

HOPE
"Recharge"
April 19, 2015

"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 (NIV)

- 86 % feel "chronically stressed out" (Harris Poll)
- 62 % say "I have burned out --or I am dangerously close to burnout" (Inc Magazine)
- 59 % feel a "desperate need to slow down" (CNN Poll)
- People sleep 2.5 hours less each night than 100 years ago.

"As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me." But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:38-42 (NLT)

3 Questions to Help Recharge your Life with Hope:

1. What's your current pace of life?

Pace of Life Index

Score: Always\Usually (5) Sometimes (3) Seldom\Never (1)

1. Do you hate to wait in line _____
2. Do you seem to be short of time to get everything done? _____
3. Do you eat fast? _____
4. Do you drive over the speed limit? _____
5. Do you seem to have little time to relax and enjoy the day? _____
6. Do you find yourself over-committed? _____
7. Do you think about other things while you're talking to people? _____
8. When at work, do you feel like you ought to be home? _____
When at home, do you feel like you ought to be at work? _____
9. Do you feel like you get more done when multi-tasking? _____
10. Do you feel guilty when you relax? _____

Bonus: _____

Total Score: _____

Scoring:

- 40-50 (High hurry sickness)
- 30-39 (Medium)
- 20-29 (Low hurry sickness)

Signs you're running on empty:

- Distracted (vs.40a)
- Feeling unfairly put-upon (vs.40b)
- Controlling (vs.40c)
- Disconnected (vs.41a)
- Worried (vs.41b)
- Upset (vs.41b)
- Hair-trigger display of emotions (vs.42a)
- People walk on egg-shells around you (vs.42b)

2. Are you dropping the right balls?

“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.”
Matthew 6:33 (HCSB)

3. How is your connection with Jesus?

“Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”
Matthew 11:28, 29 (NLT)

Leadership Tip!

It is helpful to familiarize yourself with the study guide before your group meets. Be sure to always read the Scriptures included in the Study Guide as well as the quotes or questions that are in **bold**. The rest of the content is important and valuable but try not to read it verbatim during your group.

Also be sure to have multiple group members help with the reading.

HOPE - Recharge**STARTER QUESTION:**

Based on last week's Study Guide and theme, did you have a conversation with someone about coming to LIFE Group? How did it go?

MAIN IDEA:

As we continue this week in the HOPE series it is important that we start with the source. Hope can change any situation we are in and can be one of the most powerful allies in good and bad times. Take a look at Paul (the author of Romans) and his thoughts on the power of hope and where it comes from:

Romans 15:13

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul uses an interesting phrase here, confident hope, what does he mean by this? What does it mean for you and I to have confident hope?

In order to have hope, you cannot be running on empty. This week, we are going to be talking about the strong correlation between hope and internal batteries. If we are low or empty, it is natural to not have any hope. This is why hope is so important. One key piece of having confident hope is understanding that sometimes our situations can dictate our state of hope. However, having confident hope is knowing that God is always in control and he is the source of it no matter what we are facing.

Let's take an initial look at our own lives. How are you feeling right now? Are you:

- **Stressed out?**
- **Sleep deprived?**
- **Burnt out?**

During the message Sunday, Pastor Hank asked each person to take a quick test to evaluate their pace of life. How did you do? What did it show you about yourself?

The Bible talks about our pace of life and how vital it is to take care of our entire body. Stewardship isn't just in light of one's financial management, it is about everything we have been given. How we steward our body, our time, our resources, and our energy is all a part of God's plan with entrusting us to live as He intended. The truth is though, that we can steward everything well and still not have hope. True hope comes only from God and we believe this because we know that Jesus came to offer hope in the form of eternal life. When we are feeling overwhelmed and down for the count, we have to remind ourselves of who is our source.

Towards the end of John 16, Jesus was talking with His disciples about sadness being turned to joy. For the disciples, it was one of the first times they finally began to understand and fully believe that Jesus was the Son of God -

John 16:30-33 (NLT)

Now we understand that you know everything, and there's no need to question you. From this we believe that you came from God." Jesus asked, "Do you finally believe? But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when you will be scattered, each one going his own way, leaving me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.

What does Jesus's victory over sin have to do with our hope? How does this keep us going when we are discouraged or stressed?

Jesus tells us to take heart because He has overcome the world! Our worry, anxiety, and stress are all connected to our hope and trust in Jesus. We can choose to take matters into our own hands and place our hope in ourselves or we can take heart like Jesus says and place our trust and hope in Him.

Matthew 11:28-30

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

What is something that you are not giving over to God (partially or fully)? What is getting in the way of trusting Him with it?

Worry and stress are often the most powerful weapons the Devil will use to get us discouraged and forget where our hope should lie. These simple tactics are often overlooked as just being a reality of life because we are expecting to be hit with stronger temptations and distractions. In order to have our hope placed in God and function fully as His followers we have to begin with trusting Him with all parts of our lives.

Worrying is basically saying to God, "I don't think you know what you are doing."

What do you think about worry and stress being connected to our trust in God?

Pastor Hank's final point was about our connection God. If we allow the Devil to break this connection by creating worry and stress then he has done his job. As common as these words are in our lives, we must be more intentional to guard against saying and living this way. Our connection to God is the most important thing in our lives.

Being overwhelmed can be a natural response to one's situation, but in these moments we have to trust God and place our hope in Him. When we begin to feel worried, we have been given a great prescription for how to counter it -

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

(Consider doing these in smaller groups or couples if you have more than 4-6 people in your group)

ACTION STEPS:

- 1) List things that you are worried about. Pray over each one of them and ask God to give you His peace and hope.**
- 2) Ask someone to hold you accountable to praying when you are worried.**
- 3) Pray for each other and against anything specifically that is getting in the way of hope.**

FINAL THOUGHTS:

If we continue reading Philippians 4, we see some helpful reminders of what we should think about instead of being worried and overwhelmed:

Philippians 4:8-9 (NLT)

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Our final question today, what is one takeaway that you are going to leave with and incorporate in your life?

How can we hold you accountable to this for next week?

FAMILY FOCUS:

Hold a glass of water and ask, "How heavy do you think this glass of water is?"

Pause for answers. And then say ...

"It does not matter about the absolute weight. It depends on how long you hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it is fine, no problems. If I hold it for an hour, I will have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you will have to call an ambulance. It is the exact same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

"If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, we will not be able to carry on, the burden becomes increasingly heavier. What you have to do is to put the glass down, rest for a while before picking it up again."

We have to put down the burden periodically, so that we can be refreshed and are able to carry on. What are some ways we can "put down our worries?"

Discuss some of the things from the main lesson— pray, Jesus, trust. But you can also include practical things such as exercise and sleep. These all play a role in being a healthy Christian.