



ABIDING HOPE

Abiding: continuing without change; enduring; steadfast

Hope: the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best

Study Guide

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Abiding Hope

by T. Windahl

Personal or Small Group Study Questions

Worry or Pray? – Page 11

*What specific things in your life are you worried about?

*Name one thing you could do in order to remind yourself to pray about those things instead of worrying?

*According to Philippians 4:6–7, what does God give to his children when they choose to pray instead of worrying?

He Calls Them Each by Name – Page 13

*Which of God's actions in the verses from Isaiah 40 stand out to you the most? Why?

*God calls the stars by name. What difference can knowing that fact make in any difficult situations in your life?

Help My Unbelief – Page 15

*Like the father in Mark 9, are there areas of unbelief in your life? If so, what are those areas?

Ask Jesus to help you with any areas of unbelief you might have uncovered.

Suffering and Fruit – Page 17

*How can knowing that there is purpose for our suffering encourage us during hard times?

*As you consider the fact that God brings fruit out of his children's suffering, what thoughts come to mind?

*Have you ever experienced fruit from any hard times in your life? If so, what was that fruit?

Not Forgotten by God – Page 19

*Have you ever felt forgotten by others? By God? If so, what caused you to feel forgotten?

*What promise does God make to his children in Isaiah 49:15?

Jesus Understands – Page 21

*Isaiah 53:3 clearly tells that Jesus suffered greatly; how does this fact speak to you in your current circumstances?

*Who is the only one who will always understand the difficulties we go through in this life?

Believe and See – Page 23

*Have you experienced any benefits of trusting God? If so, what are those benefits?

*Have you ever seen God's power or glory manifested in your life as a result of trusting him? If so, what happened?

*What is something you can choose to believe God for today?

Sowing God's Word – Page 24

*What have you been sowing into your hard circumstances?

*If you are not already sowing God's Word into your circumstances, how can you begin to do that today?

Cast Your Burden – Page 27

*What burden or burdens can you cast on God today?

*What does God promise to do in Psalm 55:22 when we choose to cast our burdens on him?

Setting Our Minds on Things Above – Page 29

*Why does God want us to set our minds on things above?

*What specific action or actions can you take in order not to focus on any difficult situations you may be enduring, but rather on things above?

God's Grace – Page 31

*Have you ever experienced God's sufficient grace? If you have, what happened?

* Where do you specifically need God's grace in your life right now?

*God's sufficient grace, which he lavishes on his children, is only a prayer away!

God, Our Deliverer – Page 33

*Have you come to know God as your personal deliverer? If so, what has he delivered you from?

*Where in your life do you currently need God’s deliverance? Ask him for that deliverance today.

Never Forsaken – Page 35

*God promises never to leave or forsake his children. Is that fact comforting to you in your present circumstances? If so, why?

Our Struggles Are Temporary – Page 37

*As a child of God, which of the following truths is most comforting to you now and why?

—Your struggles are temporary.

—The best is yet to come.

—A pain-free, tear-free, mourning-free, and death-free life awaits you.

*Revelation 21 teaches us that God will one day dwell with his people. What will be the best thing about that for you?

A Life of Thanksgiving – Page 39

*How are you living a life of thanksgiving? If you don’t already, how can you begin to do so?

A friend shared with me a great idea regarding growing in the area of thanksgiving—At the end of every day write down one thing you are thankful for from that day.

Guard Your Joy! – Page 41

*Have you ever experienced true biblical joy during hard times? If so, what were your circumstances?

*Why should we guard our joy?

*Are there any joy-stealers in your life? If so, name them. Think of some joy-maintainers that could help to guard your joy and not let the enemy steal it.

Choosing to Rejoice – Page 43

*In order to make rejoicing a part of your everyday life, what is one thing you could start doing now?

Need Hope? – Page 45

*What four things does Lamentations 3:22–23 teach us about God’s love, mercies and faithfulness?

*Which of those four things are you most thankful for and why?

Life is Hard, but God is . . . – Page 46

*The Bible teaches us that God is good. Why do you think many of us have trouble believing that when times are hard?

*Where have your ideas about who God is come from? Books? TV shows? Movies? A church? A pastor or other religious figure? The Bible? Your parents? Or other people in your life?

*If you don’t read the Bible already, would you consider reading it and discovering what God says about himself within its pages? The book of Psalms is a great place to start!

A Simple Prayer – Page 49

*Has pride ever convinced you that you could handle things on your own and didn't need to depend on God? Have you ever considered the fact that God wants us to depend on him?

