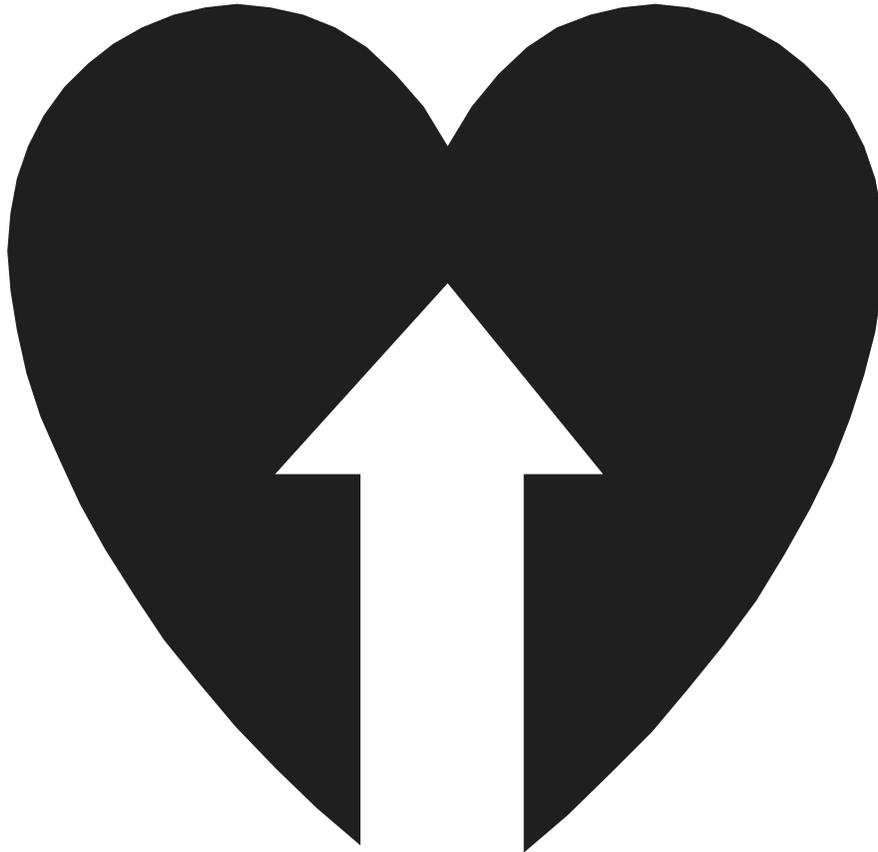


God and Your Hope



“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

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Hope and Comfort Are Available

Jesus identifies with our sorrows

When we are hurting we want others to listen. Sometimes we want others to experience the same emotions and feelings we have. There's a saying, "hurt people hurt people". We must be careful how much we expect of others when sharing our sorrows. The reason is because people are human and will let you down. However, there is one person who will never let you down and knows completely all your thinking and feeling. Jesus understands, go to Him.

Isaiah 53:3-5 "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed."

Hope comes from God

When we experience sorrow or sadness we look for something or someone to bring us up (out). Sometimes we look for it in the wrong places or places that give temporary escape but not lasting or meaningful change. Only God and the Scriptures can bring about sustained strength and hope.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 God is "the father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows."

Hope comes from the Scriptures

Psalms 119:28 "My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word."

Romans 15:4 "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

A Plan of Hope & Discipleship

Below are seven sessions for you to read a Scripture passage and answer questions. By reading and applying these questions you will uncover where hope comes from and how to receive it into your life. It is best if you complete each session and discuss them with someone who has a believing relationship with God and understands how to lead others in this aim. This may be a pastor or a close friend.

SESSION 1

Read Psalm 23.

Write a list for what it means that God is a shepherd.

What valleys are you currently walking through? Be specific.

How does God comfort people in the valleys of life?

Take a walk outside. Ask God to help you see His leadership in your life and circumstances. Tell Him your “valleys” (be specific) and ask for His help.

SESSION 2

Read Matthew 9:20-22.

How long was this woman dealing with her problem?

What did this woman believe about Jesus?

How did Jesus respond to this woman’s faith?

How do you think Jesus will respond to your faith and request for help?

SESSION 3

Read 1 Samuel 17. Sure this is a long chapter, but it’s worth it!

How does this passage describe Goliath?

How does this passage describe David?

What was David’s view of God? (See verses 26, 37, 45-47)

How does this passage relate to people’s problems and their view of God?

SESSION 4

Read Matthew 14:1-14.

How do you think Jesus felt about John's death?

What was Jesus' reaction to John's death? What were his actions? How can this apply to your life?

How does it help to know that Jesus can identify with your sorrows? (Read also Isaiah 53:3-5.)

SESSION 5

Read Lamentations 3:1-26.

How does this person's feelings compare to your own? Be specific using some of the imagery this person uses.

What does it mean "we are not consumed" in verse 22?

What brings this person out of despair? Be specific in listing from verses 21-26.

Describe what it could mean to wait upon the Lord.

Call someone today and share your thoughts about these passages. This may seem insignificant but it's part of a process of growth and healing.

SESSION 6

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

What does Paul not want these people to not be ignorant about?

According to this passage, who is with hope and who is without hope?

What does Paul command these people to do with the knowledge of Jesus' return?

How are you encouraging yourself and your family & friends with such knowledge?

SESSION 7

Read Psalm 42, Psalm 55:22, 1 Peter 5:6-7.

Do you honestly pant and thirst for God in your life? If not, don't sit in your guilt and sorrow but repent of this sin and commit to treasuring your relationship with Christ above all else in your life.

Why do you think there is repetition in Psalm 42:5, 11?

What are the benefits of trusting God and relying on him?

Make a list of 10-20 things that you are thankful to God for in your life.

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