

APPLICATION

- Is there an area or situation in your life where you have become negative and need more hope?
- Have you been guilty of looking for others, or maybe even yourself, to fulfill those hopes?
- Looking at our circumstances can often cause us to lose hope, but when we put our trust in God and His plans for us He can find the most amazing and surprising ways to fulfill our hopes. He does it even in spite of our circumstances. God is a redeemer!
- Putting your hope in God, and nothing else, is a choice. Trusting God is also a discipline that we have to develop in life, but the benefits are hope, joy and peace!

Prayer

Oh Lord, thank You that You have good plans for us. Thank You that Your plans give us hope and a future. Forgive us when we get angry at You for our circumstances, when in reality it is others, or even ourselves, who have let us down. Help us to not hold any bitterness towards ourselves or others, but instead help us to trust in You for our future. Thank you that You are the God of all hope and that nothing is too difficult for You. Help us to trust in You, and to put our hope in You, from this day forward. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Freedom Groups were created with the belief that we are all on a journey through life and that our heart's desire is to be free to be all that we can be. Yet there are many setbacks, heartaches and road blocks along the way. Trying to overcome the issues we face in life by ourselves just does not work. We are all the same, no one is different. We need others to help us successfully walk our journey to freedom. Everyone is invited on this freedom journey. Join in!



HOPE

NOTES

WARM-UP

- Bucket lists are a popular notion these days. Name one thing you hope to do during your lifetime?
- Can you share a time when someone really disappointed you?
- Do you remember something you really hoped you would get, or something you really hoped you would be able to do, and you got what you had hoped for? What did that feel like?

WORD

Hopes placed in mortals die with them; all the promise of their power comes to nothing. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD. The eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing Love. "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."
Prov 11:9, 13:12; Ps 39:7, 31:24, 33:18; Jer 29:11

Hope. It is such a simple word. Even its meaning is simple. Hope simply means to have a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen. It is a feeling of trust that something good will happen. Hope is wonderful.

What happens when we do not feel hope? It means we are hopeless. Hopelessness is to have no expectation of good. It is to be despairing, to feel there is no remedy or cure, or that something is incapable of being redeemed or improved.

Hope is wonderful and exciting. Hopelessness is awful. So how do we build hope in our lives and avoid hopelessness?

1 - Misplaced hope makes one sick!

Hopes placed in mortals die with them; all the promise of their power comes to nothing. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. Proverbs 11:7, 13:12

Many of us have had our hopes dashed. Whether they were hopes that we would be able to do something, or hopes that someone would do something for us, or even hopes that something would just happen. It is hard to have our hopes go unfulfilled. If we look back at these unfulfilled hopes, and take an honest assessment of them, how many of these unfulfilled hopes were because of our own failures or the failures of others?

2 - A hope-filled plan!

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." Jeremiah 29:11

To base our hopes in the actions of others, or even in our own actions, sets us up for hopelessness. People, including us, are flawed. On the other hand, the Bible tells us that God has a good plan for us that gives us hope and a future. If you personally have put your hope in God and His plans, how has that enabled you to have hope in spite of the people and circumstances around you?

3 - Jesus: God of all hope!

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

Hope isn't something that we can just manufacture. Hope is something that develops in us as we put our trust in God. In fact, God does not just want to give us hope. He wants to go well beyond hope and give us joy and peace too. Can you share a time when God turned around a situation that you thought was hopeless and even brought joy and peace to you?