

Need Hope? Read This

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Nobody invites discouragement for dinner. But he needs no invitation. He slips past the door with the silence of a cat. Or, he knocks down the door with the rage of a bull. Once inside our head, like a squatter, he refuses to leave. And how we handle his presence will determine our well-being.

How Jesus Dispelled Discouragement

When Jesus announced his impending death, he saw the lifeless look in his disciple's eyes. On the threshold of his departure, Jesus uttered a sunrise promise. He told them his death wasn't a final farewell. And he promised a better tomorrow, "I am going away to make ready a place for you. And if I go and make ready a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me, so that where I am you may be also" (John 14:1-2)

Swimming Mice

I once read about researchers who placed a dozen laboratory mice in a vat of water. As the mice swam in circles the researchers periodically lifted from the water those they had identified with a mark on their head. After briefly lifting the mice they returned them to the water. As the researchers expected, the lifted mice swam longer than the others. This surfaced a question: Did some of the mice die? No. They actually had a mouse-guard on duty who pulled several to safety. Not even an injury. Most suffered fatigue due to the long swim.

Having written that distraction . . .

Here's another, more important question: why did the lifted mice swim longer? Could it have been . . .

Rest? The researchers doubted that a one second rest mattered.

Strength? The mice were randomly chosen, not according to strength or intelligence.

Finally, the researchers narrowed the answer to a single word:

HOPE

Lifting the mice infused them with a hope of rescue. And hope empowered them to hold up their heads and keep kicking their legs (were they dog paddling? Can they? I mean, these were mice).

Hope Dispels Discouragement

When discouraged you may feel as helpless as a mouse swimming in a bucket of water. It's there Jesus offers you a lifeline of hope. He promised you a better tomorrow. No, he *guaranteed* you a better tomorrow. Reject every discouraging lie and replace it with the Lord's promise above. Remember, every thought is attached to an emotion

and every emotion to a thought. Take every thought captive and make it believe the Lord's promise.

Keep swimming.