

Island Group Discussion Guide

Abide • Connect • Share

Week of August 31, 2025

THRIVING IN BABYLON • WEEK 5

HOPE KILLERS • ROMANS 15:13



OPENING PRAYER TIME

Begin your meeting with 10-15 minutes of prayer using these prompts:

- Thank God for His presence with us today and His desire to work in our hearts
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our discussion and fill us with hope
- Pray for God to strengthen our faith and trust in His control over our circumstances
- Invite Jesus to reveal areas where we need His hope to replace discouragement
- Ask for wisdom to recognize and overcome the things that diminish our hope
- Pray for our church to be a community that multiplies hope in one another

DISCUSSION

- **Ice breaker:** Have you ever been so tired that you felt like you couldn't think straight or make good decisions? What did you do to recover?
- **Read Romans 15:13.** Pastor Paul said this verse contains key words: *joy, peace, trust, overflow, hope, and power*. Which of these words resonates most with you right now and why?
- Pastor Paul referenced the Delirious song "God is Bigger Than" and said the chorus declares "*God is bigger than the air I breathe, the world that we're going to leave. God will save the day and we all will say, my glorious.*" How does remembering that God is bigger than your circumstances affect your perspective?
- **Read Isaiah 40:30-31.** Pastor Paul asked, "*Have you ever got so busy trying to solve your own problems that you've just put yourself in complete exhaustion?*" How does this passage speak to the hope killer of fatigue and exhaustion? **Application question:** What are you currently doing to rest and replenish in the Lord? What practical step could you take this week to "*wait on the Lord*"?
- Pastor Paul used the illustration of a severed arm or leg trying to function apart from the body. **Read Proverbs 18:1 and Hebrews 10:24-25.** How does isolation become a hope killer, and how does connection multiply hope?
- **Read Isaiah 41:10.** Pastor Paul said worry and fear "*lead us to dwell on things that are going to keep us stuck*" and "*lead to paralysis both spiritually and physically.*"
Application question: What specific worry or fear do you need to surrender to God's control this week?



- Paul mentioned that grumbling is "*simply complaining about God's care for our lives.*" **Read 1 Corinthians 10:10.** How did the Israelites' grumbling lead them to wander in a desert for 40 years?
- Paul said when we try to earn God's approval through striving, "*all you do is you put yourself in bondage. You're putting handcuffs on yourself.*" **Read Psalm 46:10. Application question:** In what areas might you be trying to earn something God has already freely given you?
- **Read Proverbs 4:23** in the context of unhealthy relationships. Pastor Paul said, "*Hurt people, hurt people.*" How can we "*guard our heart*" while still showing love to difficult people in our lives?
- Pastor Paul defined being spiritually myopic as "*when we lose perspective. We judge God's goodness, we judge God's power by our current reality.*" **Read 2 Peter 1:5-8. Application question:** What has God brought you out of in the past that you can remember and thank Him for, even in current difficulties?
- Pastor Paul warned that Satan "*wants to destroy our hope*" and will try to get us to "*put our hope in anything or anyone other than Jesus Christ.*" How has our culture tried to convince people to place their hope in political solutions rather than in Jesus?
- Paul said, "*The party platform has become an idol*" and "*political points have taken over the affection of our hearts rather than the Word of God.*" **Application question:** How can we engage responsibly in civic duties while keeping our ultimate hope in Jesus alone?
- **Read Revelation 2:1-5.** Pastor Paul used the church in Ephesus as an example of false hope in good works and solid doctrine without love. What warning does this passage give us about having right activities but abandoning our "*first love*"?
- Pastor Paul outlined four "*weapons and methods of the Holy Spirit*": **prayer, obedient living, loving enemies,** and **faithfully proclaiming the gospel.** Which of these do you find most challenging and why?
- Pastor Paul said these spiritual weapons should be "*the natural outflow or overflow of our relationship with God.*" **Application question:** Which of these four areas needs to become more natural in your daily walk with Jesus?
- **Application question:** Pastor Paul said, "*When you feel like you don't want to connect with people, you need to seek connection with people.*" What specific step will you take this week to choose connection over isolation?
- Paul encouraged us to "*cultivate a heart of gratitude*" because it "*counters hope killers*" and "*builds hope when we just praise God.*" What are three specific things you can thank God for right now, regardless of your current circumstances?

CLOSING PRAYER TIME

Share prayer requests and concerns with the group. Be sure to write these down and send them to all group members so everyone can pray throughout the week, including those who were absent today.