

Hope in God

A Biblical Perspective for Understanding,
Overcoming & Preventing Depression

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About this Study

Hope in God presents biblical principles necessary for dealing with the spiritual aspects of depression. It is designed for individual study, one-on-one discipleship or counseling, and Bible study groups of all sizes.

Each lesson contains three interrelated, yet stand-alone sections. The three sections are:

- Foundation Study:** These studies provide biblical insights into depression and related issues. Each one is divided into three parts, each part requiring approximately 15 minutes of study.
- Name of God:** Following each foundational lesson is a section directing you to Scripture passages about God and His character, which will help you to trust Him more fully. “*And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.*” —Psalm 9:10
- Topic on Hope:** The final section in each lesson is a topical study on a subject related to hope. Each topic is designed to strengthen and increase your hope in God.

The sections make this course extremely flexible and adaptable to any circumstance, ability, individual or group. See page eight for various study options.

Materials required for this study are:

- A Bible
- A *Hope in God* course book
- A pencil or pen

Shorter study options are provided in some sections for those with limited study time or ability. When assignments contain both boldface and non-boldface passages, completing only the boldface items will provide a good overview of essential truths. (See page 84 for an example.)

Psalm 61 is a psalm of hope which King David wrote at a low point in his life. Each weekly lesson encourages memorization of a portion of this psalm, using simple repetition. By the end of the seven lessons, you should know the passage well. We pray that it will be a source of continuing hope and encouragement to you.

Journal pages for thoughts, meditations and prayers are provided throughout the course book. Use these to record personal thoughts and insights as you study.

Prayer is vital. Begin and end each of your study times with prayer. It is also a good idea to ask one or more people to pray for you regularly as you study.

for Bible Study Groups and Discipling

for Counseling

For groups with at least 90 minutes for class discussion:

Five days of homework

Complete the Foundation Study (Parts One through Three), along with the corresponding Name and Topic. For example, the first week's homework would consist of:

- Foundation—Lesson One (pages 13-22, three days of study)
- Name—Lesson One (pages 23-26, one day of study)
- Topic—Lesson One (pages 27-33, one day of study)

Cover the Foundation Study during the first half of class. After a break, discuss the Name and Topic. (Note: It is best to have at least 45 minutes per half.)¹

The entire course will be complete after seven weeks of study.

For large classes, groups with less than 90 minutes for class discussion, or groups desiring shorter homework assignments:

Take one week to complete the Foundation Study and the next week to complete the corresponding Name and Topic. For example, the first week's homework would consist of:

- Foundation—Lesson One (pages 13-22)

The second week's homework would consist of:

- Name—Lesson One (pages 23-26)
- Topic—Lesson One (pages 27-33)

The entire course will be complete after fourteen weeks of study.

For those with mild to moderate depression:

Five days of homework

Each week, have counselees complete the Foundation Study, along with the corresponding Name and Topic. For example, the first week's homework would consist of:

- Foundation—Lesson One (pages 13-22, three days of study)
- Name—Lesson One (pages 23-26, one day of study)
- Topic—Lesson One (pages 27-33, one day of study)


The entire course will be complete after seven weeks of study.¹

For those with moderate to severe depression, or for use with supplemental assignments:

Three segments of homework

Each week, have counselees complete only the three-part Foundation Study. After completion of these basic studies, have counselees complete the Names of God and the Topics on Hope (along with weekly counseling or as homework for follow-up visits). Tapes, journaling, or related readings may easily be assigned with this option (helpful when also addressing issues such as anxiety, worry, etc.).

For those struggling with deep depression, or anything that limits ability for study:

Each week have counselees complete Part One of the Foundation Study, along with the question marked with a  (located either in Part Two or Three).

After completing this abbreviated course of study, have counselees return to the beginning of the book and complete the questions previously omitted.

Of course, there are other possible options and combinations. Feel free to adapt the study options to your particular situation and need.

May the Lord bless your study!

*Hear my cry, O God;
Attend to my prayer.*

*From the end of the earth I will cry to You,
When my heart is overwhelmed;
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

*For You have been a shelter for me,
A strong tower from the enemy.*

*I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;
I will trust in the shelter of Your wings.*

Psalm 61:1-4

Lesson *One*

Where Is Your God?

“Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from Him.”

Psalm 62:5 NIV

“Call Katie.” “Call Katie.”

