

Date: July 9-10, 2022

Title: *Haiti Weekend*

Scripture: Romans 10:13-16

Speaker: Saint-Ange Monestime & Dr. Kurt Bjorklund

Dr. Kurt Bjorklund

Well, good morning. My name's Kurt. It is so good to be here today. You know, honestly, there are some weekends where you think I wouldn't mind having a weekend to not be around. But after you have a few where you're really stuck somewhere you say I would love to be at church and there is nowhere I would rather be today than here with you.

Thank you so much, all of you who have prayed. So many of you sent cards and extended kindnesses to my family over these last six weeks. And we're just so thankful. We sense the presence of God, and the prayers of his people over the last several weeks in profound ways. And I really look forward to sharing more about that. I was hoping I could do that this weekend, just with what we've had planned for months. The timing is such that I'm going to do that next weekend instead of today. And so, I'll have a chance hopefully to share about my journey physically, kind of what the last six weeks have been, and what's ahead for me.

But even more importantly, emotionally, and spiritually, when you go through something that really is life-threatening, potentially life-altering, it does crystallize some of your thinking in ways that are significant. And so, I again look forward to sharing that with you. That'll be next week so you have got to come back.

Today we have a really special opportunity. We have a ministry partner, Pastor Saint-Ange, who has been our ministry partner in Haiti for years and years now. And we're going to get a chance to hear from him. And I'm going to take a few moments to set up a little bit about why we would have a ministry partner in a place like Haiti and set up a time for us to partake in communion. And then Pastor Saint-Ange is going to come and share about what is happening in Haiti and what you are part of by being part of this church.

So let me pray. Father, we thank you for the chance to gather. I thank you that I'm able to be here today. And God, I pray that as we gather here in Wexford, the Strip District, Butler, Southpointe home gathering, and online, you would just speak to each of us. That my words and Pastor Saint-Ange's words would reflect your word in content, tone, and emphasis. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

So, in Romans chapter ten, verse 13, there's a well-known verse that's often quoted. And here's what it says. It says this, "For, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." And the reason that's well known is because it's a verse that points to the salvation that's available in Jesus Christ.

And there's a little word right at the beginning of the verse it says "for" and what that really is doing is it's pointing back to the argument of the book of Romans and what Romans argues more or less is that everybody is sinful. Kind of the pinnacle verse of that is Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

And then Romans teaches that because everyone's sinful, everyone is condemned. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." And what Romans argues is that although everyone's sinful, everyone's condemned, everyone has an opportunity to be saved if they'll call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is really the message of the church.

A lot of times people in our culture assume the message of the church and sometimes the church is complicit in making this, their message is to come to church and believe everything we believe. Get our politics, get our position on everything, or come to church and behave as we behave. And people assume that church is a behavior modification program. That if I go to church, I'll be a better person and thus I'll increase my chances of maybe one-day having eternal life or heaven.

But the message of the Bible should be the message of the church, which is not ultimately about beliefs and behavior, although understanding and believing the Bible will impact those things, but it's about what Jesus Christ has done on our behalf. And here's what Romans ten says right after verse 14. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

So, very simply here you have a chain, you have a call, which is somebody calls on God, on Jesus, and acknowledges their need verbally, publicly. They believe in order to call you have to actually have an internal belief. You hear the message. You hear the message because somebody proclaims it or preaches it to you and you are able to preach it because somebody sends it. And then he says, beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news referencing Isaiah. And the idea here is that the beautiful feet are of those who bring the life-changing message of Jesus Christ to people who don't have it otherwise.

And in the American church, sometimes there's a tendency to tell the message over and over to the same people. And sometimes that's borne out of a philosophy of ministry. Some people think that the church is about only equipping the already convinced and then missions is something we send money to overseas. Maybe we focus on unreached people or we do missions out there. But the church is just the gathering of the already convinced. Here at Orchard Hill, we believe that equipping is part of the mission of the church. But so is reaching, and there's always a need to be helping more and more people hear the message.

