

Walking with Hope

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- **[A NOTE FOR YOU, THE PREACHER]**
- **Night 3: Walking with Hope**
- Tonight, you will be presenting about the law of God—the principles of a life with Jesus. The main ideas of this message are as follows (see also slide 55):
 - The law is the perfect expression of God’s character. (We tie this in with the previous message about salvation by explaining that when God saves us, He leads us into a relationship with Him that leads us to reflect His character of love, as revealed in His law.)
 - Sin is transgression of God’s law.
 - We have sinned and broken God’s law.
 - Jesus died to pay the penalty we deserve for breaking God’s law.
 - Jesus gives us power to walk with Him and obey His law.
 - Even though you are preaching primarily about the law, there is a major gospel emphasis in this sermon. The death of Jesus does not abolish the law, but rather rescues us from its penalty; then, Jesus gives us His power to obey.
 - For the appeal, you will be inviting people to trust in Jesus and His power to save them not only from the penalty of sin but also its power in their lives; you are encouraging people to surrender to Jesus and, by the power He alone can give, to live in harmony with His law.
 - This message lays the foundation for tomorrow’s message about the Sabbath. Pray that the Holy Spirit will do His work on the hearts of the members and visitors who are coming to the meetings.

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- Welcome to the third evening of our series: “A New Beginning”! Tonight, we have a very important message: “Walking with Hope.”
- But before we begin the message for tonight, I want to introduce the message for tomorrow night.

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- Tomorrow, we will be talking about an important reminder.

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- We live in an age of technology. We have many different devices that perform different functions for us. One of the most important devices we use is our phones.
- On many phones, there is an application that gives us reminders.

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- Tomorrow, we will look at a reminder that God has given us, as we prepare for the return of Jesus.

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- Join us tomorrow evening as we learn about "The Definite Reminder."

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- But for tonight, our topic is, "Walking with Hope." Let us pray as we begin.
- Over the past several evenings, we have been learning about how to find hope in Jesus.

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- On our first night, we learned that there is a war between good and evil. We learned that this world has rebelled against God. Satan is trying to destroy us, but Jesus wants to save us and give us hope.

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- Last night, we learned about the plan of salvation. We learned about how God rescues us from the penalty for sin.

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- Tonight, our topic is “Walking in Hope.” We will talk about how to live a new life with Jesus.
- God has wonderful plans for us; He wants us to live with hope. Jesus died so that we can have life. But He also has the power to help us to live with hope. The Bible is clear that salvation comes only through Jesus.
- We read in Ephesians 2:8-9...

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- “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”—Ephesians 2:8, 9 (NKJV).
- We are saved by God’s grace. He provided for our salvation on the cross. By faith, we respond and accept His provision. We say, “Jesus, I trust in You. I believe that you died to save me. I choose to accept Your gift. I trust in You.”

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- But when we trust Jesus for our salvation, we begin a journey of faith in Him; we allow God to fulfill His purpose in our lives.
- Notice what the rest of this verse says:

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- “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”—Ephesians 2:10, NKJV.
- When we trust in Jesus, God saves us from the penalty for sin, and He also leads us to fulfill His purpose for our lives. Tonight, we are going to talk about the principles of a life with Jesus.

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- Several of us here know how to drive a car. Perhaps you remember the first time you drove, or when you began learning how to drive. At first it was new and perhaps even difficult, but then as you continued learning, it provided freedom and opportunity to travel to where you needed to go.
- [Share your experience of learning how to drive.]
- We all know that there are basic rules for driving. There are rules for taking care of a car. When you follow these rules, you have freedom to drive and travel. But when you don’t follow the rules, you put yourself in danger, and you may even put others in danger, as well.

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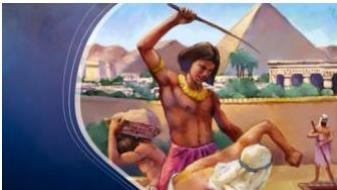
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- In a similar way, we experience freedom when receive salvation. But there are basic rules and principles for a life with Jesus. We find this illustrated in the story of the nation of Israel.

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- For many years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. The Egyptians made them work hard to build cities and monuments. They spoke harshly to the Israelite slaves. They beat them. They even tried to kill their children.
- The Israelites prayed for deliverance. They prayed for God to fulfill the promises He made to their ancestors. And one day, God sent a deliverer. He sent Moses.

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- Moses told the Pharaoh of Egypt to liberate the Israelites. But Pharaoh did not listen. So God sent several plagues that caused destruction in Egypt. Finally, Pharaoh obeyed the voice of God. He told the Israelites to leave the land of Egypt.

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- God provided for the Israelites in different ways. He opened a road for them through the Red Sea. He gave them water in the desert. He guided them with a pillar of cloud and fire that helped them to be cool during the day and warm during the night.
- He showed them that He is a God of salvation. He showed them that He is a God who provides. He showed them that He is dependable.

