



Hope in the Dark

What Do I Do Now?

#nphopeinthedark

Week 2

2 of 5

April 19, 2020

Bottom Line: I live by faith by waiting on God.

Icebreaker: Where in life do you tend to be impatient? Driving, shopping, holidays, goals, kids, etc.? How does your impatience show up?

Key Verse: *The just (the righteous) will live by faith.* Habakkuk 2:4

Habakkuk is wrestling with one huge question, and it is tearing him apart. If God is good and God is in control, why is the world the way it is. He discovered as he wrestled that the way to face hard times is by waiting on the Lord. Waiting is not passive. Wait means don't give up, don't despair. Waiting on the Lord enables us to live faithfully in the circumstances of this world.

How do we do that? We **gain perspective**. We deliberately move from our human standpoint and look at things from God's perspective. We think rightly. We **decide to obey**. We don't quit. We still serve, we still do our duty, we stay in the fight, even though we may be weary. We **choose patience**. We don't give up or despair. Patience is a result of **choosing humility**. We realize God has a plan and a purpose. We give up thinking we know all the answers, and we **choose to grow**. We intentionally view the circumstance as an opportunity for God to do something great in us. This is what turns us into persons of character. We **focus on God**, not on the things of God or what He can give. This teaches us to faithfully love Him simply because He is God. We **choose joy**. Joy is the result of choice, not circumstances. Joy leads to gratitude, and the result of a thankful heart is peace. "Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be all right, and the determined choice to praise God in all things" (Kay Warren). We **grieve well**. We lament with God. This allows me to process the pain and feel it. As I do, I am able to see my own involvement in my circumstances and shed the victim mindset. I am enabled to release anger and depression. This keeps me from lashing out and making the situation worse. I am able to empathize with others who are hurting and feel hope for the future. Grieving well begins the healing process and moves me toward a healthy, satisfying relationship with God and others.

In eternity, this life will seem very short, and when we are with Jesus, everything will be all right.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

There is no greater disaster in the spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality. Why?

Discuss how humility is essential to having patience with God.

Job said, "God knows what he is doing with me, and when he is finished, I will come out like pure gold" (Job 23:10). How is that comforting? How is it hard to accept?

You develop a prayer life under pressure—because you become desperate. We usually don't develop a prayer life when life is at ease. Has that been your experience? How does your prayer life change in hard times?

Habakkuk says to go high to get perspective. What have you found effective in your life in gaining God's perspective on your troubles?

How do you appropriately "confront" God?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

Waiting means to serve. In your hard times, you can't leave your post. You keep doing what is right. Why is this particularly challenging?

Because God is such a good and generous God, it is easy to slip into loving Him for what He does, not for who He is. How have hard times forced you to sort that out?

In hard times we often treat God in a way we would never want to be treated. Discuss.

How can you ask God the hard questions while you stay with and wait on Him?

Rejoice—What is the result of a thankful heart?

How would you explain grief as a good emotion and process? Grieving in hard times is where you begin to heal and grow a healthy relationship with your Father. Agree or disagree? Explain.

NEXT STEPS

1. Consider what is missing in your “waiting.”
2. Talk with God about the areas where you need to move toward Him.
3. Focus not on your circumstances but on the goodness of God.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: I live by faith by waiting on God.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Habakkuk 2:3

Tuesday: James 4:13-15

Wednesday: Job 23:10

Thursday: Philippians 4:4-7

Friday: Matthew 5:4

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)