

NOTES TO LEADERS: Our message was focused on “hope in Christ.” This is a GREAT NEED in our world. If you haven’t heard the message, you can hear it on our website.

SHARE

When have you been especially glad for hope in Christ? How did this hope change you?

NOTES TO LEADERS: We have all had times of brokenness. Let’s lead the way by being vulnerable with our Home Group family.

LEARN

The book of 1 Peter was written to believers who were suffering.

Read 1 Peter 3:15a. What are people supposed to see in us?

NOTES TO LEADERS: While this verse is used to remind us about challenges regarding defending our faith (apologetics), the primary focus of this book is about having hope in the face of suffering.

According to this verse, our call is to . . .

- **Set apart Christ as Lord in your hearts. This means to treat as holy Jesus Christ – to make Him your supreme desire and allegiance. He alone has first place, the one you desire to please, to love, to follow.**
- **We are to be prepared. (More below).**
- **Be prepared to give an answer (share) why we have hope! This means that people should see us as people who have hope. This is a distinctive, a mark, a badge we wear. This should be our DNA.**
- **We are to do this with gentleness and respect.**

Read the following and answer the question, ‘Why would people see something different in us?’ 1 Peter 1:13-16, 22; 3:13-16.

NOTES TO LEADERS: Not only will we stand out because of our hope, but also because of our holiness (separate from the world of sin) and love for one another.

If your friend sees that you have hope, how could you explain why you have hope from 1 Peter 1:3- 12

NOTES TO LEADERS: This is something that each person should be able to answer. In our striving culture that is ‘happiness seeking’ (every citizen has the right to be in the ‘pursuit of happiness,’) and no one is finding, we stand out. If what Jesus secured for us is a lock, is indestructible and irremovable, then this should be apparent to the people in our worlds.

DISCUSS

Where are those without Christ placing their hope? Why might this be happening?

NOTES TO LEADERS: I heard someone say that America has become a place ‘in the purchase of happiness’ instead of pursuit of happiness. It is easy for me to put my hope in happiness of things. Some find their hope in what they can accomplish or hope for the easy life. Some look to pleasing people (popularity / being liked). The list is long.

The question is ‘Why?’ I believe the answer is that nothing in this world fully satisfies. It is either disappointing when you achieve or receive OR that it doesn’t last very long. Nothing in this world is eternal and they know it. There’s a gnawing of the spirit that says, ‘This won’t last for very long.’

What helps people to see hope in us? What inhibits people from seeing hope in us?

NOTES TO LEADERS: See notes above.

How can we “always be prepared” to share the reason for our hope? (see 1 Peter 3:15) What might that look like when we do share?

NOTES TO LEADERS: I believe that we need to pursue the answer to this question. Too much is at stake. The greatest joy of my life has been to help others find hope in Christ. Therefore, here are my three essential ways to be prepared:

- **Pray and believe that God will work through me today. Walk through my day asking God to make me be a person of hope, of love, or faith. Then watch for the opening to love and serve.**
- **Listen to God in the Scriptures and prayer. In the Scriptures, God has given us a freight train of reasons to be people on hope through Christ. I need to be reminded often. I also need to remember that I am but dust, a broken person that God healed through Jesus. And when I pray, I am trusting God rather than myself. When I pray and listen, God speaks to me about how I can His and His ambassador.**
- **Put yourself in training. Being prepared for anything requires planning, effort to get ready, thinking. So study, learn, consider how you can answer people. They want hope – so learn how we can share this hope. (Good book = “God Space” by Doug Pollock.)**

May our Father give you wisdom and power as you encourage and equip people this week.

Steve