*Consider praying 2 Chronicles 20:12 over your current circumstances: "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." Which situation would be a good place to start?

*How does prayer reveal dependence on God?

Saved from Enemies – Page 51

* Do you recognize enemies (such as fear, doubt or self-pity) in your own life? What can you do if you discover any?

*Who can save us from our enemies?

A Negative Attitude? – Page 53

*Are you being held captive by a negative attitude as T once was? If so, what action can you take?

*What thoughts come to mind when you consider the fact that you have control over your own attitude?

One Day at a Time – Page 55

*Are you letting the fears about tomorrow steal the gift of each new day?

*Instead of letting the fears about tomorrow steal the gift of each new day, what did T do? What could you do?

Not Home Yet – Page 57

*What is the good news about suffering?

*Times of suffering are an opportunity to come to know God (who he is and what he can do). Have you ever come to know God better through a time of suffering? If so, describe the circumstances and what you learned about God during that time.

God's Mercy – Page 59

*Do you see God's mercy at work in your life? If so, in what ways?

*What thoughts come to your mind as you consider the song God inspired T to write regarding mercy?

Hope Has a Name – Page 61

*Do you have hope? Even amidst hard times?

*Where can one find true hope which is living, never disappoints and is an anchor for the soul?

*Whose name is the hope of the entire world?

Being Honest with God – Page 63

*Choose to be honest with God today regarding a certain situation in your life and pour out your heart to him in the form of a prayer or poem.

Trust and Lean Not – Page 64

*Why should we trust God according to the included Scriptures?

*Are there areas in your life where you have been leaning on your own understanding instead of trusting God? If so, after studying these verses, what will you do?

Praying God's Word – Page 67

*What specific Scripture can you turn into a prayer for your life right now? (One of the included Scriptures? Or a verse from Psalms? Or . . . ?)

Truth Sets Us Free – Page 69

*What lies have you believed about God?

*How has the truth about God set you free—or how has it begun to set you free?

Choices – Page 70

*Which of the listed choices could you incorporate into your life today, and what step(s) can you take?

Resolve to Do or Not to Do – Page 73

*Record something you could resolve to do or not to do in your life. Consider posting it in a place where you'll see it as a reminder to pray.

Personal Knowledge of God – Page 75

*Looking at your life, would you say you *don't* know God, you know *about* him or you *know* him?

*What does Job say in Job 42:5? How did he come to a personal knowledge of God?

Our Refuge and Strength – Page 77

*Who or what has been a refuge in your life? Where does your strength come from?

*If God has ever been your refuge or strength or very present help in trouble, describe a time when he was.

An “Are, Have and Will” Prayer – Page 78

*If you would like to pray an “are, have and will” prayer, consider starting here by filling in the following blanks . . .

God, You are my _____.

God, you have _____.

God, You will _____.

Unanswered “Why” Questions – Page 81

*As you consider your life, write down any unanswered “why?” questions you have for God.

*Would you be willing to surrender those questions to God today, trust him concerning them, and then rest in the knowledge of who he is? (He is good, loving, faithful, perfect, all-knowing, merciful and so much more.)

Waiting on the Lord – Page 83

*Name something you are waiting on God for.

*Ask God to give you a promise from the Bible that you can put your faith in as you wait on him.

Jesus and the Brokenhearted – Page 85

*Do you have a broken heart? If you do, what caused it?

*If you do have a broken heart, will you choose to call on Jesus today? He is the one who can heal broken hearts.

Submitting to God’s Will – Page 87

*What thoughts come to mind after reading the following words spoken by Jesus to his Father, God, regarding his crucifixion: “Not my will, but yours be done.”?

*Name a circumstance or area of your life where an internal battle is going on regarding the laying down of your own will and submitting to God’s will. As you consider that circumstance or area in light of Jesus’ words, what will you do?

God’s Perspective – Page 89

*As you think of a difficult circumstance in your life, what is your perspective regarding it?

*I encourage you to read the Bible and ask God to show you his perspective on it . . . which might be the exact opposite of what you’re thinking!

Prayers Based on Truth – Page 91

*What is the difference between prayers based on truth and other prayers?

*Do your prayers incorporate truth about God? If not, where could you begin?

God Encourages – Page 93

*Have you ever sensed God encouraging you through the pages of the Bible or through someone in your life? If so, describe how.

*Are you in need of encouragement today? If so, ask God to encourage you. The God of the Bible is the God who encourages!

Jesus is on the Throne – Page 95

*How can it comfort or encourage you today to know that Jesus is on the throne?

