

Hope Overflowing

Romans 15.13

Key Points:

- Biblical hope is not wishful thinking or unrealistic expectations. It is the confident and joyful anticipation of God's Promises being fulfilled.
- Our hope is in a person - Jesus. God is the source of our hope and He is good, He is mighty and He loves us. The proof our hope is our future was death, but Jesus came in and brought life.
- God gives us hope through the Holy Spirit (along with peace and joy). The way we 'access' hope is by trusting in God, and He promises to cause us to 'overflow' with hope. God always keeps His promises! However, hope is only sustained when we trust in God (and not ourselves or other people/situations).

Questions:

1. Are you a hopeful person? What makes someone hopeful or 'hope-filled'? What are the ways in which having hope (or not) can affect our lives?
2. What are the differences between Biblical hope and the common use of the word 'hope' in today's society?
3. What does it mean for God to be the 'God of hope' or the source of hope? Why does God give us cause to have hope? Is there any situation for which there is no hope?
4. Romans 15.13 suggests that God gives us hope as we trust in Him. Do you find it hard to trust God? In what or whom do you trust? If not God, how might this affect your hope?
5. Where do you need to learn to trust God *more*? Share this with the group and offer each other practical ideas of how you might learn to trust God more. (hint: small steps!)
6. What does 'overflow of hope' actually mean? Why is it important in our walk with Jesus?
7. Take a moment to pause, pray and dream - 'what would overflowing with hope look like in my life'? Share with your group or in twos and threes, and then think about what steps you can take *today* (by trusting God in the small things) towards this dream.
8. Where are the areas in your life where having hope is really difficult? Do you speak hope into these situations or do you speak despair, fear or worry into them? Are these situations bigger than God? In twos or threes pray God's hope over each seemingly hopeless area.
9. How might an overflow of hope help us as a church in our pursuit of our vision to be a beacon of hope in our community? How might infectious & influential hope affect what you already do missionally as a group or as individuals?