

0 (0s):

The one that's online right now after my message. I'm going to give you guys a cue and I want you to get out zoom. Okay. So you're going to leave this feed and go to zoom because right after the message, we're all going to do the candle lighting together. Even if you're watching online, we're going to do that at zoom. So it's going to be a rise, [denver.com/zoom](https://denver.com/zoom). You'll have the link there. So I'm just prepping you guys to be ready for that in a few minutes. But as we're talking today, we really want to focus on this idea of hope because don't, we need hope this year. It has been quite a year, hasn't it? It has been quite a year, even just a few weeks ago. We got out all our Christmas stuff and for our daughter McKinley, who's about to turn four. We have a little, little people advent set. And in this little people said, of course, there's Mary and Joseph and a little baby Jesus with the little people, and I'm not making this up.

0 (46s):

I'm not making this up. As she got out, she calls it her activity set. And as she's playing, this is what we heard. I'm not making this up. The shepherd comes over and asked, asked Mary, do you want me to wear a mask? I'm not kidding. And Mary said, no. It's okay. And in case you're wondering Herod yes. Was an anti masker. We don't like that guy, but yeah, that hasn't been that kind of year. Right? Even Mary and Joseph had to worry about COVID coming to eight pound, six pound, little baby G. It was that kind of year in 2020. Yeah. It's been rough. It's been difficult. And that's why we need to focus on hope.

0 (1m 27s):

But I think this, this year, if it's taught us anything, is that we need something better to provide us hope because you know what hope is, it's really our assurance that things are gonna get better assurance about the future and what we discovered this year. I think every single one of us is that that hope cannot be in something external, something outside of ourselves. Because a lot of us said, well, Hey, I got a job. I have some income. Well, we know that a lot of people entire sectors had to lay off 90% of employees. A lot of you lost work or were furloughed or still worrying about your job. The stock market went all over the place. We're worried about finances and you realize, well, I cannot trust in money.

0 (2m 7s):

It's so unstable. I can't trust my job. That then we look to other things like the government. Well, how did that pan out trusting in the government this year, right? Yeah. Right. We, we, we tried to, but we were like, Oh my gosh, even right now, is there going to be a stimulus or not? Right. It's hard to trust in the government. We're like, I don't know if I can trust these things that are outside of myself, even our own health. Can we trust that? But we look at it and I've been on the phone. You've talked to these people. Maybe you're them, yourself. One person gets COVID and it's like the mildest cold in the world. Another person gets it. And they're on the ventilator inches from death. And there seems to be no rhyme or reason about it. We can't even trust our health. This doesn't make any sense. We still haven't figured out this virus.

0 (2m 50s):

And we realized that putting our hope in those things outside of ourselves has led us down. And it's hard to

say, I have an assurance that things are going to get better with these things outside of. So then we say, well, it must be something inside of us. Right? We need to just sum it up some hope from inside of ourselves. But if you're like me, you also found that you let yourself down. There were days that you didn't want to get out of bed that you never got out of sweats all week. Right? Didn't even go outside of the house that you're lonely. That you're struggling, that you're thinking, Oh my gosh, Groundhog day again, that I'm stuck in this house for the, who knows how many days with these crazy screen obsessed monsters and yes, parents, that's what your kids say about you.

0 (3m 34s):

Okay. But yeah, we have those days and we're like, Oh my gosh, inside of ourselves, we don't have enough. That, that depression, that anxiety, that, that things like drug abuse and suicidal thoughts are all time highs. I referenced a couple of weeks ago, a Gallup poll that said as long as they've been tracking mental health, that, that this year mental health is eight points lower than it ever has been in their measurements across the board. Eight points, lower that's the year we've been having. And we've realized there's days. I don't even know if I can get myself up. I don't know if I can apply for another job.

1 (4m 12s):

So

0 (4m 13s):

Where does that hope come from? How can we have assurance that things are going to be better if it, if it can't come from outside of us, if we let ourselves down, where do we find that hope? Well, what I hope that you discover tonight, and as we talk about the message of Christmas is that we do need hope inside of us, but has to come from something else, has to come from someone else. And that is Jesus

1 (4m 36s):

Christ with Jesus inside. You hope overflows.

