

## Small Group News

**Family Nt (Rialto Menu: Chick-fil-A):** Wed December 11<sup>th</sup>

**Christmas Eve Service:** Tuesday December 24<sup>th</sup>

**Christmas Day Service (Rialto):** Wednesday December 25<sup>th</sup>

**Pray for:** Christmas Mission Efforts; your small group

## Small Group Questions

*For the week of December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019*

***Hope (Part 2)***

### 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 Battle**

### 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 were engaged in a battle (or share a current battle you face). What questions did you (do you) have for God? What was your hope (is your hope) in that situation? Was the battle ever resolved? If so, how? If not, why not? What did you learn (or are you learning) from that experience?
2. In the message you heard that we can sometimes find ourselves in the wrong battle, or relying on the wrong power, or even fighting for the wrong team. Discuss some examples for each. Why do you suppose this happens so often? Have you ever found yourself in one of these three situations (or are you in one now)? What are some things we can do to help avoid these pitfalls?

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend about a spiritual battle that rages around us. What does the bible say about spiritual battles and their connection to hope?

**Read: 1 Peter 2:19-20; Matthew 5:11-12; John 16:33**

Battles are everywhere, but not every battle is the same. What are some of the different causes for the battles we face? What are some examples of battles your group may be facing collectively or as individuals? How do expectations and solutions differ with each cause? How do you think different types of battles affect hope?

**Read: Matthew 16:13-19; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Isaiah 57:14; Revelation 20:7-10**

What do you think the spiritual battle is for? Who are the major players? What is its ultimate outcome? Besides Satan, what other enemies might there be in the spiritual battle? What tools or weapons are used against God's people from the various enemies you listed? What are the weapons we have from God? Does knowing this increase or decrease your hope? Why?

2. Understanding that there is a spiritual battle going on around us consider the following: How do we engage? How does the bible help equip us for the battle? How can we win in our struggle?

**Read: Ephesians 6:10-20**

Paul addressed the battle and called for us to be strong “in the Lord,” and in His might. Using the metaphor of armor he challenges us to rely on truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, our relationship with God, the Bible, and prayer in the battle. Discuss how each have helped you in your battles. Also which of those listed have been strengths for you and which have been challenges?

**Read: John 11:17-27; 1 John 5:4-5**

Why is belief so critical in the spiritual battle? Biblical belief is more than intellectual agreement, it’s a capacity to trust God. What are the things about Jesus that we need to trust in order to be successful in the battles of life? How does our belief impact our hope? What were some things Jesus was challenging Martha to see in his interaction with her? How could seeing those things help us in our battles today?

## TAKING IT HOME

**Read: Matt 7:21-27 & Acts 19:11-20**

There is a theme in these two passages that might be missed if we are not careful: Relationship vs. Religion. Often people are confused about the two thinking that religion is the desired outcome. In other words, is God’s greatest concern His rules and the rituals we read about? Or is it something else?

You heard in the message this week that sometimes we may be fighting the wrong battle. The most common battle we fight is often religion. The attempt we make to measure up to some standard of behavior. But what if God is not concerned with behavioral modification? What if God’s greater goal is life transformation? And what if life change happens in relationship?

Take some time this week to really spend some time with God. Only this week, don’t worry about trying to learn something FROM God as much as learning something ABOUT God or spending time WITH God. Maybe use a journal or a recorder and note what God is saying to you. In preparing for this ask yourself the following:

Do I really believe that God can speak to me? Am I expecting to hear from God? What situations in my life have I been leaving God out of? Am I too religious (trying to earn God’s favor with rituals and/or things I do)? What are my current battles and how does God want me to fight them? Is it possible I am fighting a wrong battle? Or using a wrong weapon? In this time with God is my hope increasing or decreasing? Is my hope securely anchored in who HE is or what I’ve done?

## GROUP PRAYER

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