

## Encouraging Words

*“Three things you cannot recover in life: the WORD after it’s said, the MOMENT after it’s missed and the TIME after it’s gone. Be Careful!”* - Author Unknown -

*“In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity.”* - Albert Einstein -

*“It is not the mountain we conquer but ourselves”.* - Edmund Hillary -

## Reminder

### Barnabas Group meeting

Thursday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. at Hudson home

## March Birthdays

2 Gonzalo Medina	15 David Lomeli	27 Marisa Perezchica
8 Drina Zamarripa	18 Buddy Cashion	30 Barrett Hoffman
9 Jessica Aguiar	24 Gabriela Marin	

## March Anniversaries

2 David & Angeles Lomeli  
6 Harold & Dortha Gentry  
24 Chuck & Pat Limburg

(Note: if anyone is “missed” here, let Jim know)

### Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Preacher**  
**Carlos Peña**

### **Church of Christ**

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# Indio Informer

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## Good News and Hope

(Excerpts from Allen Webster article via Housetoohouse.com)

There is a lot of negativity in our world. The daily news cycle feeds on the scandals, crimes, and suffering dredged up from across the world. The dog-eat-dog business world wears a person down. Bills pile up, health goes down. Our sports, political, religious, and entertainment heroes sometimes disappoint us. Everybody works with a “Negative Nancy,” knows a “Debbie Downer,” and a few people live with a “Glass-Half-Empty Gary.” Is it any wonder people are looking for a positive message on Sundays? The church is the right place to look.

### **The church preaches good news.**

At the core, the New Testament church proclaims good news, a message that brings hope, help, strength, and joy. The gospel is, by definition, “good news” (*euangelion*, 1 Corinthians 15:1–4). God instructed His ministers to “exhort” His people (2 Timothy 4:2), which literally means “to call to one’s side for a word of encouragement.”

God wants people to possess hope, peace, acceptance, and courage. While the negative is useful, it is rarely helpful to leave that as the last word. To quote William Clark upon finally seeing the Pacific Ocean, “Oh the joy” of serving God!

**To tired people** Jesus says, “*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matthew 11:28).

**To those burdened by sin and life’s hardships**, He promises: “*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*” (Matthew 11:28–30).

**To those who are troubled**, we have a good word: *“To you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels . . . when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day”* (2 Thessalonians 1:7–10).

**Those feeling lost**, are shown the way to *“the way”* (Jn. 14:6).

**Those who feel guilty** hear: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”* (Romans 8:1; cf. John 5:24).

**Those who fear death** are assured: *“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. . . then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Corinthians 15:52–57).

**To those who fear that God has abandoned them**, the message is, *“I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. He is ever merciful . . . For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever”* (Psalm 37:25–28). For good measure we add: *“He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”* (Hebrews 13:5).

**To those who feel that God is angry with them**, there is a comforting word: *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:1).

**To those who feel God is inaccessible**, we say, *“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”* (Romans 5:2).

**Yes, the gospel is good news!**

**The church restores hope.**

The church is the right place to look for hope. The word hope is found 130 times in Scripture. Hope was laid in a manger and Hope came out of the tomb on the third day. Hope is both in God (1 Peter 1:21) and in us (1 Peter 3:15). It is alive and enduring (1 Peter 1:3, 13), even to death (Proverbs 14:32). An air of hope surrounds those who believe their past is perfect (forgiven), their present is purposeful, and the future is paradise! On any given Sunday where Christians gather, there is joy and laughter, excited chatter, genuine friendships that recharge in the shared fellowship. That experience is a sanctuary from the world for a little while.

Church puts life back into people. Like an old photo left in the sun, the life of sin soon loses its color. Like an iced drink left out too long, it goes flat. Like week-old bread, it gets stale. Like a game played too often, it loses its appeal. Those on the backside of sin need invigorating, freshening, revival, and renewal. When the long-missed prodigal returned, his father urged his older brother to accept him, reasoning that it was appropriate that *“we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found”* (Luke 15:32). Paul said that those who had been dead in sins are made alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:5).

Not every church has learned to sing in the chord of hope. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote in his journal, “Wonders of wonders! I have been to church today and am not depressed.” While we all need good lessons on sin, preachers should not send hearers away on flat tires.

Jesus put hope back in people. He gave hope to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4). An outcast in her own community who had five previous husbands, she was now living with a man. Jesus did not ignore such sin, but He also taught her a better way.

Jesus put hope back into Peter. The angel said to the women, *“Tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you”* (Mark 16:7). Why did he say, *“and Peter,”* since Peter was included in the disciples? This carries the force of “especially Peter.” Peter had denied Him, and later repented, so Jesus wanted to convey to Peter, “I still have a place for you. I’m not upset with you. I care about you.” How encouraging those words must have been to him!