Genuine Faith? – Page 97

*What have the trials in your life revealed about your faith?

*According to 1 Peter 1:6–7, what will genuine faith result in when Jesus Christ is revealed?

Using Suffering for God’s Purposes – Page 99

*Have you used suffering for God’s purposes? If so, how? If not, how could you use it for his purposes?

*Give an example of how we can waste our suffering.

Crying Out to the Lord – Page 101

*Which of the four groups of people mentioned in Psalm 107 do you relate to the most? Why?

*What did each of those four groups in Psalm 107 do when they were in distress? How did God respond to them? If you are in distress, will you do as they did?

Easy in the Eyes of the Lord – Page 103

*What is a seemingly impossible situation in your life?

*Choose to look at that situation today from God's perspective, which means, no matter what it is, it is "an easy thing in the eyes of the Lord!"

Delighting in God's Word – Page 105

*Can you relate to the psalmist's words in Psalm 119:92? If so, explain.

*If you don't yet delight in God's Word, how can you start to do so?

An Earthly Perspective – Page 107

*What thoughts come to you as you ponder the words spoken by T's husband Pete: "No matter what your situation is, there is always someone who is worse off than you are."?

*Examine your life for any signs of self-pity. If you find any, ask God for his help in getting rid of it.

Unfailing Faith – Page 109

*What did Jesus tell Simon Peter that he had specifically prayed for him? Is this a prayer you could pray for yourself right now? Could you ask others to pray it for you?

*Think of others you know who are going through difficult trials and pray that prayer for them. Consider sharing this scripture with them.

Jesus Sees Us in the Storm – Page 111

*Which of the four listed insights speaks to you the most? Why?

*In the midst of the storms of life, do you tend to focus on the storm or on Jesus? How does that focus affect your outlook?

Trust, Rejoice and Sing – Page 113

*Do you have any “*How long?*” questions? If so, what are they? What did David choose to do even though his “*How long?*” questions remained? What will you choose to do?

*In Psalm 13, what did David choose to trust in? What did his heart rejoice in? And why did he sing?

*When we choose to trust God, rejoice and sing amidst our difficulties and “*How long?*” questions, what good could come of it?

Suffering and Benefits – Page 114

*Name one benefit that God has brought to your life through suffering.

*What situation in your life could you look at with a “Hezekiah” or “Romans 8:28” perspective?

When the Journey Is Too Much – Page 117

*During those difficult times in life when “the journey is too much,” what does T encourage one to do?

Carrying a Heavy Load? – Page 119

*Is there a heavy burden that you have been carrying all by yourself? If so, what is it?

*Would you be willing to tell God today that you want to cast that burden on him? For no matter what your burden is God can handle it, and he’s longing to help.

Strength Can Be Yours – Page 120

*What things seem to rob you of strength?

*Describe a time when God gave you strength, or when God sent others to help you find strength in him or when you strengthened yourself in the Lord.

Set Free – Page 123

*Are you feeling imprisoned by your circumstances? Or your attitude? Or fear? Or loneliness? Or anything else?

*What did David do when he felt imprisoned? What did Paul and Silas do when they were physically locked in a jail cell?

*If you are feeling imprisoned, what will you choose to do today?

The Best is Yet to Come! – Page 124

*Which one of the listed verses about suffering stands out to you the most? How does it speak to your times of suffering?

*People are often surprised by the sufferings of this life, but what are Jesus' own words in John 16:33? Why are we to take heart?

Behaviors That Test God – Page 127

*Have you ever considered the fact that our behaviors can test and try God?

*What behaviors in your life could be testing and trying God? In light of the verses from Exodus and Hebrews, what will you choose to do?

Walking in the Dark? – Page 129

*If you are currently walking in the dark, which one of God's names that are listed could you choose to trust in?

*In what ways do you think we waste the dark (our suffering)? How can you avoid wasting it?

Lonely? – Page 131

*Are you feeling lonely? If so, how can knowing Jesus help?

*What can a lonely place become?

God's Marvelous Love – Page 133

*Why can the following childhood saying never be said about God? *He loves me, he loves me not. He loves me, he loves me not.*

*Do you know that God loves you? If not, what is your response to the suggestions given?

*How can knowing God loves us make a difference in our lives?

Unfailing Love – Page 134

*Which one of the words describing God's love means the most to you? Why?

*Which of the listed verses about God's love could you memorize to help remind you of his great love for you? Consider posting this verse in a place where you'll see it often.