The thought kept returning as I busily tried to finish chores around the house so that I could get going on errands that had to be completed before time to pick up the kids.

“You really should call Katie.”

I had no time to call. There was not time today to ask her to lunch or even to spend time talking on the phone. Could I call someone I didn't know well and ask her if she just wanted to join me in my normal busyness? That seemed a bit strange, but I finally gave in. I called. I told her I had been thinking about her and asked her if she would like to run errands with me.

To my surprise, she said “yes.” Months later, having become close friends, she confided to me that on the day I called, she was planning to commit suicide.

There are times when life is miserable. In our own ways, we all know this first hand. We each could make a list of our own trials and sufferings: some big, some small, some just big to us. For instance, my list would include:

- not only being born to a military father, but marrying a military man. That ultimately meant 23 moves in 42 years... and consequently, few close friends to call my own.
- my parent's refusal to let me wear eye make-up when I started eighth grade. (Don't laugh! At the time this was tragic!)

- the terrible storm that broke out our front picture windows.
- the tearful good-byes as the government sent my dad to war, not once but twice. (I saved the tissues I used to dry my tears in a small apricot-colored box. The day he came home, I threw them away as I thanked the Lord for his return.)
- my grandfather’s heart attack and death right after we shared a Sunday dinner during my first semester in college.
- my first pregnancy ending in a miscarriage while my husband was overseas.
- bathing a child in tepid water for hours, praying for her fever to drop below 105 degrees.
- having to move my children away from their friends with each new assignment.
- my grandmother’s battle with Alzheimer’s....and my mom’s battle with guilt over decisions that had to be made for her.
- my son’s being diagnosed with Crohn’s disease.
- my husband’s sudden unemployment due to economic downsizing.
- the heartache of having unsaved family members.
- the shared heartaches of other friends and family members as they went through their own struggles.

Your list may be longer or shorter. There are always those who have suffered less—and always those who have suffered more. Sometimes, suffering is a consequence of our own sinful actions or the sinful actions of others. Other times, God sovereignly designs our trials to further His kingdom, conform us to His image and bring glory to Himself and ultimate good to us.

Regardless, no suffering is wasted and no situation is without hope. That’s a truth I have learned to live by daily. And today, Katie does, too!*

Almighty God,

*As I come to study Your Word today,
open my understanding that I might know the truths I need to live by, and
touch my heart that I might love You more.*

*See Appendix A for a message from the real “Katie.”

PART ONE

“Hear _____, O God; attend to my prayer.”

Psalm 61:1

Depression is not a new phenomenon. Many people in the Bible were depressed: Job, Elijah, Cain, Hamaan, Hannah, Luke, King Saul, Jeremiah, David, the disciples on the road to Emmaus and many more. Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11 tell us that things recorded in the Old Testament are examples for us, that we might learn from them and be instructed and encouraged in our lives today.

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning,
that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures **might have hope.**”

Romans 15:4

Begin your study by learning from an Old Testament believer who struggled with depression.¹

1. Read Psalm 42.

Beside each phrase below, write out the exact words the psalmist uses to describe how he feels: (verse references are in parentheses, and the first one is done for you)

a. spiritually dry (42:1-2) “so pants my soul” “my soul thirsts”

b. constantly tearful (42:3) _____

c. forsaken by God and others (42:3) _____

d. in despair (42:4) _____

e. longing for past joy and closeness to God (42:4) _____

f. miserable and without peace (42:5) _____

g. like he’s drowning (42:7) _____

2. Have you experienced any of the feelings described by the psalmist? If so:

a. Put a check mark in the margin beside all that apply.

b. When you have had these feelings, how have you responded to them?

3. The psalmist expressed great anguish of soul and sorrow of heart. Where was his God? Was there help? In the first half of verse 5 he asks himself,

“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?”

How does he answer himself in the last half of this verse?

4. In Part Two’s study, you will take a more detailed look at the psalmist’s responses. For now, however, end your time with a short prayer. Thank God that, through His Word, you can know that godly people have struggled with depression. Thank Him for including the writings of Old Testament believers for your instruction and encouragement today. When you finish praying, initial the box.

PART TWO

“ _____ my cry , O God; attend to _____ .”

Psalm 61:1

Today you will see how the psalmist responded to his feelings of depression. There is much to learn here, so don’t give up!

