

BIBLE STUDY LIVE

The Christians Sur-thriv-al Plan

"Hope and Help for Our Current Realities"

Hope Is In God's Sur-thriv-al Plan

"Hope is like stars, the darker the night, the brighter it shines" Spurgeon

Rom 8:24

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for KJV

Exactly what is hope? Our society would define Hope as a desired or trusted future expectation of something or someone. Given the reality of the world's condition, the question for us here today is; in what or with whom can we entrust our hope? Who are what can assure any of us an expected outcome or a desired conclusion?

At this hour, the world's definition of hope carries with it the feeling of uncertainty. People in the world may indeed be hoping, but for many their hope is filled with skepticism and uneasiness. However, for the Christian, hope takes on a much different meaning. Our hope is not anchored or secured in man-made promises but our confidence is in God, the one who hath begun a good work in each of us! The Christian's hope is the confident expectation of what God has promised and its strength is in God's faithfulness and power to perform His will.

QUESTION: According to Rom. 8:24, what factors must be in place for hope to be authentically "hope?"

What is the difference between Faith and Hope? – Faith is the totality of a belief system that has been shaped and configured by our experiences; while hope is that desired expectation of future matters. It could be asserted that you cannot have hope without faith. "Now, faith is the substance (grounds) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb 11:1 – Faith is the main ingredient to our hope.

Hope Is Not Natural

READ 2 Tim. 1:7

Young babies are able to exhibit the Moro reflex often referred to as the "startle reflex." This is an unconscious sudden motion that babies make when they are startled or frightened. It is not necessary to teach babies this reflex they are born with it. Likewise, it is not necessary to teach people to be afraid. Fear is a natural occurrence but hope must be generated. 2 Tim. 1:7 tells us that "God has not given us the spirit of fear..."

QUESTION: What does this verse tell us about fear? First of all it tells us that fear is something that God does not distribute. Secondly, the verse tells us that fear is a spirit. And if this spirit didn't come from God, where do you suppose it came from?

QUESTION: In place of this fear, according to 2 Tim. 1:7, what exactly did God give us? The answer is "power, love and a sound mind." Power to do his will, love to overcome enemies and a sound mind to understand and comprehend his guidance and directives.

Hope Takers

READ: Acts 27:18-20

This verse is part of Luke's narrative that records the Apostle Paul's shipwreck while sailing to Rome to stand trial before Caesar. The scriptures tell us that Paul along with the sailors and other passengers had been battered by a great storm at sea for many days and despite all of their valiant efforts the fury of the storm and the spirit of fear it produced managed (according to Acts 27:20) "take away all hope that they would be saved." **QUESTION:** Are there circumstances that can try to take away a person's hope? Paul certainly thought it was, and provides us with some examples in this shipwreck account.

The Realities of Life Can Try to Take Your Hope

READ Acts 27:20

The storm was real. No amount of positive thinking would change the fact that the ship was in real danger. When it comes to crises, people tend to respond in one of three ways. Either they pretend that the crisis isn't real, or they panic because they know it's all too real, or they pray because they know that God is real. **QUESTION:** Is it possible for someone to go through all three responses? In the Acts 27:20 the reality of the great storm had taken its toll on the people's hope. **QUESTION:** In what ways has Covid19 taken a toll on the hope of some people?

Great Loss Can Try to Take Your Hope

READ Acts 27: 18 – 19 and Acts 27: 22 - 25

The ship was heavy with cargo. This cargo was no doubt very important to the passengers but it was so heavy that it was causing the ship to sit really low in the water and this made it easier for the stormy waves to flood the ship. What was the answer? – Get rid of all this stuff! Hoping to make their conditions more favorable the people tossed these valuable possessions overboard, but it didn't help. Despite their sacrificial efforts they were still in grave danger of losing their lives. In hopes of saving their lives these men were willing to sacrifice what at one time was very precious to them. Real trials and real hardships will make you readjust your priorities! In the second scripture Paul informs the crew and the passengers of the words from his angelic visitation that God will preserve their lives but they will lose the ship. **QUESTION:** Does faith and hope have a price? Often the price of faith and hope involves us losing those things that provided a false sense of security or safety. God wanted Paul and the other passengers to understand that it hadn't been the ship that was keeping them from harm. God would prove to them that is the master of ocean, earth and sky! And that he could sustain them in the sea even without a ship! **QUESTIONS:** What things in our life may have given us a false sense of security and safety? What is God trying to prove to us in the current season?

You Can Make It On What You Have Left

READ Acts 27: 42 – 44

At some point the ship hit a rock, was shattered and began to rapidly sink. The guards not wanting to suffer the penalty for losing their prisoners desired to kill all of their prisoners but the guard with Paul protected him. The guard order everyone off of the ship. He told those who could swim to go first. **QUESTION:** But what about those who didn't have the same ability, skill or talent of those harder swimmers? What was their instructions? These were instructed to use the boards, planks and broken pieces from the ship. God has just what you need to make it! You may not have the entire ship but you got just what you need to get where God desires for you to go!