



Part 4 of 5: *The New Hope*

APPETIZER: Fighting Despair

Cynicism: a inclination to believe that people are motivated by self-interest.

Defeatist: person who expects or is excessively ready to accept failure.

Fatalism: the belief that all events are predetermined and therefore inevitable.

No one will help.
We are going to lose.
It doesn't even matter.

How do you fight despair?

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

2 Corinthians 4:8-9, Colossians 3:15

DINE IN: Hope is the Thing with Feathers

Romans 12:12-16

Everything we do matters.
We are participating in bringing God's Kingdom.
Let's do this.

Joyful in hope

Patient in affliction

Faithful in prayer

TAKE OUT:

To DO:

1. Share (**verse 13**)
2. Practise hospitality (**verse 13**)
3. Bless (even your enemy) (**verse 14**)
4. Feel things (be present) (**verse 15**)
5. Be with others (harmony) - 'be mindful (phroneo) of others' (verse16)

Don't DO:

1. Curse (**verse 14**)
2. Be Proud (**verse 16**)
3. Conceited (think too highly of yourself) (**verse 16**)
4. Don't avoid association with people in low positions (**verse 16**)

Home Church Questions

HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. What stood out to you from the teaching on Sunday?

Watch the home church hangout video.

HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

[Our discussion time will be slightly shorter this week since we're making more time for a prayer emphasis in huddles.]

2. Read **Romans 12:12-16**.
 - a. What verse or idea stands out to you?
 - b. What does it mean to share with the Lord's people who are in need (**verse 13**). What are some practical applications of this instruction for your life? For the life of your home church? For our church as a whole?
 - c. What does blessing someone who is persecuting you look like? Break into pairs, and take turns workshopping some ideas using a situation from your life where someone seems to be against you. Then discuss as a group.
 - d. Read **verse 16** again. One issue with pride is that we don't often have the ability to recognize it in ourselves. What is Paul's practical advice to help us avoid pride, or to notice the signs of it when it is growing within us?

HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

3. Paul tells the church to be "faithful in prayer" and that's what we're working on this week...
 - a. To be **joyful in hope (verse 12)** means to expect and delight in Jesus - hope of the world. When we do that well, our immediate sufferings matter less as Jesus outshines the darkness around us. How do you do that in your life? Do you have dark areas that need the light of Jesus to shine through? Take some time right now to pray for the light of Jesus to fill you with hope.
 - b. To be **patient in affliction** means to remain true and endure through pressure. The word "affliction" is translated from two Greek words (Stenochoria and Thlipsis) and mean 'confined in a small and excruciating uncomfortable space'. If you think back to the first week of this series Paul started off this letter by saying 'do not be conformed to the pattern of this world'. Can you think of ways you specifically, or all Christians in general, are being 'shaped' or 'conformed' or 'confined' by our culture or circumstances? Take some time right now to pray for each other about this.
 - c. To be **faithful (stick to it) in prayer** means to never give up seeking and communicating and nourishing a relationship with God. Take some time right now as a group to plan some extra prayer together this week (e.g. set a time everyday on your watches/phones to pray where you are, or join together online or on the phone each day to pray, or get together in person once extra time to pray, etc.). Make a realistic goal and then be faithful!