

Keeping Spiritually Fit



Memorizing Scripture is an important part of keeping a mind focused on Christ.

We are to meditate on God's Word 'day and night', (Psalm 1) think about it over and over, reflect on it from different angles until it becomes part of us.

Knowing God's truth is a great weapon when we face difficulties, Jesus used scripture in this way. (Matthew 4v1-11)

Out and About This Week



What sources (media, books, friends, activities) most *damage* your level of hope?

What sources most *feed* your level of hope?

In light of this, how might you want to rearrange your life to create the highest level of hope possible?

Prayer For Today



Heavenly Father, I know that you will never abandon me, in your love I have the strength to handle whatever comes. May my faith in your character and sovereignty give me the courage to withstand the storms of life. Amen.

Based on 'If You Want To Walk On Water, You've Got To Get Out Of The Boat' – John Ortberg

Sunday 4th February 2018

Psalm 142 Mark 6v45-56 'In The Storm'

We can't fix, heal, or escape all of our bad situations. But during those times, we can find refuge and hope in God. He understands storms. He is the God of encouragement. He is the God of power who never ceases to redeem all things.

'Sometimes you are in a cave and no human action is able to get you out. There is something you can't fix, can't heal, or can't escape, and all you can do is trust God. Finding ultimate refuge in God means you become so immersed in his presence, so convinced of his goodness, so devoted to his lordship that you find even the cave is a perfectly safe place to be because he is there with you.' - John Ortberg



Verse to Remember



Romans 15v13:

'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.'



Homegroups (or private study)

Psalm 142

Icebreaker: How adept are you at 'encouraging yourself in the Lord?' How might you develop your ability to do this more effectively?

It's not easy to face the pain and discouragement of failure and adversity. There were times in David's life when he felt utterly destroyed. His response to one of those times is found in Psalm 142

- What do we learn from verses 1 and 2 about David's communication with God?
- In the first part of verse 3, what did David affirm about God?
- In verses 4-6, how did David describe his situation? What did he count on God to do for him?
- What was David's hope and request in verse 7?
- Discuss this quote from John Ortberg:
'Optimism requires a belief that things will in fact get better for you and me. Hope includes the psychological advantages of optimism but is rooted in something deeper. When we hope, we believe that God is at work to redeem all things regardless of how things happen to be turning out for us today.'
- The following Scripture passages give us a basis for placing our hope in God: What about God gives us reason to hope? (Psalm 62v5-8)
What aspect of God's eternal character gives us reason to hope? (Psalm 89v1, 2)
What do Philippians 3v12-14, 4v13 emphasize?
- As you share the things you are currently struggling with, encourage one another with what God has promised us in Scripture in the midst of these situations.
'For in him every one of God's promises is a "Yes".' 2 Corinthians 1v2

Extra Reading



Isaiah 26v3,4 and Romans 12v2 give us essential instruction regarding how we need to use our minds. What do these passages teach about where we focus our minds?

What are we to do with what we have learned?
(Philippians 4v8,9)

List some positive changes you could make in order to focus more on Jesus.

Encouraging One Another



What's your favourite promise of hope in the Bible?

Perhaps you could write it in a card and send it to someone you want to encourage this week.

My Quiet Times With God



In general, how do you respond to God when you are experiencing failure, pain or disappointment?

In what ways is your sense of value and significance tied to your earthly success? Remember that God loves and values you even when you fall flat on your face. He is the God of power who can redeem all things.

See Ephesians 1v15-21