

HOPE FOR THE HEART

GROUP STUDY

- *Watch the video together.*
- *Take turns reading the paragraphs below. As you read, underline the ideas that capture your attention.*

Where do you place your hope? We often put our hope in people or things without much thought. We spend money hoping it will bring the happiness we long for. We take a job hoping it will provide the fulfillment we desire. We jump into a relationship hoping it will fill the emptiness we feel inside. None of these are bad in and of themselves. We all want stability and identity. We want to be valued and loved. But we get into trouble when we put unrealistic expectations on those things to bring us lasting hope.

We must be careful where we place our hope. Jeremiah 17:7 says, "But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence." When we trust God, we can have a confident hope. Only Jesus can provide hope for our hearts.

That's our first core value: "Hope for the heart is found in Jesus." When we place our hope in Jesus, He provides a confident hope that nothing else in this world can. He steps into our hopeless situation with His power and strength and leads us out of The Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37) and into New Beginnings (Isaiah 43).

This isn't a "hope for the best" mentality. Our hope is grounding in Jesus Christ, who conquered sin and death and the grave. There is no struggle or situation He can't resurrect, restore, and revive.

Think about your greatest frustration right now. A struggle or situation that's not changing. Often, when the situation isn't changing, we take matters into our own hands. More often than not, our actions and reactions make the situation worse, not better. When you feel helpless and hopeless, take your frustration to the Lord. Come before Him openly and honestly. Tell Him your frustrations and fears. The situation may not change around you. But everything will change within you. God will show up with His presence. He will stand with you, and He will bring you through whatever you might be facing. His presence has the power to resurrect, restore, and renew your confidence and hope.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

- *Choose something you underlined that's important to you. Take a moment to share with everyone why it is important.*

CORE PRACTICE

- ***Have someone in the group read the core practice and description below.***

One of the ways that we find hope for our heart is through the core practice of Daily Devotions.

God wants to speak to each of us and the main way He does that is through the Scriptures. Divine direction is found in Daily Devotions. Daily Devotions are divine moments to walk with God, talk with God, sit with God, and worship with God like a Father and friend. God wants to give you dreams, visions, and direction for your life. Most of us are busy and finding the time is difficult, but if we don't make the time, life will become difficult. Daily Devotions are a daily discipline. Just make sure they don't become a daily duty.

Studying the Bible can seem daunting, intimidating, and a bit overwhelming. That's why we have created some helpful tips, tools, and a Lord's Prayer guide. To learn more just go to corechurch.com/study.

Here are a few tips to help you:

- Make time each day to be with God. What time of day am I most alert and full of energy?
- Find a place free from distractions. Where can I be alone and what do I need to set aside to be fully engaged?
- Make it consistent each day. What do I need to do to make this a daily habit and rhythm in my life?

EVALUATION AND ACTION

- ***Complete the evaluation section below. Then take a moment to share with the group the answers you wrote down.***
- ***Remember that these core practices are not an effort to earn God's love, but to grow in your love for God.***
- ***Be honest in your evaluation. But be kind and graceful to yourself because God is kind and graceful to you.***

My Daily Devotions are struggling because _____

My Daily Devotions are strengthening because _____

My Daily Devotions are satisfying because _____

My time each day will be _____ My place will be _____

What specific action can you take to grow in your practice of Daily Devotions?

Who do you know that is consistent in their practice of Daily Devotions? What have you learned from this person?

Listen, learn, and grow: This week contact this person and let them know about their influence in your life.

CORE PRACTICE

- *Have someone in the group read the core practice and description below.*

Another way we find hope for our heart is through the core practice of Sunday Worship.

We gather, as the body of Christ, to express our praise, worship, and devotion to God. Sunday Worship is not about having an individual experience with God. We could do that at home. It's about the people of God, bringing the presence of God with them, and joining their spirits together with the Holy Spirit. As we gather, we learn a shared vision and mission from the scriptures that equips us to move together as the body of Christ. It's an opportunity for us to grow together in unity, love, and faith. We gather to experience God's presence and be equipped for his purpose.

EVALUATION AND ACTION

Complete the self-evaluation section below. Then take a moment to share with the group the answers you wrote down.

My Sunday Worship is struggling because _____

My Sunday Worship is strengthening because _____

My Sunday Worship is satisfying because _____

What specific action can you take to grow in your practice of Sunday Worship?

Who do you know that is consistent in their practice of Sunday worship? What have you learned from this person?

Listen, learn, and grow: This week contact this person and let them know about their influence in your life.

PERSONAL STUDY

Be prepared to discuss the following next week:

- *What action steps did you commit to and what were the outcomes?*
- *What results did you see from contacting the people who have influenced you in their Core Practices?*
- *What is one insight from one of the Daily Devotions?*