

INTRO & ICE BREAKER

Introduce yourself and answer this: Share a favorite movie or book where the main character(s) must overcome seemingly impossible odds in order to save the day.

RECAP & DISCUSSION

This week, Pastor Chris continued our series, “Get Your Hopes Up”, where he explained how followers of Jesus can find hope when facing hopeless situations. Constant exposure to news sources and people who complain about the difficult situations our world is facing can cause us to complain about our difficult circumstances and increase our anxiety. Our need to know everything happening in the world can lead us to doubt that God is in control. Instead of complaining, we need to trust in Jesus and ask the God of hope to fill us with his Holy Spirit, so we can endure the hardships of this life and bring him glory.

Discussion:

- Let’s spend a few moments sharing what stood out to us from the message on Sunday. What was new or unexpected? What impacted you the most? What did you talk about after service?

Pastor Chris begins his message by stating that it is hard to find hope when we feed on news and conversations that focus on the hopeless situations our world is facing. Our overwhelming circumstances can appear worse than ever, but people throughout history have endured tough times and experienced hopelessness. Our hardships can seem worse because we complain more and are surrounded by people who are quick to complain about their circumstances, too.

Discussion:

- In what ways has our world improved since the days of the Bible?
- Why is it easier to complain about the tough situations our world is currently facing?

Have someone read Romans 15:4-6, 13.

This passage reminds us that we serve the God of hope and that we can find encouragement in the stories of the Bible where God helped his people endure hardships; these stories produce grit and determination to withstand our hardships. We can also gain access to the hope God has to offer by following Jesus' example in extending grace, love, and truth to the people around us. With humility, we can ask God's Holy Spirit to fill us with joy and peace as we trust in him.

Discussion:

- Share a time, past or current, when you needed encouragement to endure a difficult situation. How did you find the strength to endure it?
- Think of a story from the Bible that reminds you of God's faithfulness. How could that story help you endure a hopeless situation you are currently facing or might face in the future?

Pastor Chris concludes his message by reminding us that our hope comes from our trust in God. We don't find our hope in something on earth, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. In addition to fellowship with the Holy Spirit, we can also apply this week's message by reading old Bible stories and being quick to admit when we are wrong; owning our mistakes is a sign of spiritual maturity.

Discussion:

- Spend a minute with the Holy Spirit; where do you need to seek forgiveness from God or from another person? Share ways your life group can encourage you in that area.
- Share an area where you see God at work. Where do you need God to fill you with hope this week?

ANNOUNCE

- Meet & Greet with Pastor Chris and Brenda is 4/30 after second service! Are you newer to Our City or know someone who is new to Our City? Pastor Chris and the Our City staff would love to meet you! Please fill out this form or send it to someone you know!
 - <https://ourcity.churchcenter.com/people/forms/46499>
- Baptism Sunday is on 5/7! If you're interested, please fill out the form below or go to the blue Next Steps wall on Sunday!
 - <https://ourcity.churchcenter.com/people/forms/29047>
- Growth Track 101 starts again on Sunday, May 7th during the 11am service!

PRAY

One of the things that we want to focus on each season of Life Groups is to get comfortable praying

out loud together. Close out your time together with prayer. If you're a newer Life Group, the leader can set an example by leading in prayer, but explain that we'll all be doing this over the next few weeks together. Explain that prayer is simply talking to God - there aren't perfect words to say. Next week, encourage someone else to close in prayer!

Are there any prayer requests or praise/prayer requests?

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