In fact, one of the reasons we do KidsFest every year isn't just so we have a really cool version of Vacation Bible School, which you can't call Vacation Bible School because that wouldn't be cool. It's KidsFest. But one of the reasons we do it is because every year there are families that come and their kids have a great week and they come back and in time their families go, maybe this church thing isn't just behavior and belief modification. Maybe it's a celebration of something more profound.

One of the reasons we pitch our weekends, the way that we pitch them is that it isn't just a gathering of the already convinced, but we want to be a place that's accessible to people who become disenfranchised with the church, who've become, in a sense, maybe said, I haven't had it with God, but I've had it with the attempts of religion in my life or the attempts at self-improvement.

And one of the reasons that we partner with Pastor Saint-Ange in Haiti is because he is doing a phenomenal job in Haiti of reaching people that nobody else is reaching. And so, it's a great thing. But as I said, sometimes in the American church, what we do is we just keep saying the same message over and over.

I remember years ago I got on a flight and I'm one of those people who is too cheap to buy drinks in the airport because they cost a lot relative to what they should. And then when you get on a plane, they give you a drink for free. Well, it's not free. You paid for it on the flight. But you get the point.

And I remember one time I got on a flight and I was seated at the back of the airplane. And when the flight attendants first came on, they went to first-class and offered a drink. They all had their drinks by the time I got on. And then they went to them again and offered them a drink. You could watch it. And I was thirsty at this point because I hadn't bought a drink.

And then they went to the people in first-class a third time. And then the plane took off, and they went to the people at the beginning of the cabin and were working their

way back. And then there was a little turbulence and so they suspended the drink service.

And then one of the flight attendants switched and they went back to the front of the plane and offered drink service again. And it never made its way to the back of the airplane. And toward the end of the flight, I remember saying to one of the flight attendants, I said, do you think I could have just a thimble of water, please? I'm kidding. But they said, no, we're too close to landing. There's no drink service for you. And I remember sitting there thinking, you serve the people in front of the cabin twice, the people in first-class three or four times, and nothing for me. And sometimes that's the approach that the American church has with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ. Let's keep telling it to the same people.

Why do we partner with Pastor Saint-Ange? Why do we do church the way we do it? Because we want to take the message that is life-changing and so good to as many people as possible. Pastor Saint-Ange has pastored a church in Haiti called Hope Baptist Church for 30-plus years now. The church reaches about 4,000 people in weekly attendance.

They've planted ten churches. We, as Orchard Hill, have had a chance to be a part of partnering with Pastor Saint-Ange and his support for that church and helping to plant substantially the church in Caracol several years ago. You may remember that we've had other projects we've been a part of. They have 100 Bible students who are being trained to be pastors in rural parts of Haiti where no other churches go.

And so, this is a strategic investment in an indigenous person rather than Americans going in and doing an American ministry, doing a Haitian ministry in the poorest country in our hemisphere. It's a great thing that we get a chance to be a part of it. Now here's what Romans ten says, verses 16 and 17, "But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ. "

So, you can speak the message, KidsFest week in and week out here in Pittsburgh, in Haiti, and not everyone believes. Why does everyone not believe? Some people say, well, I don't buy the message of Romans that all have sinned. I haven't sinned. I'm good. Other people say, well, maybe I've sinned, but it's not worthy of condemnation because compared to other people, compared to those people, I'm pretty good. But the message, the Christianity that the Bible gives us is ultimately everybody's sins. Everybody needs a savior and Jesus Christ made it possible for everyone.

I love how one author, Pete Forsyth, put it. He said, "Christianity is not a sacrifice we make, but a sacrifice we trust. It's not the victory we win, but it's the victory that we inherit." And that is what we get to celebrate when we come to communion. It's what we celebrate week in and week out here as a church. Not that we get our behavior just right or our beliefs just right, although we want to do that, but ultimately, it's that because we don't get our behavior and our beliefs just right, there's a God who has said, I've made the sacrifice on your behalf.

