

WARM UP

1. Have you made any promises that you have not been able to keep? If yes, why?
2. With the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, can you describe any new routine / habit that you developed which you've found beneficial and intend to keep doing?
3. Can you explain a moment when you have given up on a relationship or changing a habit? What brought you to the point of letting go (or giving up)?

WORD

KEY SCRIPTURE: PSALMS 39:7

7“But now, Lord, who do I look for? My hope is in you”

My hope is NOT

- in the government, although we support and pray for the leaders.
- in doctors, although we seek their professional help.
- in other spiritual leaders.

My hope IS in Jesus -

- the one who spoke the world into being (John 1:3,10)
- the all-knowing, all-powerful ever-present God of the universe (John 1:1-2).
- the One who heals deaf ears, opens blind eyes, and raises the dead.

He's my provider, comforter, source, strength, rock and assurance. He is the One we can trust – HE IS OUR HOPE IN HARD TIMES!

1.) CERTAIN HOPE

HEBREWS 6:13-19

“When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for Him to swear by, He swore by Himself, saying, “I will surely bless you & give you many descendants.” And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said & puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, He confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.”

Abraham has a dilemma: He is caught between the great promises of God and the great barrenness of his situation. The only way to overcome the tension was holding on to biblical hope.

Abraham did not just have an optimistic view, which looks at the situation and tries to find a positive outcome. Feeling optimistic depends a lot on the human emotions. Instead, Abraham held genuine biblical hope.—a hope that acknowledges the situation

but looks to God for a divine outcome. It's a hope that looks at the character of God, not just our circumstances.

Hope in the character of God gives us the certainty that God is in control and we can anchor our soul in Him. We need an anchor because we can find ourselves drifting when pain and hard times come. We can drift from where we need to be and from God's plan. But when we have an anchor for our soul, we remain where God has called us to be.

THE OBJECT OF OUR HOPE IS THE CHARACTER OF AN UNCHANGING GOD.

2.) LIVING HOPE

1 PETER 1:3

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Situations can sometime overwhelm us or make us feel completely under-skilled. It is during those moments that we are reminded to look to the works of Jesus (his life, death & resurrection), not our own skills, works, deeds or knowledge. When we depend upon what we are capable of doing, we end up building our lives upon a dead hope which in time will fail to fill the immeasurable gap between us and our Holy God.

However, when we depend on the works of Jesus, the bible tells us that we have a living hope. Having a living hope means we don't have to drown in the midst of chaos, or fall into the great chasm separating us from God. Our living hope in Jesus grows as we reflect upon His work, believe it, and trust in Him to greater depths. It reminds us that Jesus is in our presence and will always be with us in times of need, since he bridged the chasm, reuniting humanity with the Creator. That's the living hope that sustains us.

APPLICATION

1. What is a recent painful situation you've faced?
2. If you have ever felt hopeless, please describe that time.
3. How will this study allow you to apply the "Certain" and "Living" Hope of God to your present circumstance (or perhaps a rough past situation)?

PRAYER

1. Pray that in the midst of tough circumstances the Holy Spirit will re-align us with the hope that we can have in God through Jesus.
2. Pray for kindness, compassion, and boldness to be able to share the hope of God to others who may be in a difficult situation right now.