



OPINION PIECE
10th September 2020
Bishop Brian Tamaki

WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY 2020

Hope is the drug we should be peddling, not dope! We have got a generation of politicians who are peddling death policies, they are building an atmosphere conducive to suicide. Our politicians are killing our babies (Abortion), they're killing our brains (Cannabis), and they're killing our bed-ridden (Euthanasia).

There's no way to dress it up, the End of Life Choice Bill is actually assisted suicide. David Seymour ought to be ashamed of himself for introducing such a bill. We now have our terminally ill feeling like a burden on society, with the pressures the Euthanasia debate brings.

We are asking the New Zealand public to give ticks or crosses on issues of death. We have a country that is conditioned by these subjects of death...a culture of suicide, cultivated through a culture of death.

With politicians peddling death, is it any wonder we are faced with such atrocious statistics, that our younger generation thinks of life so flippantly, and will end their own life on a whim. The latest Unicef Child Wellbeing Report revealed New Zealand's youth suicide rate is the second-worst in the developed world. This rate is more than twice the average among the 41 OECD countries surveyed.

Our younger generation has lost all hope! It is incredibly sad, and a serious slight on New Zealand. Many of our teens are filled with hopelessness...they believe there is nothing more to live for. How did it get so bad?

I believe it's because the previous generation were supposed to pass on hope, instead, now they're offering self harming things like dope. Trying to legalise cannabis and it's recreational use.

Proverbs 13: 12 says "Hope deferred makes the heart sick." Hopelessness is the root cause of this current mental health tsunami we are experiencing with suicide.

We now have a younger generation that has missed having hope imparted into them because the previous generation, their parents, had it taken out of them.

How did they have it taken out of them? Glad you asked. Just take a look at the source of hope. "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15:13

Previous generations have allowed God to be removed from the New Zealand way of life, and along with removing God, they've foolishly not realised they've removed all hope! After all he is called the God of hope!

People need something bigger in their life to anchor to. These days we have bred false hope and false affirmation through our love of social media, hanging on to other people's opinions of us and whether we're receiving enough likes, shares, comments, PMs and DMs.

People need something much bigger in their life, someone they can depend on who will never let them down. To put it simply, they need God, who gives you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

We need to be feeding this generation, what the other generation took away. They took away access to the hope our young people needed. It's not dope, not a rope, or even a coke, it's HOPE! That's how we'll COPE.

Once you take God out of the equation, regardless of your belief or religion, you are more likely to contract hopelessness as time goes on. The human heart responds to hope, it needs a concentration of hope. Researchers are learning that a change in mind-set has the power to alter neurochemistry. Belief and expectation, the key elements of hope, can block pain by releasing the brain's endorphins and enkephalins, mimicking the effects of morphine. In some cases, hope can also have important effects on fundamental physiological processes like respiration, circulation and motor function. The whole body responds favourably to hope.

Hope gives you the motivation and enthusiasm to bounce out of bed in the morning, filled with the hope that this new day will be better than yesterday.

While we have politicians peddling dope, Destiny Church peddles hope! We are hope pushers, not dope pushers!

Destiny Church is the biggest dealer of hope through our ManUp and Legacy programs. Our youth arm of ManUp & Legacy, Youth Nation, needs to be applauded. They are currently working towards their annual SWOSH (Self Worth over Self Harm) conference for youth over Labour Weekend in October. They are creating awareness and instilling hope into our next generation, in a world that is devoid of hope.

This is where the value, the underestimated value of churches like Destiny Church, comes into their own. Destiny Church in particular deals with young Māori and Pasifika families, and makes a huge impact in giving hope back to many Māori and Pasifika. For all of its criticism, it's one of the few churches that is bringing hope back to a generation that only received hopelessness.

Destiny Church believes we need to promote 'A National Week of HOPE' – where the whole country focuses on spreading HOPE. Just imagine we parked all the negativity, put-downs and politics for a week in the media, and only spread messages of faith, hope and love. We could instantly turn around the deficit of hopelessness, depression and suicide.

And don't forget the age-old acronym for HOPE.. **Hanging On Praying Expectantly!** We can certainly all do with doses of that.

We can do this New Zealand – let's fill this nation with hope again, by bringing the God of hope back into this nation.

Additional information:

<https://www.unicef.org.nz/stories/new-report-card-shows-that-new-zealand-is-failing-its-children>

<https://edition.cnn.com/2013/04/11/health/hope-healing-enayati/index.html#:~:text=%22Belief%20and%20expectation%20%2D%2D%20the,%2C%20circulation%20and%20motor%20function.%22>