

YEAR OF GROWTH

HOPE WEEK 4

EXERCISE

How To Grow in Hope:

It is important to understand the meaning of hope and to see examples of this characteristic in Scripture. Yet, it is also important to do the work necessary to have and to develop true hope. Our focus will be on passages that teach what one must do to have and to grow in joyful hope.

Day One – Sunday

Reflect on the definitions of the words that God used to describe hope. Think back over the previous lessons. Read again the passages that you have written. Recall the verses you have memorized. Focus on the meaning of hope and prepare to exercise in developing this characteristic.

Day Two – Monday

Romans 15:1-4

This passage teaches two contributing factors to one's hope: patience and comfort. Both of these are based upon Scripture and one's knowledge of God's Word. The things written in the Bible (including the Old Testament) were recorded for our learning. Studying God's Word produces both a desire and ability to endure. Furthermore, it produces comfort – consolation and encouragement. Together these characteristics result in hope.

Day Three – Tuesday

1 Peter 3:12-16

Hope that is based upon the truth of Scripture can be both taught and defended. The Christian's hope is not "wishful thinking." Instead, it is an expectation grounded in certainty. Thus, when questioned, we can answer; when challenged, we can respond; when doubted, we can defend. To strengthen our hope, we must continue to grow in our knowledge of Scripture.

Day Four – Wednesday**Hebrews 11:1-6**

Hope is supported and sustained by faith. In fact, faith is what stand beneath and upholds the Christian's hope. Again, this is not "wishful thinking." True faith is built upon evidence – the knowledge of God's Word (Rom. 10:17; 4:17-21). To increase one's hope, one must grow in faith.

Day Five – Thursday**Romans 8:24-25**

Of course, hope is joined to salvation. Only when one is saved from sin can he have hope of Heaven. One is saved by obeying the Word of God. Thus, faithful obedience increases one's hope. When we know that we are walking in the light, we know we have forgiveness of sins and, therefore, the hope of eternal salvation (1 John 1:7). Obedience produces hope.

Day Six – Friday**Romans 5:1-5**

Hope is increased when one endures the tests and trials of life (cf. Lamentations 3:26). Through testing we learn to endure. By enduring we find approval – learning that God is faithful to His Word and that we can be pleasing unto Him (cf. Rom. 12:12). This produces hope which will never make us ashamed or disgraced. The faithful child of God will be vindicated in the end!

Day Seven – Saturday**1 Peter 1:13-16**

Hope grows as one anticipates the return of Jesus (cf. Titus 2:11-13). The Christian is to prepare his mind for the battle, think soberly about the struggle, and hope until the fight is ended. When Jesus is revealed, all will be made right. The longer we live, the more we should long for the return of our Lord!