

Study Series: Unfailing Love in Uncertain Times

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Lesson Title: “Hope and Christ’s Work” (pp. 34-47)

Session 3

March 19, 2023

The main point of this lesson is: Believers can have hope because of the work Jesus did.

Focus on this goal: To help adults have hope amid the chaos of our fallen world because of the work Jesus did on the cross

Key Bible Passage: 1 John 2:28–3:10

Before the Session

1. Bring current newspapers to class or jot down a few of this week’s headlines on a large poster and display it visibly to the class. (Step 1)

2. Bring a boat anchor (or a picture of one) to class. (Step 2)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Ask: What are some headlines you came across this week? After a few volunteers have brought up some recent news, share the headlines you brought, whether in newspaper form or by pointing to the headlines displayed.

Say: If we get all our understanding of our world from headlines, what word might we use to describe the world? Answers will vary, but most headlines point to upheaval, uncertainty, and chaos in the world. Say: In today’s passage, let’s see if John doesn’t give us a little hope for this chaotic, fallen world.

Step 2. Proclaim Hope for the Hopeless, Part 1

Relate the opening paragraph from Day One (p. 34) and share something in which you hoped as a child. (These may include a visit from a distant family member, dreaming about a different situation, a family trip, etc.) Convey to learners how that hope shaped your excitement as a child.

Use the author’s definition of “hope” in the second paragraph (p. 35) to make a distinction between something you wish would happen and something you know would happen.

Read Hebrews 11:1 aloud, pointing out that our hope as believers is anchored in Christ. If you brought an anchor (or picture of an anchor), display it where it can be a reminder throughout the session.

Step 3. Proclaim Hope for the Hopeless, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 2:28-3:1 aloud from his or her Bible.

Point out that 1 John (and John’s gospel, too!) stresses the importance of remaining or abiding in Christ. Challenge learners to see how many times they can find some version of the word “remain” or “abide” in 1 John 2 in their Bibles. (Most Bibles have it eleven times!)

Grasp your right forearm with your left hand and say: This is like Christ abiding in us. Simultaneously grasp your left forearm with your right hand and say: This is what we do in response: we abide in Him.

Use the rest of Day Two (pp. 36-37) topoint out that, when we abide in Christ, we are free to pursue righteousness and experience the ongoing, overwhelming love of Christ.

Step 4. Proclaim Hope for the Hopeless, Part 3

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 3:2 and 1 Corinthians 15:20-21. Use the Day Three content (p. 38) to consider not only our daily transformation (2 Cor. 5:17), but also the complete resurrection of our physical bodies one day. Say: We can see in Scripture that God’s promises are true. And as we consider His faithfulness to us, we can find hope and confidence in our present and our future.

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 3:3 and Philippians 2:12-15. Use the Day Three content (pp. 39-40) to stress that we work and God works to enable us to live pure lives. Encourage learners that we must work, but that God enables us.

Step 5. Remember Why Christ Came, Part 1

Read the opening paragraph of Day Four (p. 40) and invite a volunteer to read 1 John 3:4-6 aloud. Use the second Day Four paragraph (p. 40) to explain that we won’t live sinlessly, but that, through Christ, we will not be marked by sin. If part of your testimony includes a sin that held you captive, briefly share that with learners. Be sure to point out how Christ gave you the ability to throw off that old self.

Read John 1:29 and the paragraph from Day Four (p. 41) that begins with “When we say Jesus paid for our sins . . . .” Engage the group in determining why we should reflect Him in our lives. Remind learners of the sinless perfection of Christ and that we are recipients of His paying off our sin debt. Gratitude should compel us to live for Him.

Step 6. Remember Why Christ Came, Part 2

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 3:7-8 aloud. Point out the phrase, “Little (or “dear”) children” and ask: What attitude or emotion should we remember when we see this term of endearment from John?

Use the Day Five content (pp. 42-43) to give hope to learners: Satan is defeated. And though Satan is our enemy, He has no hope. Contrast that with the hope we can have in Jesus.

Invite a volunteer to read 1 John 3:9-10. Explain that John repeated himself here because his truth is important: Those born of God strive for righteousness and love others.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Read from the closing paragraph of Day Five (p. 44): “Holy-spirit empowered righteousness and a self-sacrificing love for one another are hallmarks of true Christianity.” Instruct learners to close their eyes in prayer and repeat that sentence.

Encourage learners with concerns about their salvation or lifestyles to talk to you privately after class or during the week.

Close with a prayer of confession and dependence, seeking God’s help to see our own faith as He sees it.