0 (4m 43s):

You've got to know Jesus. You've got to have a relationship with him because when he is inside you, you have that relationship with him and he's inside. You hope overflows in your life. And some of you need to be filled up again tonight, as you're watching this as you're listening. And that's what I'm praying for you. So we're going to look at one scripture today, just one verse. And we're going to look at this. It's not really a normal Christmas verse, but I think it ties so well to the Christmas story. So we're going to look at Romans chapter 15, verse 13, together. If you have a Bible or a smartphone, or if you're online, you can look at, even use the YouVersion Bible app and you can find our event for arise, church Denver. And in Romans 15:13, we read this may the God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow

2 (5m 35s):

With hope by the power of the Holy spirit.

0 (5m 40s):

May the God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy spirit. This verse, as you can tell is a prayer. And it was a prayer by the apostle

2 (5m 51s):

Paul, who was really the leader

0 (5m 53s):

Of the early Christian movement. And he was starting churches. And right now he writes letter to a group of followers of Jesus in the city of Rome. And he's trying to encourage them. He's praying for them. So he writes out this prayer and I think he praises for all followers of Jesus. So it's for us. And it's actually my prayer for you right now, because I know some of us need to be filled again with hope that we need more assurance, that things will get better. So I'm praying for you. I'm praying for you that you would be filled again tonight on this Christmas Eve, Ms. My prayer may the God of hope fill you because that's our God. He's a God of hope. He's a God who knows the future, who plan the future and can bring about whatever future he desires.

0 (6m 35s):

And it is a good one. And that God of hope wants to fill us. No, I think some of us need to be filled because we're running a little empty. Aren't we, our meter is a little low. Maybe things are a little bit better at Christmas, but we're like, Oh my gosh, just wait until Christmas day's over or on Christmas, I'm going to be lonely this year. And I won't see people that I wanted to our hope meters down. Maybe you're running low. Maybe you're even running on empty today. You're on fumes. And your hope tank, right? Is that you, or maybe you have lost all your fumes few, a few miles back, and you're just stuck on the side of the road. And you're like, how the heck can I even move forward? You're watching right now online because you couldn't even get out of bed.

0 (7m 17s):

You didn't even worry about COVID. You just couldn't get up. If you're running on empty right now, I am praying for you to be filled again, because God wants to fill you with hope. He is the God of hope. He's the God of hope. I know that I have needed it this year. I remember back in June, you know, as a pastor, I was thinking, okay, I, at the beginning, I just got to push through. We got to figure this out. Even though I'm a pastor of a church that I can't see at all, because none of us can be in person and people are, are getting hurt. People are in the hospital, people are hungry and they don't have any money. I'm like, okay, I gotta figure this out. I was punching through and pushing through as a lot of you did right at the beginning of this of COVID and then came into June and I was just, I hit the wall. Anybody hit the wall this year.

0 (7m 57s):

I know I did. I did totally hit the wall and I was physically emotionally exhausted. I was running on empty. I was running on empty. And I remember like, I'm called to be a pastor. I love being a pastor. I've been doing it almost 10 years now. I don't want to do anything else. And yet there was a moment that I was thinking, what could I do besides being a pastor? What list of jobs turns out? There's not a huge demand for people who can speak to dead languages. Right. Okay. Well, and that degree is kind of worthless and don't worry. I want to be a pastor. And to keep being a pastor when I was that low on empty, right? You guys were there. We hit the wall. It was hard. And I needed to be filled up again. And I think some of you need to be filled up again tonight. And that's what I'm hoping and praying that Jesus would be the one, because with Jesus inside, you hope overflows, hope overflows in our verse in Romans 15:13, it says how this happens, because you're wondering, well, how do I get filled again?

0 (8m 52s):

How do I get filled? So the prayers may, the God of hope, fill you with all joy and peace. Now that sounds great. As you trust

1 (8m 58s):

In him,

0 (9m 0s):

It's by trusting in God, the God of hope that you can receive the hope, the joy, the peace that will fill you up

1 (9m 8s):

Again, it's through trust

0 (9m 10s):

And trust. When we talking about a person is saying, Hey, this person, because of what they have done in the past, I can trust them into the future, right? And that gives you hope this person has come through in the past. They have a great track record. So therefore I know that I can trust them in the future.

1 (9m 27s):

And that's what

0 (9m 28s):

We're being told here. That we can be filled with hope for our future. We can have assurance that things will get better because we can trust the person who speaks and does what he says. And that is the God of hope.

1 (9m 40s):

I want you to think about

0 (9m 40s):

This just with Christmas, because God is the God who speaks and does, if he says something, he does it.

