

Update on the Worldwide Ministry of The HOPE . . .

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The Power of The HOPE

Sharing the Gospel Like Jesus and Paul

How to be Misunderstood

It is easy to be misunderstood when something you've said is taken out of context. You may have heard the saying, "context is king." If I simply state, "He's the best.", you'd have no idea what I mean. Who is "he?" The best what?

Looking at the horizontal row in the adjacent illustration, you would take the center character as a "B." But looking at the vertical column, you'd take the center number as a "13." Context gives meaning. Without it, meaning can be lost.



Truth Out of Context

I have been a follower of Jesus since 1974. As a young Christian, most of the methods of evangelism I learned were actually based upon the premise that the person with whom I was sharing had some context in which to understand what I was sharing. For instance, one of my favorite methods was the Four Spiritual Laws. It began with, "God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life." At face value, that statement has meaning to the hearer only if he/she has a context from which to acknowledge the existence of a personal God. If that person is convinced there is no God, or that God is just an energy force, then my statement loses its power.

There was a time in America when most people shared at least a basic Biblical view of the world. Adherents of faith and antagonists alike accepted the idea of a Creator as evidenced in our nation's founding document, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights. . ." In the 70's, the late Francis Schaeffer observed the spiritual decline

of America, explaining that at some point in the 20th century, America began living off of her Christian memory. When, as a young Christian, I shared the Four Spiritual Laws, most people had enough Christian memory, enough context, to understand what I was sharing. Today, that is often not the case. Before he left this world, Dr. Schaeffer expressed concern that America was losing her memory. For many, that day has come.

America is now much like the rest of the world. Billions of people lack the underpinnings of a Biblical worldview, the context, to understand a Gospel presentation that moves too quickly to the cross, or that promotes the promised blessing and benefit of following Jesus without conveying the cost.

D.A. Carson tells the story of a missionary in India who found that many of his converts were still going to Hindu temples. When asked why, they would say things like, "Well, now I'm about 60 percent Christian and 40 percent Hindu." Thereafter in his outreach, he started explaining the Bible's whole story line. In the words of Dr. Carson, ". . . the Bible as a whole document tells a story, and, properly used, that story can serve as a metanarrative that shapes our grasp of the entire Christian faith. In my view it is increasingly important to spell this out to Christians and to non-Christians, as part of our proclamation of the Gospel."

How Jesus and Paul Communicated the Gospel

After His resurrection, Jesus came upon two disciples walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus (Luke 24:13ff). Recent events had left them confused and discouraged. But as Jesus talked with them, they did not even recognize who He was. They knew Him in another context, as a prophet, a miracle worker and a great teacher (v.19). But apparently, they did

not know Him as the Alpha and Omega, the One in Whom all things exist. So Jesus began with Genesis and walked them through God's Word, explaining "the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." Assuming an average human walking speed of 3 mph, and the distance between Jerusalem and Emmaus, Jesus filled them in on the Bible's big picture for over two hours. At dinner that evening, it all finally came together for these two. But it was on the road, "while He was explaining the Scriptures" that their "hearts were burning within." Time and truth, and more time and more truth . . . that is often how the Holy Spirit opens our eyes (Luke 24:34).

Paul's speech to the Athenians on Mars Hill in Acts 17:22-31 is the longest sermon recorded in the New Testament where a Christian is evangelizing people who do not have any knowledge of the Bible or foundation to understand the Gospel. So Paul began with familiar reference points in their world (i.e. the altar to the unknown God, v.23), and from there he explained the big picture of God's story, from creation to the nature and character of God, all the way through Christ and His resurrection. Paul gave them a context to understand the Gospel.

The Power of The HOPE ... the Scarlet Thread

There is currently a new wave of big-budget television and motion picture productions dealing with stories from the Bible (i.e. The Bible, Noah, Son of God). Content and scriptural accuracy aside, these productions are visually spectacular. The HOPE was produced well over a decade ago. It may not have the production value to compare with some of these newer offerings, but The HOPE has something not found in these others: the story of God's promise for all people. That is why missionaries around the world are using it. That is why we have over 40 new translations of The HOPE in production.

The Bible is not just a collection of amazing stories about God and man. The big story of the Bible is the story of God's



On Mars Hill, Paul gave his audience a context for the Gospel (Acts 17:22-31). Painting by Kennedy A. Paizs

kingdom, and the way this kingdom comes to us through the saving work of Jesus Christ. The great stories of the Bible all point to the cross. From the first book of the Bible to the last, this theme weaves through the Bible like a scarlet thread, leading us to the blood of Jesus, poured out for you and me. Throughout The HOPE, there is a dramatic tension between man's sin-infected fallen condition, his need for deliverance from this fatal bondage and God's promise to send a Deliverer. The HOPE clearly presents our problem, God's solution and our need to respond. It may be dismissed, but it cannot be missed. It is the Gospel, "the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

On these pages you'll read about our work to update The HOPE. Yet, however we abridge, adapt or update The HOPE, the essential story will not change. For it is the story that explains every story. It is the grand story of God's promise for all people; the Gospel in context. That is the power of The HOPE!