1. Return to Psalm 42 and record the psalmist’s responses below.

Response #1...Ps. 42:5a (NOTE: The “a” indicates the first half of the verse. A “b” means the last half.)

He reasons with himself, searching out the cause of his depression. Write down the questions that he asks himself.

Response #2...Ps. 42:5b

He expresses hope in God along with hope that his present troubles will not last forever. Again, write out his exact words below.

Response #3...Ps. 42:6

He remembers God's past faithfulness to him and other believers. Read verse 6 out loud.
Write out the phrase about remembering God.

Response #4...Ps. 42:8

He expresses confidence in God.

a. What is he confident God will do for him in the daytime?

b. Does he expect that God will leave him alone at night? What does he say?

Response #5...Ps. 42:8b-9

He prays.

a. What two names for God does he use?

b. Would you describe this prayer as one of praise, request, or questioning?

Response #6...Ps. 42:11a

He examines and reasons with himself again. This time, write out his two questions using your own words.

Response #7...Ps. 42:11b

He encourages himself by telling himself what he needs to hear: truth about God, God's character and the future. Record the truths he tells himself using your own words.

2. Compare your own responses to feelings of depression to the responses of the psalmist. For each response, put an **X** under the appropriate column.

The Psalmist

How often is this my response?

Never Sometimes Often Always

Examines and reasons with himself _____

Expresses hope in God _____

Expects a better future _____

Remembers God's past faithfulness _____

Expresses faith and confidence in God _____

Prays using the names of God _____

Repeatedly tells himself truth _____

3. From what you have read:

a. Would you say the psalmist had given up hope? Why or why not?

b. Would you say he was taking an active or passive role in overcoming his depression? Support your answer from Scripture.

c. Do you think God wants you to take an active or passive role in overcoming feelings of depression? Why?

4. Again, close your study time in prayer. Begin with this week's memory verse, and end by telling God that you desire to respond to any feelings of depression in ways that will bring honor to Him. When you finish praying, initial the box.

PART THREE

“Hear my _____, O _____; _____ to my prayer.”

Psalm 61:1

Have you ever hoped that life would change or get better?

Have you prayed, asking God to make it so? And then, if it perhaps did not get better, or it improved only temporarily, has your hope been shipwrecked, dashed against a rock?

Has your hope been dashed so many times, or so profoundly, that you have no more hope?

If so, then you are not hoping in God...you are hoping in changed circumstances. True hope is in God, whether or not the circumstances change.

But how does someone find hope in God when it seems that hope is lost?

1. Circle the two phrases which identify the source of the psalmist’s strength and hope.

*“My soul melts from heaviness;
Strengthen me according to Your word...”*

*My soul faints for Your salvation,
But I hope in Your word.”*

Psalm 119:28, 81

2. How does God’s Word bring hope? For one thing, it informs the heart and mind of truths about God.

a. As you read the following passage, circle each truth about God.

“Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The everlasting God, the LORD,

The Creator of the ends of the earth,

Neither faints nor is weary.

His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak,

And to those who have no might He increases strength.”

Isaiah 40:28-29

b. How many truths did you circle?

c. Although *all* of these are truths believers need to keep in mind every day, put a star by the truth that brings the most hope or is the most meaningful to your life at this moment.

d. Why did you pick that truth to star?

3. Teach yourself to respond in a biblical way to your feelings of depression. Reason with yourself. Tell yourself the truths from God's Word that you have just read...truths that will, little by little, bring hope. Help yourself to hear the truths of Scripture by saying the following to yourself (out loud):

God is the everlasting God, Creator of all things.

God is always able to help those who call on Him because He never faints nor gets weary.

God understands and knows all things.

God gives power to the weak.

God increases the strength of those with no might.

Repeat truths such as these to yourself time and time again throughout your day. If possible, say them out loud each time. It doesn't matter whether you feel that these words are true. What matters is that they are true, and your heart needs to hear them.

4. All of the promises in God's Word are sure and certain, but we must remember that God has a timetable for the fulfillment of His purposes. He knows the purposes that are to be accomplished through the circumstances He causes or allows. He has a way and a time for everything.

"But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham..."

"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son..."

"Behold, the days are coming...that I will perform that good thing which I have promised..."