1 (9m 47s):

That's why we can trust him. It says

0 (9m 48s):

In numbers, 2019, I'm sorry, 29, nine 29. That, that God is not a man that he should lie, or a son of man that he should change his mind. Does he speak and not act as he promise and not fulfill the answers? No, God always does what he says. He's going to do, because he has done that in the past. We can trust him for the future. Think about just the story of Christmas. Over a thousand years before Jesus was ever born, there was a promise

1 (10m 19s):

That God gave

0 (10m 21s):

The savior would come. Then a Messiah would be born. And there was a specific prophecy that this child would come from the tribe of Judah.

1 (10m 29s):

Hey Judah, how are you doing?

0 (10m 33s):

The Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah. And then a few hundred years after that, there was a promise that the Messiah would come from the line of David, a descendant directly of King David, the tribe of Judah, a descendant of David, but to complicate matters even more. There was a prophecy given that this Messiah would come from the region of the North region of Galilee to complicate it further. There was a missing prophecy that the Messiah would come from a small town of just a few hundred people called Bethlehem. Why is that more complicated? Because Bethlehem is not in the region of Galilee. So how does this all work? Well, we know the Christmas story.

0 (11m 13s):

We know that there was a young man named Joseph and he was from the tribe of Judah in the lineage of King David. Okay. He's got those first two

1 (11m 22s):

Boxes checked off. Okay.

0 (11m 24s):

And he was a carpenter, probably worked with stone in the Northern part of Israel in the town of Nazareth located in the region of Galilee. Okay. He's got three check marks, but he didn't live in Bethlehem, but it just so happened that there was a Roman emperor at the time who called for a census, meaning everybody needed to count, be counted. So they had to go to their hometown. Well, that was his hometown there in Bethlehem. So Joseph set off with his fiancée, Mary to go to Bethlehem for different prophecies being fulfilled,

1 (11m 56s):

Right. To complicate

0 (11m 58s):

Matters. Even more. There was a prophecy given about 700, 600 years before Jesus that said that the Messiah would come from a Virgin. And in case you miss sex ed class, that's not really possible. Right. Okay.

1 (12m 15s):

But here was Mary engaged

0 (12m 19s):

To be married to Joseph, but they had not ever had any sexual relations. And yet there she was

1 (12m 25s):

Pregnant.

0 (12m 26s):

And we know that this was tobacco because Joseph was, it was going to end things quietly. He just wanted to kind of put the relationship beside, cause he knew that he was not the father of that baby inside of Mary. But before he could act on that, an angel came to him at night in a dream and said, don't do that. That child inside of Mary was put there by the Holy spirit. You will call him Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. And you will call him a manual because he will be God with us fulfilling that impossible promise that prophecy from Isaiah, all these prophecies happening again and again and again.

0 (13m 8s):

But there was even more that when they did finally get to Bethlehem and the baby was born there and the manger, we know the story that, that it was prophesied, that Kings would come and be led there by a star, probably similar to the star just a few days ago when those two planets aligned, you know, the, the term for star in the Greek could be planets too. And they followed this and they were brought to Bethlehem, brought to the manger where the baby Jesus was, all these prophecies are lining up. Right. But here's an even

crazier one. The Messiah was supposed to come out of Egypt. Well, how is that possible for someone from Nazareth in the town of Bethlehem? Well, there was this terrible King Herod. Remember the anti masker guy who was angry, that these Kings came from the East to worship this little baby as King because he thought he was the King.

0 (13m 55s):

So he ordered that all little boys be killed.

1 (13m 59s):

And what happened,

0 (14m 0s):

Joseph was warned and dream and fled to eat

1 (14m 3s):

Gypped where they were safe until they could return back to Nazareth. And the region of Galilee

0 (14m 10s):

Prophecy after prophecy, after prophecy was being fulfilled in the birth of Jesus, the Christmas story, it wasn't just his birth that God said something. And did it. It was with the life of Jesus, our Messiah, because it was promised that Jesus would be the one who would proclaim good news to the poor and freedom for the captives. And that is the exact message that Jesus stood up to proclaim among the people he served. And more than that, we're told that he would be a compassionate man. And that's exactly who Jesus was. He loved people. He cared for those who were outcasts of society. The least the last, the last Jesus fulfilled prophecy with his life. He was even prophesied that at the end, he would enter into the city.