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- After many weeks of travel, God led the Israelites to Mount Sinai. There He chose to reveal Himself to the people in an amazing way. There was an earthquake and fire. There was thunder and lightning. And then, the people heard the voice of God. There, on Mount Sinai, God proclaimed the ten basic rules of His kingdom. He proclaimed His law.
- He began by telling them,

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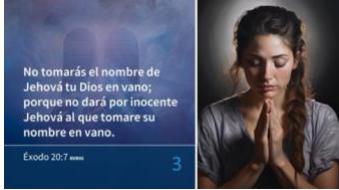
- “You shall have no other gods before Me.”—Exodus 20:2, NKJV.
- God reminded them that He delivered them. He was their Redeemer. He was their Savior. He had given them freedom. Now, He was going to teach them how to live in freedom. He declared His law. Let us review the law of God together.

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- "You shall have no other gods before Me."—Exodus 20:3.
- Only God is worthy of our worship. He is our Creator. He is our Redeemer. We must worship only Him.

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- "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them"—Exodus 20:4-5.
- We cannot represent God with any idols; He is holy and exalted above anything we know or see.

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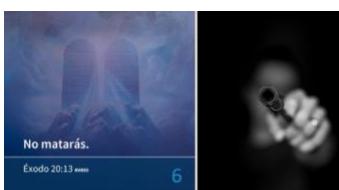
- "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."—Exodus 20:6-7.
- Because God is holy, His name is holy. We must have reverence when we relate to God, or anything associated with Him.

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- "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God."—Exodus 20:8-9.
- We must honor the day that God has sanctified.

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- "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you."—Exodus 20:12, NKJV.
- We must respect parents, and other authorities that God has placed in our lives. This is crucial to a life of freedom.

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- "You shall not murder." —Exodus 20:13.
- We must respect human life.

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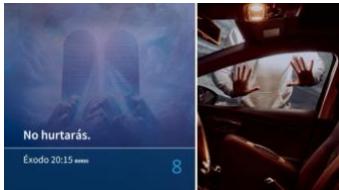
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- “You shall not commit adultery.”—Exodus 20:14.
- We must respect the sacred institution of marriage; we experience happiness when we follow God’s plan for families.

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- “You shall not steal.” —Exodus 20:15.
- We must respect the property of others.

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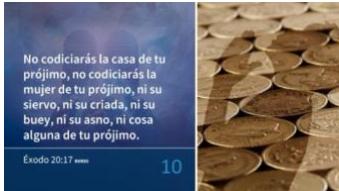
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- “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” —Exodus 20:16.
- We must be honest and respect the reputation of others.

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- “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”—Exodus 20:17, NKJV.
- We must be content with what God gives us.

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- These are the ten commandments—the ten rules for life that God proclaimed on Mount Sinai. They were so important that God proclaimed them from Mount Sinai and wrote them on tablets of stone (Exodus 31:18).
- For some people, rules seem like a burden. Some people think that rules prevent freedom. But actually, rules protect freedom. They protect us from hurting ourselves and others.

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- God gave the nation of Israel freedom from slavery. He saved them with His Almighty hand. Then, he taught them how to live in freedom.

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- God does the same for us. He saves us by His grace. He delivers us from the penalty for sin. Then, when we choose to trust in Jesus, He teaches us how to live in freedom. He teaches us to live in harmony with His law.
- When we choose to follow Jesus, when we choose to walk with Him, we choose to follow His principles for life.
- Amos 3:3 says:

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- “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” –Amos 3:3.
- If we choose to walk with Jesus, we choose to live according to the principles of His kingdom.
- 1 John 4:8 says,

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- “God is love.” This is the character of God. When we choose to follow Jesus, we choose to follow His principle of love.

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- The law reflects the love of God. One time, a scholar asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was. We read Jesus' response in Matthew 22:37-40.

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- You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.
- — Matthew 22:37-40.

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- And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”
- — Matthew 22:37-40.

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- Many people do not understand this text correctly. They think that if we love God and love others, we do not have to keep the ten commandments. But in reality, the law teaches us how to love God and love our neighbor.
- The ten commandments are based on the principles of love. They are the expression of perfect love. The first four commandments are about how we love God. The last six commandments are about how we love others.

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- Sin is the opposite of love. Satan hates God and His character. He hates the principle of love that is the foundation of God's kingdom. Satan introduced sin and selfishness. The Bible provides a clear definition of sin.
- 1 John 3:4 says:

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- "Sin is the transgression of the law." –1 John 3:4, KJV.
- The law of God is based on the principle of love, and sin is based on the principle of selfishness. When we break the law, when we break the ten commandments, we commit sin.