- Until All Have Heard,
Fred Carpenter - President, Mars Hill

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God . . ."

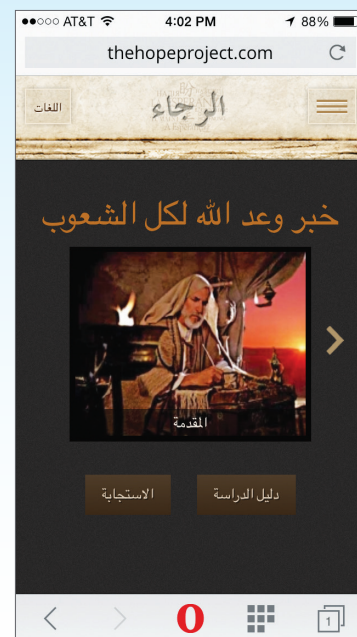
HOPE on the Internet Reaching Soft Hearts in Hard Places

By the end of this year, there will be over 3 billion Internet users worldwide. Searches on Google are now reported to be as many as 6 billion a day. Factor in all the other search engines, i.e., Yahoo, Bing, Baidu, etc., and that number climbs to around 7 billion. As a well-known pop musician once wrote, "Everybody's looking for something." Millions of them are on the Internet looking for meaning and purpose in life. They are looking for truth and hope!

In 2007, we partnered with another ministry, Gospel Communications, to build an Internet portal for The HOPE in English and Spanish. Gospel put a link to this site on one of their sites, the Bible Gateway, and by 2008 we were receiving about 1,200 visitors a day. Later that same year, Gospel decided to close their doors, and the Bible Gateway was sold to the Zondervan company, who elected not to continue the partnership. The traffic dropped significantly. But within the past two years, God has provided the resources to completely rebuild TheHOPEProject.com. And while we're still working to grow the traffic to previous levels (and beyond), evidence indicates that the Internet ministry of The HOPE is more strategic than ever, going places people can't go.

TheHOPEProject.com provides The HOPE video, a 65 lesson study guide and

right - mobile
version of
The Arabic
HOPE website



Updating The HOPE

Sharpening the Tool

The HOPE was created over 10 years ago using state-of-the-art technology and broadcast quality footage from some of the greatest epic Bible movies ever produced. Much has changed since then, not only with technology, but also in terms of what we've discovered from using The HOPE around the world. Over the years, we've learned a great deal about what works and does not work with different types of people. With these insights and some new tools, we're now pursuing a plan to update The HOPE.

First we'll convert all of the video in The HOPE (now in Standard-definition) to High-definition. We're already well into that process and expect to have an HD version of The HOPE by the end of this year (2014). Next we'll look at completely replacing some of the current scenes in The HOPE. For instance, we plan to replace the Super Nova scene at the beginning of the section dealing with the complexity and design of creation. Too many people have not used The HOPE because they think this scene represents the big bang. With all of these changes, we plan to maintain the overall timing of each existing scene so that previous translations of The HOPE can use the new scenes by simply laying in existing audio tracks over new video.

Finally, we plan to produce two special edition versions of The HOPE, an abridged version (under an hour) for use in Church services and classroom settings, and an indigenous tribal version that will replace current visuals to which people in remote areas of the world cannot relate. We believe this effort will result in an even more effective tool to reach nations with the Gospel!



One of our new tools, the Teranex, will help us convert The HOPE video from Standard-definition to High-definition.

HOPE to the World



Since our 2013 mid-year update, we've added 11 new translations of The HOPE bringing our total to 60. Here are some ways The HOPE was used this past year.

Haiti - One of our ministry partners used The HOPE to lead over 1,500 people to Christ. Another partner used it with our Study Guide to disciple groups as pictured above.

Papua New Guinea - After watching The HOPE and other Gospel movies on his mobile phone for 10 hrs, a gang leader gave his life to Christ, then led others in his gang to give up their guns and trust Christ.

Burkina Faso - After coming to Christ, a tribal chief agreed, in spite of personal risk, to appear in The Turka HOPE, giving the introduction and the invitation.

Cape Canaveral, Florida - Seafarer's International welcomes seamen to the USA. They are using The HOPE in 10 languages to introduce them to Christ.

Arctic HOPE - 1st Baptist / Keller, TX took a group to use The HOPE with Native Americans in the Arctic Circle.

Virginia - The Virginia Southern Baptist Convention created and implemented, Communities of HOPE, a Church planting strategy using The HOPE.

Pakistan - The Urdu HOPE was broadcast nationwide 4 times this past spring. Our partners plan to do it again in October during Eid al-Adha (the Muslim holiday of sacrifice). They believe it will help Muslims understand the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus.