Acts 7:17, Galatians 4:4, Jeremiah 33:14

In the next lesson, you will look more at the subject of waiting patiently for God's work to be accomplished. For now, however, take a short look at how a believer named Asaph responded when he began to doubt while waiting for God to fulfill His promises. Read Psalm 77:7-15 and list the things the psalmist told himself when his doubts began. (*Your list will come from verses 11-15.*)

Asaph's Example: Truths to Remember When Doubt Begins

5. Whether in times of doubt or strong faith, one of the best uses you can make of your memory is to bring to mind truths about the LORD. Think back and recall at least one act of faithfulness you have seen God work in your life. Record it below.

6. To simply read, remember or repeat Scripture is not all that we need when hope is weak. Many people have read the words on the pages of the Bible and not come away with hope. Why? Because hope is ultimately a gracious gift of God within the heart.

Every believer receives the gift of hope through Jesus Christ at salvation.

*“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and **given** us...good hope by grace, comfort your hearts...”*

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17a

The gospel message *is* a message of hope! (1 Peter 1:3, Colossians 1:5) In addition, there are several things that will help that gift of hope grow, strengthen and flourish. The main one is to be in God’s Word, for it is there that we learn truths about God on which to rely as we wait for Him to act.

What are some of the truths that believers must remember about God in order to consistently place their hope in Him? Record what you learn from the following verses.

Passage

Truths About God

a. Deuteronomy 32:3b-4

“...Ascribe greatness to our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.”

b. Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

“‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

c. Hebrews 10:23

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

d. Isaiah 55:8-9

“‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’”

7. Would you pray the following prayer as you close your study? Be sure to initial the box when you are done.

O God, My God,

Cause me to hope in Your Word and cling to Your promises. You are my hope—may my heart come to know it! Help me to remember Your power, mercy, mighty acts and faithfulness to all generations. As I study Your Word, increase my hope!

Thoughts, Meditations and Prayers

The LORD of Hosts The God of Jacob

Psalm 46 reveals a wonderful two-fold name of God: The LORD of hosts, The God of Jacob.

Read the beginning of this psalm out loud:

*“God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear,
Even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though its waters roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its swelling.”*

Now read the last verse:

*“The LORD of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.”*

The “LORD of hosts, the God of Jacob” is the God who is with us and gives refuge when the “earth be removed” and the “waters roar.” In other words, He is with us in the midst of turmoil and overwhelming circumstances. He is with us when our lives seem hopeless and even terrifying. Who is He?

1. First, consider the name “LORD.” This is the covenant name of God that the Jewish people most revere. As God’s covenant name, it reveals God’s relationship with His people and His faithfulness to His promises.

It is a word written YHWH, when copying letter-for-letter from the Hebrew. The end result is the name Yahweh (or Jehovah in English). English Bibles usually translate it “LORD” (in all capitals).

Its root is not a noun, like most names, but a verb, carrying the idea of a God who is, always has been and always will be. It is the name God used with Moses at the burning bush when He said, I AM WHO I AM.” (Exodus 3:14)

Underline one fact about the name “LORD” that you find most interesting.

2. The word translated “hosts” is “sabaoth.” (Therefore, the whole name “LORD of hosts” is Jehovah-Sabaoth.) Who or what are the hosts that God is LORD of? The answer has several parts.

- a. In Deuteronomy 4:19, “host” refers to things in the heavens. As you read this verse, circle the things specifically mentioned that are a part of the host of heaven.

*“And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun,
the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them...”*

- b. In Luke 2:10-15, “host” refers to angels. Read this well-known passage along with Psalm 103:19-22. Note what the angels are doing in each passage, along with any other insights.
- c. “Host” is also used in reference to armies and/or the people of God. Depending on the translation, this word is translated “armies,” “camp” or “people.” (*NOTE:* Two examples where the word “host” is used this way and is also translated “host” are Exodus 7:4 NAS and Joshua 3:2 KJV. You may read these if time permits.)

3. So, Jehovah-Sabaoth (The LORD of hosts) is the LORD of the heavens, the LORD of angels, and the LORD of men. In Psalm 46, the NIV translates the name “LORD of hosts” as “the LORD Almighty.” Knowing what you do about the meaning of “hosts,” why do you think the translators might have chosen to translate it this way?