0 (14m 51s):

People would cheer him on as the King. And he would write on right on the foal of a donkey, again, fulfilling a prophecy. As he entered in Jerusalem and his last week, they cheered him as King, but then he fulfilled another prophecy because it was foretold that he would have to

1 (15m 5s):

Buffer and be rejected

0 (15m 8s):

And even betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, three more prophecies that you

1 (15m 13s):

Fulfilled as he was arrested, one of his own followers, Judas betrayed him and they beat him and mocked

him. He fulfilled even more prophecies when they put him up on the cross when they

0 (15m 28s):

Pierced his side and when they never broke his bones, even though that was the common way to make sure that the criminal was dead on the cross

1 (15m 36s):

Again and again and again and again,

0 (15m 37s):

Jesus filled so many prophecies, but perhaps the greatest prophecy that Jesus fulfilled was the one he himself gave. And he gave it on multiple occasions to whole sorts of different people, even when he was on trial. So it's in the court records. Jesus said that he would die. And three days

1 (15m 51s):

Later rise from the dead. And guess what? He did it now, if we just ignore it,

0 (15m 59s):

All the other prophecies just said, those don't count. But if someone says I'm going to die, three days later, I'm going to be risen from the dead. And then they do it. You should probably listen to everything. They say something different about that guy, because he has done something that no other human in, all of history has ever done.

1 (16m 15s):

And we see

0 (16m 15s):

All these things prophecy after prophecy, through birth,

1 (16m 18s):

Life, death, and resurrection fulfilled, God speaks. And he fulfilled.

0 (16m 24s):

If he says he's going to do something, he does it. And that's why we can trust him. There was a mathematician in California professor, and he worked with some of the grad students and they said, what, what, what's the likelihood? What's the possibility of Jesus fulfilling these prophecies? So they narrowed it down to eight. They said, okay, we know for sure, there's at least eight prophecies filled. So what's the mathematical problem



1 (16m 44s):

Ability of that happening? Well, they figured out it would

0 (16m 47s):

Be one times 10 to the 17th

1 (16m 49s):

Power case. You're wondering that's a lot of zeros, right?

0 (16m 54s):

This mathematician in order to make it a little more clear to us, he says, well, just imagine you take a silver dollar and you Mark one silver dollar and put it somewhere in the state of Texas.

1 (17m 4s):

And then

0 (17m 4s):

You fill the rest of the state, right? One coin next to each other with silver gold

1 (17m 9s):

Across the whole state.

0 (17m 11s):

But you don't just do it with one layer. You do it three feet deep. Then you blindfold the man and tell them to find the one silver dollar you put somewhere in there. You can go wherever you want. You spin them around and say, good luck. You got one chance for that man, to find that one silver dollar would be the same likelihood of, of Jesus fulfilling all

1 (17m 28s):

Eight of those prophecies. But by better

0 (17m 32s):

Accounts, Jesus fulfilled probably about 55

1 (17m 35s):

Different prophecies in his birth life, death and resurrection. It's so remote

0 (17m 42s):

Of a possibility that it's impossible.

1 (17m 45s):

And yet it happened when God says he's going to do something.

0 (17m 51s):

He does it. He has proved it again and again and again through the birth life and death and resurrection of Jesus. So therefore we can trust him when he says he's going to do something in the future. And that should fill you with hope because this same God has said things like never will I leave you and never will I forsake you? You'll never be alone. The same God has said, I will work in all things for the good of those who love me, no matter what you're going through and suffering and struggling through, God will figure out a way to make it good if you trust him. And you love him. If God has said things like, if you believe in me, your sins will be forgiven. And there is life after this life that your body though, it breaks down and may not be able to make it through this pandemic.

0 (18m 33s):

You will have another body ahead of you forever. There will be no more sickness, sorrow, pain, or death or pandemics or loneliness. Again, we can trust him for that because when God speaks, he does it. And if he says, he's going to do something, he's going to do it. We can trust him. And therefore we should be filled.

1 (18m 54s):

Yes. Hope that's. Why

0 (18m 58s):

May you be filled with peace and joy as you trust in him and Jesus, but that's not even the greatest part of this first. I don't think maybe that is, but here's the even greater part. Look at this last part so that you may overflow with hope.

1 (19m 14s):

When you trust

0 (19m 15s):

Jesus, you can be filled again with hope. Even if you're running on empty. Even if you think there's no way things can get better, you can be filled again. But now you can be filled so much that you're overflowing. You can't even contain all the hope that you have within you. Doesn't that sound good? This is what happens. It's more hope than you even need. There's hope for people around you who need hope. And I have seen this more than ever

1 (19m 36s):

This year.