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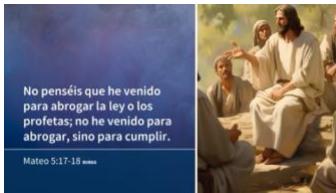
- When Adam and Eve sinned, they broke the law of God. They chose to follow their own desires instead of loving God. This created a problem.
- Love and obedience bring happiness, but sin and rebellion bring sadness and destruction. In His love, God has to destroy sin and sinners, and put an end to the sadness and destruction that sin brings.
- God could not change His law to accommodate sin. His law is eternal, because it reflects His own character.

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- So God sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus lived a perfect life. He perfectly loved God and loved others. When He began His public ministry, there were people who thought that He was teaching people to ignore God's law. But notice what Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-18.

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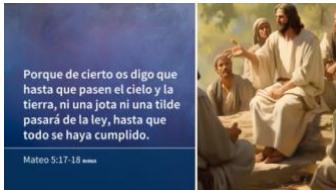
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- “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.
- — Matthew 5:17-18.

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- For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.
- — Matthew 5:17-18

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- Some people think that because Jesus came and died for us, we do not have to keep the Law. But Jesus clearly said that He came to elevate the law of God.

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- In fact, He told His disciples, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

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- Jesus provided an example of perfect obedience to the law of God.

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- At the end of His life, he could say, “I have kept My Father’s commandments” (John 15:10).

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- Jesus died because of the importance of God's law. We have broken the law. We deserve to die. But Jesus died in our place. He died to fulfill the penalty of the broken law.

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- When we come to Jesus, we come in weakness. Our characters are weak; our human nature is weak. We are not able to keep the law of God in our own strength. We are under the penalty of the law. But Jesus died to free us from the penalty that we deserve. Because of Jesus, we are free! But are we free to break the law again? No!

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- The Bible is clear that although Jesus died for our sins, He did not stay in the grave. He rose again! The power of His perfect love was stronger than death. And that same power is available to us today.

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- We come to Jesus in guilt and weakness. But He forgives us and gives us His power. We cannot keep the law in our own strength. But Jesus gives us power to keep the law. In fact, the Bible says that He writes His law on our hearts.
- Hebrews 8:10-12 says:

- I will put my laws into their minds,
- and write them on their hearts,
- and I will be their God,
- and they shall be my people.
- — Hebrews 8:10

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- Let's review quickly what we have learned tonight.
- The law is the perfect expression of God's character.
- Sin is transgression of God's law.
- We have sinned and broken God's law.
- Jesus died to pay the penalty we deserve for breaking God's law.
- Jesus gives us power to walk with Him and obey His law.

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- Let us be clear: Our own attempts of obedience cannot save us. Romans 3:20 says:

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- For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.
- Romans 3:20

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- The Book of James says that the law is like a mirror (James 1:23-25). A mirror shows us any imperfections we have. But it cannot clean our face or remove our imperfections.
- [You will likely check the mirror before leaving your hotel to preach tonight. Mention this as an example of using a mirror to see our imperfections.]

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- The same is true with the law. Because we are sinful, the law can only show us our sin and make us realize that we deserve the penalty for sin, which is death. But in this, the law shows us that we need Jesus. We need to trust in Him and His perfection; we need to trust in His sacrifice for us on the cross. When we come to Jesus in our guilt and weakness, when we confess our sins, He forgives us. Then, as we continue to trust Him, we desire to obey Him, and He gives us His power to keep His law. God desires the obedience that comes from faith and trust.

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- Satan is a deceiver. He tries to tell people that they cannot keep God's law. Today, we see the results of Satan's lies. All around us, we see crime. We see infidelity. We see immorality. We see broken societies and broken homes. Why? Because we are experiencing the tragic results of breaking God's law. The Bible tells us that at the end of time, Satan will convince the whole world to turn away from God. He will convince the whole world to disobey God's law.

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- Yet God will have a people who put their trust in Him. He will have a people who depend on Jesus. He will have a people who love Jesus so much that they choose to obey Him. They receive power from their Savior to obey His law.
- The Bible describes these people in Revelation 14:12.

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- “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” –Revelation 14:12.
- I want to be one of those people, how about you?

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- Tonight, Jesus invites us to walk with Him. He invites us to have a life of hope. His way brings happiness. He invites us to live in harmony with His law.
- Maybe tonight, you realize that you have not always been in harmony with God’s law. As I look at my own life, I realize that there are many ways in which I disobey God. But I want to choose Jesus tonight. I want Him to forgive my sins. I want to walk with Jesus, and I want to trust in His forgiveness and in His power. He can set us free from our sins, and He can teach us how to live in freedom.

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- Tonight, you may be struggling with a particular sin. Maybe you have not had the right priorities. Maybe you have not been honoring God. Maybe you have sinned against someone in your family. Maybe you struggle with gossip. Maybe you struggle with drugs or alcohol. If there is a particular sin or struggle that you would like to surrender to Jesus, I invite you to raise your hand tonight. I am raising my hand too, because I want the forgiveness and power that only Jesus can give me.
- Let us pray together.