... for salvation to everyone who believes ... - Romans 1:16

a means to receive help if needed in 11 languages. It is available on desktop machines, tablets and mobile devices. We are currently receiving hundreds of visitors a day, nearly 80% of whom are coming to the site on mobile devices. But what we find really interesting is that the most used language after English is Arabic. Regularly we receive responses from Arabic speakers. Most of these fall into one of two categories. The first category consists of some of the most profane and vile emails we have ever received. They often conclude with, "there is no god but allah and muhammad is his prophet."

The second category are emails from people who are encountering the Living God in closed access countries behind the veil of Islam. Responding to what they've experienced on TheHOPEProject.com they write things such as, "I just prayed to receive Christ," "I want to grow in my faith," "I want to share Him with others," and "I am not a Christian and still have questions." The most common kind is the latter. Our partner, Global Media Outreach, handles most of the response. Worldwide, unprecedented terrifying violence in the name of Islam is actually being used to soften hearts and open minds and turn many Muslims to Christ. These people are hungry for the God of truth, grace, love and forgiveness, and we are blessed to be there for them with an Internet ministry that is not confined by the powers of this present darkness.

In addition to the 11 languages on TheHOPEProject.com, we're streaming an additional 15 languages on YouTube and Vimeo. For a full listing of The HOPE video streams, visit www.hopepartnering.com/hope-online. Regularly we're adding new video streams. Please pray for the online ministry of The HOPE!

Name: علي حسين

Response: I am not a Christian and still have questions.

Language: Arabic

Responses like this indicate a growing spiritual thirst in areas hostile to the Gospel.



Help Wanted! It's Harvest Time!!! Find Your Missionary Calling with Us!

Some people still remember the days when agriculture in America was defined by the family farm. They will tell you there are few things more exciting than harvest time. When the fruit of the earth was ready, whole communities would drop everything and come together to help their neighbors bring in the crop. Around the world it's a harvest time for souls, right now. It might not look that way where you live, but there are many areas in the world where the soil is soft for the Gospel. In climates characterized by storms of political and religious oppression, unprecedented violence, economic collapse and other forms of adversity, God has prepared the hearts of men, women and children to receive Him. In these places the words of Jesus could not be more current, "Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest." – John 4:35.

"Lift your eyes and see!" That is what we are doing at Mars Hill. We are looking beyond our borders, and beyond our limits. We are planning to take the Gospel where it has not yet gone. But we can't do it alone. Like those farmers in the by-gone days of rural America, we need help! Jesus also said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." – Luke 10:2. We are praying. Perhaps we are praying for you.

We need volunteer, part-time and full-time workers. For a description of the kinds of roles we need to fill, visit www.hopepartnering.com/join. By investing yourself in our work with The HOPE, you could have a strategic role in reaching the unreached without ever leaving your city! Think about it. Better yet, pray about it!

The ESL HOPE For Such a Time as This

The ESL HOPE is a software curriculum designed to teach English as a second language, and communicate God's promise for all people, the Gospel.



Edmonton, AB, Canada, a recent ESL class led by Bud Fuchs - Using The ESL HOPE, he has seen nearly 70 people come to Christ.

Built entirely around The Hope, this tool is loaded with interactive games and lessons. It is offered as a free download, and averages about 75 downloads a month. Missionaries around the world are now using it as a regular part of their outreach. Our main partner in The ESL HOPE, CRU (Campus Crusade) Australia, is now working on a mobile app to make this tool even more accessible.

The ESL HOPE is now in its 7th year of distribution and we are as excited about it as ever. By the end of 2015, 10 Asian countries are due to finalize the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. ASEAN will function much like the European Union. With over 630 million people, the official trade language of ASEAN will be



ASEAN - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand & Vietnam

English. Right now there is a big push in Southeast Asia to learn English. As one of our missionary partners told us, "The biggest avenue we have for ministry is teaching English." God has opened a big door for the Gospel in SE Asia, and we are stepping through it!

Stay in Touch with The HOPE

Facebook Page - www.facebook.com/TheHOPEforAll

WordPress Devotional Blog Site - www.devosfromthehill.org

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/TheHOPEforAll>

Vimeo - <http://vimeo.com/marshallproductions>

YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/thehopevideo>

Linkedin - <http://www.linkedin.com/company/mars-hill-productions>

If you have a question, email us at hopeinfo@mars-hill.org.



Looking Ahead



We now have 40 HOPE translation projects in production. These include 10 major Indian languages, a Hebrew version of The HOPE, and a Chinese sign language version.



The HOPE is a project of Mars•Hill, a non-profit ministry dedicated to ministry through media. For more than 30 years, award-winning Mars•Hill films and videos have been used around the world to introduce thousands of people to Jesus Christ.

4711 Lexington Blvd., Missouri City, Texas, 77459 | (281) 403 - 1463 | www.mars-hill.org