

“The Christmas Promise”

Week 1 - HOPE

warm-up

Group Ice Breaker: HOPE

Begin your group meeting with this question: “What one hope is in my heart that, if fulfilled this year, would have the most transformational affect in my life?”

word & application

Habakkuk 2:3-4

*“This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed. Look at the proud! They trust in themselves, and their lives are crooked. **But the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God.**”*

Hebrews 10:35 – 11:1

*“**So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord.** Remember the great reward it brings you! **Patient endurance is what you need now,** so that you will continue to do God’s will. Then **you will receive all that he has promised.** For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my **righteous ones will live by faith.** But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away. But we are not like those who turn away from God to their own destruction. We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved. **Faith** shows the reality of what we **hope** for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.”*

Discussion & Application: Explore these points and questions through in-depth conversation

Faithfulness – “*emwnah*” (Hebrew): A steady, firm trust

Confident Trust – “*parrēsia*” (Greek): Free and fearless confidence, boldness and assurance

Patient Endurance – “*hypomonē*” (Greek): brave perseverance

Faith – “*pistis*” (Greek): trust that God’s character is of one who can be relied on

Hope – “*elpis*” (Greek): a confident expectation of good

Discussion Questions:

- Notice the progression of language in these passages:
 - A steady, firm trust leads to a free and fearless confidence that empowers us to bravely persevere, knowing that God’s true character is one who can be relied on with a confident expectation for good.
- Who is our source for HOPE? Why is it so important to God that we embrace HOPE?
- How do we cultivate HOPE in our lives?
- What are some “Hope Growers” in our lives?
- What are some “Hope Killers” that we need to eliminate/avoid?
- Is there something that we have not dared to hope for, but we desperately want to believe God will do?

prayer

Share recent “God moments.” Celebrate some wins in your lives. Pray over requests. Pray that the Holy Spirit begins cultivating HOPE in our hearts. That this hope will grow strong, bear fruit in our lives and lead us into a confident trust of God’s good desires for us.