0 (19m 38s):

I've seen our church rally to provide meals for healthcare workers that, that you guys have, have given more financially to our benevolence fund, which just goes a hundred percent out to people in need. You've given more in this year and we've given away more of that fund than we ever have in all the other years that I've been here combined, that that people have stepped up to serve. We had someone who hadn't been nursing for a while and jumped back to volunteer in the emergency room department. In our church, I saw people that stepped out courageously, a young woman who had come, decided to come out and tell people that she was a sexual assault survivor so that she could give hope and courage to those who are struggling with that same thing.

0 (20m 19s):

I saw th the, a family when they saw an, a college student who got kicked out of the dorms because of COVID and had no place to say the family brought them into their home. I've seen an alcoholic who had been sober for just a few months, help an alcoholic who had been sober for a few weeks. I've seen a community group rally when, when three different people in that one community group had lost job or refer load and losing income. They rallied to give money and share what they had with those three who were in need. I've seen people pursue foster care and adoption to, to care for orphans. I've seen all sorts of hope overflowing, and I'm not even including all those outreach projects that you guys have been a part of this year.

0 (21m 5s):

And when I see all those things that hope overflowing, and that's just like the tip of the iceberg, some of these stories, but as I see this hope overflowing, I know it's because Jesus is inside of you, the people on our church. And guess what? That gives me the thrill of hope, that that feeling, wow, that's the thrill of hope because with Jesus inside, you hope overflows. So if you're here right now and you're like, I've been running a little bit low, I'm praying for you to be filled again tonight. I pray that you can be filled again, as you trust Jesus and say, Jesus, you are good. You are faithful. If you've said something, you're going to do it.

0 (21m 47s):

I can trust you. And you will be filled up because you can have an assurance that the future will be better. Even if things seem to get very bleak, because you know that God is on your side. And if he could do all those amazing things through the birth of his son, through the life of Jesus, through his death and resurrection, he can take care of you too, with Jesus inside. You hope over flows. So I just want to pray for everybody right now. And I want to give an opportunity for those of you who don't know Jesus yet, but want to, you want that hope inside of you. I want to give you an opportunity to, to accept that gift, but let's pray right now for all of us, whether you're here or online, Lord God, I pray for those who are joining us this Christmas.

0 (22m 30s):

Even maybe their, their hope tank, their peace tank, their joy tank is running empty. They're on fumes. They've got nothing left. They hit the wall. Maybe even right now, I pray that you would encourage them, give them strength, help them push forward. If they're in the hospital, if they're struggling with their health, or if they love someone who struggled with their health, because that's even harder, would you give them courage to move forward? Would you fill them again for those who are struggling financially right now, Lord, God, I pray that you would just remind them that you have a good future for them, that you are the provider and Lord God, for those who are really suffering right now, that they're depressed, that they're anxious and they don't even know if they want to keep moving ahead. One more day that you'd fill them with a hope, a thrill of hope that would never leave him.

0 (23m 18s):

Now, I just want to offer that opportunity. Like I said, if, if you don't know Jesus and you want him inside of you, you've got to say a prayer to accept him into your heart. So with everybody's eyes closed, if you're here, I'm going to lead you in a prayer so that you can make Jesus, your Lord and savior so they can be inside of you. But if you've already done that, if you are a follower of Jesus, I want you to say this prayer to give courage to some of the people around you who need to pray that prayer for the first time. Would you do that with me? So repeat this prayer after me, dear God, thank

1 (23m 46s):

You for loving me. I'm a sinner. I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me. I declare that Jesus is Lord. Fill me with hope to overflowing. Give me your spirit, help me to follow you and serve you for the rest of my life. Amen.

0 (24m 19s):

Now with eyes closed, keep your eyes closed. Just to hear if you said that prayer for the first time and meant it, you accepted Jesus for the first time. Would you please just slip your hand into the air? I'd love to just encourage you and pray for you. Awesome. Praise God. The angels are rejoicing with you for making that incredible decision that you have eternal life, that you have hope that will fill you for the rest of your life and beyond praise God for that. And if you are here in person or online, and you made that prayer for the first time and you meant to go to [rise, denver.com/follow](https://denver.com/follow), fill that form out. And I will personally pray for you, encourage you and send you a book as a gift. Lord, God, I pray for all of us right now for those that have entered the kingdom for the first time that they have received you and you are inside them, just fill them right now.

0 (25m 0s):

That thrill of hope that that sense of hope and peace and joy would never leave them. And they would leave out of this place or leave from watching a different person. I pray for all of us that we would be filled with hope that you would be inside us and empower us by your Holy name,

1 (25m 19s):

Spirit, Jesus name. Amen.