elements

