



AT THE MOVIES

The Shawshank Redemption

#NPMovies

Week 4

4 of 4

July 24, 2016

Bottom Line: We find hope in the midst of hopeless situations through the power of Christian friendship, worship, and God Himself.

Icebreaker: To whom or to where do you turn when everything seems hopeless?

Key Verse: *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. Acts 16:25-26*

According to Internet Movie Database (IMDB), *The Shawshank Redemption* is the best movie of all time. Of all the movies on there, the users of IMDB have rated *Shawshank* as the best. Why? Could it be the story or the writing or the performance by Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman? Or, what if America's affection for this movie is the result of something much deeper? Ultimately, the movie is a story about hope in a dark place. Hope is something all of us need.

Freeman's character, Red, gives the film's best remembered line to a hopeless, despairing, and wrongly accused Andy Robbins: "Get busy living or get busy dying." Thinking about this line through gospel eyes puts an interesting twist on this quotable phrase. All people are either busy living or busy dying. All people are headed to an eternal life or an eternal death. We know this to be true. Only when we find the hope of the gospel are we finally able to live.

The hope that we find in the gospel allows us to face any obstacle and know that we are ultimately secure. When we forget this reality, it is easy to get trapped in our own prison of despair. But when we remember our hope, we have the freedom to live. This was the experience of Paul when he and Silas were in a literal prison. Because their hope was located beyond this temporary world, they were in prison but they were free.

Knowing God through a relationship with Jesus Christ gives us hope that will never fail or dismay us because our faith is anchored in something eternal and imperishable. Finding our hope in Christ gives us the confidence to live and thrive in any circumstance.

THINK IT OVER >>>

Thinking back on Brandon's message, what stood out to you?

Brandon said that in hopeless situations we need each other, we need the weapon of worship, and we need God.

How do we make an intentional effort to remember our hope in our daily lives? How can we remember Jesus and what He has done for us?

What must Paul and Silas have known to be true about Jesus to thrive in prison?

Whom do you know who exhibits the type of hope we see in Paul and Silas?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

When they were in prison, Andy and Red in *The Shawshank Redemption* depended on one another to get by. God intends the same for us. How does walking with other people inspire you to remember your hope?

What types of situations most often test your hope?

Why are we all so tempted to try and find our hope in things that will not last? When was the last time you did this? Walk through your thought process and see where you went wrong.

Paul knew that Jesus loved them even if they never got out of prison. How does focusing on our identity in Christ lead us to be able to praise God regardless of our circumstances?

Why are people in dire circumstances more receptive to listen to the hope that we have within us?

NEXT STEPS

This week, consider taking some next steps together, as a group:

1. One of the ways we learn to focus on the hope we have in Christ is by remembering what God has done for us in Scripture. What are some Scriptures that speak to the hope we have in Christ? How could you partner together to hide these words in your heart?
2. Praise God for the unshakeable hope you have in Jesus Christ. Thank Him for living for you and dying for you. Express your confidence and love for Him, and ask for His help to remember His work in your life every day.

EVALUATION/ACTION Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: We find hope in the midst of hopeless situations through the power of Christian friendship, worship, and God Himself.

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:

Day 1: Acts 16:19-24

Day 2: Acts 16:27-33

Day 3: Romans 8:35-36

Day 4: Romans 8:37

Day 5: Romans 8:38-39

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)