

Purpose: Jesus Christ is the ultimate hope.

Supplies:

- 1-7 Jenga games (depends on size of your group)
- Bibles

Total Time: 40-50 minutes

ACTIVITY

Jenga (10-15 minutes)

Have groups play by pulling blocks out, have the group set a goal of how many blocks they want to pull out before the tower falls. *If a large group, have individuals take turns from each team.*

1. How did your group decide what your goal would be?
2. Did your group have hope they would get to a certain number of blocks?
3. What made you doubt your goal as you were playing the game?
4. What made you more hopeful toward your goal as you pulled block after block out?

LARGE GROUP

(15-20 minutes)

- Why do we cheer on the underdog?
- Why do we say, "Hope for the best, expect the worse"?
- When was the last time you had your hopes crushed?

How we handle not reaching expectations, being let down, or circumstances coming against us shows what we have our hope in. When life gets hard, many people get discouraged and

lose hope. Some get so discouraged in their hopelessness that suicide becomes the only option. "Getting back on the horse" is easy to say, but to actually do it is a totally different story.

What is hope? *Let them share their thoughts.*

Hope is, "to desire something with confident expectation of its fulfillment." So, it's something you believe in your heart so strongly that you know you'll find happiness and contentment in that. You know it's promised to be that and maybe even more...you just know it..

Video clip: Soul Surfer

<http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/heart-of-a-soul-surfer/my-story>

Video Questions: *Allow the teens to share before you respond.*

1. **Why is Bethany able to trust Christ even after her accident?** Because she is confident in what Jesus Christ is all about. She believes what the Bible says to be true. She believes that her situation has a purpose that pleases God. She believes obeying God will be the ultimate joy of life. She believes someday she will be with her most loving Creator, God. Her hope is eternally focused! She understands very well that her hope must keep an eternal perspective. It's not about today and my situations! It's about the joy in pleasing the God in heaven. That's true happiness when our hope is focused right. READ: Jeremiah 29:11 and/or Philippians 3:13-14.
2. **What is Bethany's hope in?** Jesus Christ
3. **How have you handled difficult times in your life?**
4. **What is your hope in?**
5. **How is your future hope for life holding your today life together? Or is it?**

SMALL GROUP

(15-20 minutes)

Allow the teens to share.

- Who would like to share a time when they had an expectation that didn't work out?
- Who would like to share a goal they are working on and what will lead to achieving that goal or not reaching that goal?
- Who would like share a time when you expected a situation to work out differently?

- What affects our hope in people or in circumstances?
- What are some things you still hope for in life?

Whatever we build our lives on, or our purpose in life, is what we call the foundation of your life. We aren't going into a lot of detail about what our "foundation of life" is all about. But we need to understand that our view of life, what we find to be the most important thing in life, etc., affect what we place our hope in. For example: if your life is mostly based on you...that means your decisions will be based on how it will affect you. When a tough time in life hits, you'll place your rescue from the situation on yourself. So you have to get yourself out of it or fix it or whatever. If you don't have the answers or can't "fix" things, you are feeling hopeless. If you are able to "fix" things, then you're feeling pretty good about yourself.

What is a Christian's hope built on? *See if they have any good thoughts.*

Let's see what God says.

READ:

- **Psalm 71:5**...who but God provides perfect forgiveness, controls the future, provide a future in heaven, and who but God can provide a life that will last forever? It's a no brainer that God would be the reason for hope.
- **2 Corinthians 9:8**...*He is all we need*
- **Ephesians 3:20**...*He's going to do more than we can imagine, so why wouldn't someone build their life on God?*
- **Lamentations 3:32**...God shows compassion and his love is unending. Again, who doesn't want that!?
- **1 Peter 1:3-5**...Jesus was raised from the dead! If God can raise Jesus, we can have confidence that God will do the same for us!

WRAP UP

READ: 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

Jesus Christ is the only hope that will give you the reason to face the day, to stand tall when under fire, and to live each day with a positive outlook. Hope for eternity in Heaven is found only through Jesus as well. Jesus rose from the dead, and that alone gives us the hope and confidence that He will raise all the Christians from the dead to someday spend eternity in

heaven with the perfect, loving, just Father...God the Father and God the Son, Jesus. Some-day...

Where is your hope? Is it in you? Is it in a girlfriend/boyfriend? Is it in a car? Is it in a person? Is it in Jesus Christ? Is the thing you are hoping in going to last forever and provide a deep inner peace and joy? Will it be there no matter what? Will it ever fail you?

Jesus Christ will never fail you, never leave you, never disappoint you, never leave you hanging, and will always be there no matter what time it is!

Do you want Jesus? *Encourage teens that are ready to follow Jesus and put their hope in Him to stay.*

CHALLENGE

Start reading from Acts 9 to the end of the book: you'll be reading about a guy whose name started out to be Saul and later changed to Paul. As you read, think about what his hope is in and how it changed his life.

SALVATION VERSES

God's Amazing **Forgiveness** that Leads to Eternal Life with Him!

- We all are sinners: Psalms 51:5, Romans 3:9-12, Romans 3: 22-24, 1 John 1:8-10
- We are chained to our sin: John 8:31-36, 2 Peter 2:19, Romans 6:16-18
- We cannot be close to God because of our sin: Colossians 1:21-22, Ephesians 2:12-13
- Sin has a punishment: Romans 5:12, Romans 6:23, Galatians 3:10
- We cannot save ourselves from our sin: Romans 8:7-8, Ephesians 2:1-5, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:4-7
- JESUS saves us!!! John 1:12, John 3:14-16, John 10:11,14-15, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Ephesians 5:25-27, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Romans 5:8
- We can be rescued when we trust Jesus: Romans 10:9-13
- God will never turn anyone away! John 6:37, Romans 10:13
- Your new purpose in life: Romans 8:1-14, Ephesians 5:1-21, 2 Corinthians 5:15