And so, this morning we're going to partake in communion before Pastor Saint-Ange comes and have a chance just to celebrate that. And here in Wexford this morning, the way that we'll do that is we'll invite you during the next song to come forward or in the balcony, go to the back, and come, take the bread, and dunk it in the wine. And if you're a follower of Jesus Christ, we practice open communion, meaning you can come and you just say God, thank you, that it's the sacrifice I trust, not the sacrifice I make that gives me standing with you. And that's a way just to celebrate what God has done. And then to say, I'm part of the sending, proclaiming, and hearing that God's doing in Haiti, in Pittsburgh, through Orchard Hill, to say, I want as many people to know about this sacrifice as is absolutely possible.

If you prefer not to dunk the bread and partake in the line, there are also cups at each station that contain a wafer and communion. You can take it back to your chair and partake in your chair during the singing as well, and so would you stand and I'm going to pray and our team will come. Father, we thank you just for a chance to gather today and to celebrate what Jesus Christ has done and to hear from Pastor, Saint-Ange. God, I thank you that as we partake in communion today, those of us who've come to personal faith in you come not because of our goodness, our behavior, but because of Jesus and that there is so much freedom in that knowledge. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Pastor Saint-Ange Monestime

Greetings. Finally, I came at the right time to visit Pittsburgh. I came in the summertime. Bringing a Haitian gang to Pittsburgh in the wintertime is a killing time for us. However, that's what Pastor Kurt and Kevin have been doing for years. This time I could see the beauty of Pittsburgh. Thank you so much for inviting me. I do like time. I bring greetings from Hope Baptist Church. We are so happy to be here to worship together with you and to share about the Ministry of Hope Baptist Church, and what you and Hope Baptist Church are trying to accomplish together.

This morning I would like to share a few things about what we are doing. Hope Baptist Church and World Missions. I would like to start with Matthew 28 verses 18 through 20, "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them

in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

First thing first, let me share with you about the Foundation of Hope Church in Matthew 16, verse 18, Christ says, “I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” Hope Baptist Church was founded on June 14, 1998, by Christ Himself through the Holy Spirit using me, my wife Evelyn, and nine other people. And now starting from scratch. We have about 4,000 members. Praise the Lord for that.

Second, is the meaning of hope for us. Haitians in Haiti are helpless and hopeless. And we know that the only show and seek you hope is the gospel. While they are dying of hunger and lack of medical care and going to hell, for those who do not know Christ, we offered them the hope of the Gospel. We offer them salvation in Jesus Christ.

Hope Baptist Church. The word hope is four words. “H” helping, “O” others, “P” prepared, and “E” eternity. We are helping them prepare for eternity. Why that? Because Christ says in Mark 8:36-37, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his soul? Or, what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” The best thing you can do to a hopeless person is to offer the hope of the gospel.

Number three is the purpose and objectives of Hope Church. What is our purpose? Our main purpose is to glorify God. Paul says in First Corinthians 10:31, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” How do we accomplish this good purpose? Glorifying God through four objectives. Four things drive everything we do at Hope Church.

Number one, we exalt God. We worship God. Number two, we edify. We build up believers. Number three, we evangelize the lost, and number four, we educate, we train, we form disciples.

What is our mission statement? Our mission statement is to exalt God through leading people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and through edifying and training them to become mature believers. We lead them to Christ and we help them to grow spiritually.

The question is, does Hope Baptist Church have a model? Are we imitating another church? Yes. Number four, is the model of Hope Church. The model of Hope Church is the Church of Jerusalem. That church has put Acts one, verse eight into practice. It

says this, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Church of Jerusalem takes its mission very seriously. What do they do? They do four things. Number one, they send believers out to evangelize the lost. They preach in Jerusalem. People God saved in Judea, Somalia, and other parts of the world.

Second, the church sent believers out to establish new churches and appoint elders. They have churches in Antioch, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, and everywhere. They pledge churches and then they appoint elders and pastors to minister to those people.

Number three, the church sends believers out to encourage and strengthen believers that then you are saved now and baptized. You need leaders to help you, encourage you, and strengthen you.

And number four, the church sent believers to equip new churches to get involved in missions and church spreading. Churches are planted and those churches planted, they plant other churches. That's wonderful. And when we read that in the word of God, we say, well, that's what we're going to do. We're going to go out, witness to people, people get saved, start churches, and those churches, we would like them to start other churches.

