

Small Group News

Family Night (Rialto Menu: BBQ): Wed December 4th

Church Decorating (Rialto): December 1st

Pray for: Christmas Mission Efforts; your small group

Small Group Questions

For the week of December 1st, 2019

Hope (Part 1)

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the month of December, the teaching series will focus on Hope that is an anchor for our lives and how biblical hope is more than simply wishing.

The focus of the week: **Hope in the Waiting**

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time, or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Share about a time in your life when you waited on God for something. Did He provide? If so, how long did you wait, and how did it make you feel when He came through? If not, why do you think God didn't provide? How has that experience affected your ability to Hope in God?
2. In the message you heard that you cannot put your hope in your calendar, your ability to control, or your comfort; share some examples of when you or someone you know has placed their hope in these things. Is there one of the three in which you are more prone to hope? In what ways do each fail us?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend about the importance of placing our hope in God as a confident anchor through discussing the life of Abraham. But what else does the Bible say about hope?

Read: Romans 5:1-6

Discuss what it means to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (v.2). How does that help us to find joy even in the midst of suffering (v.3)? How does it make you feel to know that hope is the product of character, which is the product of endurance, which is the product of suffering (v.4)? Finally, in what ways does hope in God protect us from shame or disappointment (v.5)?

Read: Psalm 34:1-8; Matthew 7:11; James 1:17; & Psalm 145:5-7

Do you agree or disagree that God is good? Why is it so important for what we place our hope in to be good? In what ways have you experienced the goodness of God? In what do people place their hope that isn't good? If you struggle with Hoping in God could it be because you struggle with God being good? Why or why not?

2. The big idea of this weekend's message was that "hope in the Lord is fuel for the wait." God wants us to rely on Him and trust that He will come through in His timing. Consider the following:

Read: Psalm 27:1-14

This Psalm was written by David during a time when he was running for his life before he was anointed King. What do you think was David's motivation for waiting on God? What do you think he was waiting for specifically? What kinds of emotions or struggles occur while we are waiting on God? What factors do you think challenge someone to quit on God while waiting?

Read: Isaiah 40:28-31

Written during the exile of Judah in Babylon Isaiah 40 refers to the benefit of waiting on God to fulfill His promises to Israel back to the time of Abraham hundreds of years prior. Discuss the attributes you see that describe God. How do the attributes of God help fuel you to wait for him in your life's current situations?

Read: 2 Corinthians 1:19-20; Romans 8:24-28

What are the promises of God based on? What promises has God made to us? Have you ever seen God break a promise He has made? If not, what do you think is happening when people believe God has failed them in a given situation? What do you think motivates God to answer or not answer us when we are waiting on Him? Do your answers to these questions help or hurt your willingness to hope in Jesus?

TAKING IT HOME

When Jesus began His earthly ministry one of the biggest struggles for the Jewish people (especially the religious leaders) was that they had a different expectation of the Messiah than who Jesus was. In other words they were challenged to shift their expectations/hopes for who the Messiah was and what He came to do. Those who made that shift became disciples; those who did not wanted Jesus dead or walked away.

When you think about struggles or challenges in your life, how much of your capacity to wait on the Lord and keep your hope in him could be connected to false expectations? Are there areas of your life where you are wanting something from God that is not in line with His Word or His will?

Take some time this week to list and evaluate anything you are wanting from God. Is it a biblical want? Are you motivated by godly reasons? Is there something that God wants you to do, or not do, that may prevent Him answering you in this matter? Have you spoken with godly friends/leaders to gain a better perspective on what to do next?

Bottom Line is that no one who has waited on God has ever been disappointed (think Abraham); but plenty have quit waiting on God and then been discouraged. Spend this week considering how you can focus your Hope on God and gain new fuel for the wait!

GROUP PRAYER

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