4. In Psalm 46, the name that accompanies “LORD of hosts” is “God of Jacob.” Briefly record what you know about Jacob (even if you only know his name and that he has a God!). Then, record additional facts from the verses that follow:

Facts about Jacob

a. What I know about Jacob

b. Genesis 25:24-27

c. **Genesis 27:35-36**

d. **Genesis 29:30-34**

5. The Almighty LORD of hosts was the God of this man Jacob. The LORD of heaven, angels and men took interest in and cared for a simple, solitary man, a man who lived in tents, who was deceitful, and who acted uncaringly toward his wife.

Jacob was a man like any other man, and yet the LORD of hosts openly identifies Himself as *Jacob's* God. From the following verses, identify and record some of the actions that are associated with God when He uses the name “the God of Jacob.”

a. **Psalm 20:1-2a**

*“May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble;
May the name of the God of Jacob defend you;
May He send you help from the sanctuary...”*

b. **Psalm 46:11**

*“The LORD of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.”*

c. Psalm 84:8

*“O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob!”*

d. Psalm 146:5

*“Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help,
Whose hope is in the LORD his God,”*

6. Here is the most exciting truth for every believer: The God of Jacob is *your* refuge, too. He is your God. The same God that created and upholds the sun/moon/stars, commands legions of angels and rules the world of men is the God who cares about you when life is overwhelming!

The writer of Psalm 42 said, “...they say to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’” Perhaps you have even asked yourself this question.

If someone saw you going through a tough time and said to you, “Where is your God?” how would you now answer? Would you say that God is with you just as He was with Jacob? That He is the Almighty LORD of hosts who is also the God of individual people, including you?

From the following verses, record other truths you could tell yourself or someone else who asks, “Where is your God?”

Where is your God?

a. **Deuteronomy 31:6**

*“Be strong and of good courage,
do not fear nor be afraid of them;
for the LORD your God,
He is the One who goes with you.
He will not leave you nor forsake you.”*

b. **Psalm 46:1**

*“God is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.”*

Where is your God?

c. Psalm 121 (only a portion is printed below)

*“...He who keeps you will not slumber...
The LORD is your keeper;
The LORD is your shade at your right hand...”*

d. Psalm 139:7-12 (only a portion is printed below)

*“Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence? ...
Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You,
But the night shines as the day;
The darkness and the light are both alike to You.”*

e. **Jeremiah 23:23-24**

*“‘Am I a God near at hand,’ says the LORD,
‘And not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself
in secret places, so I shall not see him?’ says the LORD;
‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’ says the LORD.”*

f. Matthew 28:20

“...lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

7. Spend some time meditating on the verses from Psalm 46 which began this lesson:

*“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed,
And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though its waters roar and be troubled,
Though the mountains shake with its swelling...
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”*

What thought stands out most as you consider these truths?

8. The psalmists knew the character and promises of God. Even when they could not sense His presence, they knew He was there and that they could expect an answer. Consider the hope that the following passage displays. Would you make this prayer of David’s your own prayer today? If so, pray it now and then initial the box.

*“Answer me speedily, O LORD;
My spirit fails!...
Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning,
For in You do I trust;
Cause me to know the way in which I should walk,
For I lift up my soul to You.”*

Psalm 143:7-8

Understanding Biblical Hope

Why is hope so important? The following passage expresses one reason in an analogy. Underline the phrase which tells what a man with hope in God is like.

*“Blessed is the man...whose hope is in the LORD.
He shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river,
and will not fear when heat comes;
But its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought,
nor will cease from yielding fruit.”*

Jeremiah 17:7-8

We live in a fallen, sinful world, and so we will all have trouble and disappointments. Every person experiences difficulty and hardship. Every person has “down” days and times of sorrow. Yet during these times of “drought,” we can still yield fruit (have lives that are productive, useful and godly) if we hope in the LORD. Hope in the LORD is the essential thing which will see us through days of sorrow and trouble.

God has not left us alone to blindly discover on our own the truths we need to know about hope. Instead, through His Spirit, He has given His Word with rich teachings on this subject. In this study, you will examine some of these precious, essential truths.

1. Below you will find some of the words translated “hope” in the Old Testament (Hebrew) and New Testament (Greek). A brief definition of each word is given. The Strong’s reference numbers¹ are in parentheses should you wish to complete a more extensive word study.

Old Testament (Hebrew):

- a. tiqvah (#8615) *expectancy: expectation*
- b. tocheleth (#8431) *expectation: hope*
- c. yachal (#3176) *root: to wait; by implication to be patient, hope, tarry, trust*

New Testament (Greek):

- d. elpis (#1680) *root: to anticipate, usually with pleasure; expectation or confidence, faith*

From these definitions, how would you describe the difference between biblical hope and the world’s idea of hope (an uncertain “I hope so, but can’t count on it” attitude)?