What can we say about the Ministry of Evangelism and Missions of Hope Baptist Church? Number five, is the Evangelical, the evangelistic spreading efforts of Hope Baptist Church. Hope Church takes the Ministry of Evangelism very seriously. First things first. For us, we appoint a minister or pastor of evangelism and missions to lead this good ministry.

Second, we train believers to become active and faithful. And third, we witness door to door. Every week, we choose Saturday, and we witness by knocking on doors. As a result, every month we lead to Christ between 50 and 120 people. Not because we are great believers, but because we allow the Holy Spirit to use us to accomplish this purpose. And again, every month we baptize between 20 and 50 new converts. God is in the business of saving souls. Let's make ourselves available for God to use us to save as many as He wants to.

And the question is, what about church spreading? Hope Baptist Church is an evangelistic, mission-minded, and church-planting church. Listen to these facts. In

1998, God has used us to start Hope Baptist Church. In 2002 we planted a church at Limbe. 2003 a church at Grison-Garde. 2004 a church at Bois-caiman.

2005 issued us St. Thomas, the US Virgin Islands. 2006 we founded Hope Baptist College, and in 2008 we started a church at Champs-de-mars downtown Cap Haitian. 2012 a church at Lory. 2014 a church at Gonaives. 2016 a church at Caracol, what you played a good part in. In 2016, a church at Pillatre, and we are about to adopt two small churches started by the graduates of our Bible College.

Listen, friends. God is saving souls, opening churches, and His name must be glorified. The thing is, the problem is that we went too fast. And those churches do not go as respected because we don't have enough funds to buy properties for them so they can go faster. Pray for us in this area.

But why are we trying to do all those things? Do you know why? The harvest truly is plentiful, but there are few laborers. What are our hands and feet of mission and church planting? Number six, the church building hands and feet of Hope Baptist. In Second Timothy two verse two, we read, "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

In 2006, we founded Hope Biblical Theological Seminary. We have around 100 students. Last month, 23 graduated with their bachelor's degrees, and among those people, some are called into full-time ministry. We use them to plant churches in their home cities, in their hometowns.

What is our vision? Lastly, the church planting vision of Hope Baptist Church. Let's go back to the text Pastor Kurt used a few minutes ago, Romans 10:13-15. This is just a part of it. "... And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" Good questions.

Three words that are important here, hear him, preach, and send. That means for people to be in heaven, three kinds of people are needed. Hearers, preachers, and senders. Hearers are everywhere. The lost people want to hear the truth. All of us today could say we are believers; we are saved because we heard the truth. We were hearers but remember when we got saved, we became preachers. Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Because we heard, we believe. Now we have to pitch.

At Hope Baptist Church we have lot lots of preachers. Those guys who got trained, who got called into full-time ministry, are ready to go to their hometowns to start

churches. They said we are preachers. We want to preach the truth. That's the importance of our partnership with you.

Now, we need senders. You are the sending people. Hope Baptist Church is the sending church. You are the sending church. Let's send the preachers to preach the gospel so the lost can hear the truth and get saved.

Are you ready? Are you ready to send preachers to preach the gospel? That's the question. He was one to hear the truth. Preachers need to preach the truth. Senders need to send preachers.

We've been praying for an evangelical church, a Bible-believing church to partner with us so we can preach the truth and plant churches, and God has answered prayer through you.

Orchard Hill Church, thank you for partnering with us so we can continue to preach the gospel to establish new churches. Our vision is to have at least one evangelical, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching church in every main city of Haiti. Hope Baptist Church is working together with you to plant at least one church probably every other year, probably every three years, or every five years, we would like to plant one new church. So that's why God has put us together. God has used his power, his providence, to put us together to save people for His glory. The question is, are we ready to partner together to preach so hearers can hear and get saved.

Are you saved? Are you born again? If you are, you become a preacher. Are you called to become a foreign missionary? I was called to become a preacher of the gospel. Do you want to become centers through prayers and financial giving? Let us all respond as the Prophet Isaiah responded to God when he had the vision. He saw God and Jesus worshipping and God said this, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'" Would you like to say this? "Here am I. Send me!" May God bless you.