Introduction: It all started with a homework assignment

- **The question:** What’s the single most important thing you do as a leader?

  **The answer:** “That’s easy, I make sure I stay ________________________.”

  “Discouragement is the anesthetic the devil uses on a person just before he reaches in and carves out his heart.”
  - Howard Hendricks

- **What is hope?** – The mental and emotional outlook that life is good, the future is promising, and progress is certain… even in the midst of difficult circumstances and challenging relationships.

- **Why does it matter?**

- **What’s your “HQ” today?**
  1. The *Hope Quotient* by Ray Johnson

- **What’s the source of your hope?**
I Choose Hope
(Part 1)

How to find and keep hope alive:

The context: Philippians 1-2

- In difficult circumstances = I choose joy!
- In challenging relationships = I choose love!
- In confusion and chaos = I choose hope!

The command: Rejoice in the Lord
Philippians 3:1

The warning: Beware of false teachers
Philippians 3:2

The reason:

3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by His Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—
Philippians 3:3 (NIV)

The proof:

4 though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

Philippians 3:4-9 (NIV)
3 Vital Takeaways:

1. Whatever we put our HOPE in will determine what we ____________________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>False source of hope</th>
<th>True source of hope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules, laws, success, status, salary</td>
<td>Grace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in self-effort</td>
<td>Confidence in Christ’s work</td>
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</tbody>
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2. False HOPE always ends in either ________________ or ________________.
   
   1 Timothy 6:17

3. True HOPE is rooted in ________________________ and results in
   _______________ and ________________________.
   
   Romans 5:1-5
Discussion Questions:

1. How important is hope in your life?

2. What new insight did you gain about hope?

3. What “false hopes” are you tempted to pursue? Which ones have you pursued in the past?

4. How does a person come to have the kind of personal relationship with Jesus that Paul describes?

5. What has helped you the most to enjoy your relationship with Christ?

6. How has your hope in Christ sustained you in difficult times?