



HOPE SHINES THROUGH

Hope Shines Through Week 3 Group Discussion Notes

Leading Off:

Do you open gifts on Christmas Eve or do you wait until Christmas morning? What is the *best gift* you have ever received for Christmas?

Scripture:

67 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied: “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a horn of **salvation** for us in the house of his servant David (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us— to show **mercy** to our ancestors and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham: to **rescue** us from the hand of our enemies, and to **enable** us to serve him without fear **Luke 1:67-74**

Given the tragic events that occurred this past week in Newtown Connecticut, we’re reminded of the hopelessness and despair that fills the world and surrounds us all. We’re also reminded of how desperate people everywhere are for peace and hope. During Sunday’s message, Pastor Chad shared with us that the one thing this world desires more than anything else is peace – that the greatest gift we could ever receive from God is **peace**.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think about peace?
2. Has there ever been a time in your life where you’ve experienced deep and abiding peace in the midst of a very challenging or troubling circumstance? If so, where did your peace come from?

*“Peace I not the absence of **crisis**; peace is the guaranteed presence of **Christ**.”*

3. Have you ever felt that in your life there was a *lack* of peace? If so, how?

*"Peace comes into my life through God's **initiative**. Peace comes into my life when I **respond** to Christ and **trust** that He is good."*

4. What is one way that you can personally respond to God's initiative in your life?
5. Have you ever found it hard to trust that God is good based upon the circumstance of your life? If so, in what ways?

"Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!" –John 12:27-28

6. What can we learn about the heart of Christ and the purpose of God through this prayer that Jesus prayed?
7. How can we apply the prayer that Jesus prayed in our own lives?

In this prayer, Jesus prayed, *"Don't get me out of it, get me through it."* –Pastor Mark Driscoll

One To Grow On (This weeks growth challenge)

As we enter this season of Hope, we know that many around us are struggling, and that during the Christmas season, many lose hope more so than any other time of year. You may be one of those struggling with a lack of hope and peace in your own life.

Pastor Chad felt prompted this weekend to say to all of us, *"Hope WILL Shine Through For You!"* Hope will shine through because God is good and He's promised to be with us and to heal and restore, redeem and renew us as we continue to trust Him with our lives.

Perhaps you could use a bit of prayer right now. Ask your LifeGroup to pray that peace and hope will shine through in your life this Christmas Season.

Don't be afraid to ask the others in your group if they could use some prayer as well.

Hope Will Shine Through! It's the ONE thing we can absolutely count on!