

## Study Discussion for the May 10, 2020 Sermon: “The Struggle for Hope”

1. In *The Inferno*, a famous poem about hell, a sign at the entrance to hell states: “Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.” The poem's author believed that hope was an essential element of the Christian experience, and that the damned would be denied any hope. What is the Biblical meaning of hope? Support your answer from Romans 5: 2 & 5, or from other verses on hope.
2. How might you use the Bible to counsel a new believer who said that, because of a struggle, she was losing hope?
3. Pastor Paul said that when we fail, we must remember that our sin does not define us. What does define the believer? Support your answer with Scripture.
4. One of reasons that Christians remain hopeful is that “...suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character...” (Romans 5:3). Give an example of an old or new testament person who acquired endurance and character through suffering.
5. Some religions teach that evil and suffering are illusory. Christianity portrays them as real, but teaches that we can rejoice, even in suffering. Use Romans 5: 1-5 to explain why we can rejoice in suffering.
6. Scripture reference to our resurrection bodies give us great hope. Can you summarize any scriptural descriptions of how our new bodies will differ from our current bodies?
7. Memory test: What was one of reasons, given in the sermon, that we will need a new body in heaven?
8. Application of the Sermon: Pastor made the following recommendations to those who were in the midst of a struggle:
  - Give yourself margin – time for prayer and Bible study. During the Bible study look for both encouragement, and for warnings about the consequences of sin.
  - Ask for help. This might mean calling a Christian sister or brother, or a Pastor or Deacon, or placing a prayer request on NWB's online site.

Has anyone tried this since Sunday?