2. Some important questions about hope are listed below. As you read the verses in the left hand column, circle the word “hope” each time you see it. Then, in the right hand column, briefly record each passage’s answer to the question. (Some are completed for you.)

a. Verses

**In whom or what am I
to place my hope?**

And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.
Psalm 39:7

the Lord

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of
God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope.*
1 Timothy 1:1

*My soul faints for Your salvation, But I hope in Your
word...You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in
Your word.* Psalm 119:81, 114

*Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, on
those who hope in His mercy...* Psalm 33:18a

*... in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie,
promised before time began...* Titus 1:2

*... rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought
to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* 1 Peter 1:13

What are some things that people tend to hope in other than God, His Word and His work?

b. Verses

Why do I need hope?

*Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart,
All you who hope in the LORD.* Psalm 31:24

for courage & strength of heart

... rejoicing in hope... Romans 12:12a

it brings joy

*But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning
those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others
who have no hope.* 1 Thessalonians 4:13

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be
ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason
for the hope that is in you...* 1 Peter 3:15

to increase opportunities to tell others
about Christ

Verses (continued)

Why do I need hope?

And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:3

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast... Hebrews 6:19

Sum up the need for and benefits of having hope in God: which areas of life does hope impact?

c. Verses

How do I get this hope?

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace... 2 Thessalonians 2:16

... who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance...reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith... 1 Peter 1:3-5

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Romans 15:4

... that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 5:13

begotten (born) again to it by God

Thoughts on how to gain true hope

d. Verses

**Hope is a gift from God, but
do I have any responsibility
to get or maintain it?**

... at that time you were without Christ... having no hope
and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you
who once were far off have been brought near by the blood
of Christ. Ephesians 2:12-13

be sure Jesus Christ is my
Lord and Savior

My soul, wait silently for God alone, For my expectation
[hope] is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation;
He is my defense; I shall not be moved. Psalm 62:5

But I will hope continually, and will praise You yet more
and more. Psalm 71:14

[Paul praying for the Ephesian believers] that you may know what
is the hope of His calling... Ephesians 1:18

pray for it

... continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast... not moved
away from the hope of the gospel which you heard...
Colossians 1:23

For whatever things were written before were written for
our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of
the Scriptures might have hope. Romans 15:4

Therefore we do not lose heart... For our light affliction,
which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more
exceeding and eternal weight of glory... For I consider that
the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be
compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us...
For we were saved in this hope... we eagerly wait for it with
perseverance. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 and Romans 8:18-25

don't lose heart
think biblically about
suffering
eagerly wait with
perseverance

How well are you fulfilling your responsibilities in the area of hope? Which area(s) of responsibility are the hardest to fulfill in times of depression? What could help?

3. God uses three objects to describe the importance of hope in our lives today. As you study the following verses, think about how these objects picture the nature and work of hope. Record what you learn and add additional thoughts that come to mind. If you are artistically inclined, feel free to draw pictures!

a. Hebrews 6:18-19 compares hope to what nautical object? _____

1) What does an anchor do? What are its uses?

2) How does this give an understanding of biblical hope?

b. 1 Thessalonians 5:8 describes hope as a _____.

1) What does a helmet do? What are its uses? (*List as many as possible.*)

2) How does this give an understanding of hope?

c. The third picture is from Jeremiah 17:7-8, which is quoted at the beginning of this lesson. It tells us that a man who has the LORD as his hope is like a _____.

1) List at least three characteristics of this tree:

2) What part of this description most appeals to you? Why?

4. What is one truth from this study that you could use to begin to encourage a friend who is having trouble maintaining hope?

5. The final questions for today are:

_____ Do you desire to have greater and greater hope?

_____ Have you done the “first thing” by placing your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

_____ Are you willing to do your part in developing, strengthening and maintaining your hope?

_____ Do you see the tribulations of your life as a means of producing hope? Have you thanked God for these opportunities?

_____ If your hope is strong, are you willing to help those who are weak in hope to trust in God?

_____ Will you stay consistently in God’s Word so that you will be prepared to give an answer for the hope that is in you?

End your study in a time of prayer and commitment. When you finish, initial the box.