



# Small Group Study Guide

# **Finding Hope In Trying Times**

## **Small Group Study Guide**

Thank you for being willing to lead and care for people in your Small Group! This is not an easy task, but it is an important one. You are leading a group of people to help them engage in community, and encounter God together. This doesn't mean you have to be serious and solemn when you lead, it means that you get to help a group of people learn more of who God is, what He is about, and how we can follow God more fully in our life. This can be a fun and exhilarating adventure!

Below are some things that will help you in your role as the leader:

**Focus of the Series:** Have you noticed that there are some seasons in life that just seem like they are full of darkness? So far, 2020 has been like that. Even in August, with so many days in the 90's, we are going through a very dark time. And when light emerges from the darkness, we find hope. Our new series is called FINDING HOPE. The fuller title is: Finding Hope in Trying Times. Together we will learn how the gospel of Jesus Christ starts with Hope Rising in the midst of the darkest times.

**Structure of the Study:** The format of the study is broken down into three sections (Share, Study, Symbolize), progressing from easy-conversational questions, exploring the Bible passages, to personal reflection and thought. There are plenty of questions from which to choose from. Do not feel pressured to have to get through every single question in the study. The study was specifically designed in order that you can pick and choose the questions that will be most effective in navigating the discussion. The ultimate goal is for the group to engage in discussion to better understand God's grace together. If there is good dialogue happening, and you only get through a few questions, that's great! If you need more questions to help move the group along, then feel free to use whatever you need.

Some Tips For Leading The Study:

Your role is to be a facilitator. You do not need to be the in-house expert of the Bible, you simply need to lead the group in good discussion. This means speaking less yourself, and giving as many people in your group as possible a chance to share their thoughts and insights.

Silence is OK! Don't get nervous if no one answers the question right away. If too much time goes by (say, 45 seconds), ask if you need to repeat the question, or if the question was clear.

It's OK if you or the group does not have an answer to a question. If someone asks a difficult question, and the group is unsure of the answer, it's OK to table the question.

for a week in order to research the answer. Some of Apostle Paul's letters were responses to questions and problems in the church, and they waited months for an answer!

**Expect God to Show Up:** Most of your prep-time should be prayer-time. Ask God to be present in your group. Invite the Holy Spirit to be present in your group. Ask God to show you where He is working in your group. Pray for the challenging dynamics in the group. Allow God to lead your group's discussion by being open to what is coming to the surface in the discussion. Shepherd the group to engage with what God is doing. Pray that group members don't leave the same way they came!

**Honor Start/Stop Times.** Your group should agree together on when the group should start and end. Honor those times by beginning on-time, and manage the time so you don't go over.

## **Finding Hope: Week Two**

### **SCRIPTURE: Luke 4:14-30**

**The Big Idea:** Hope rises whenever we see light shining in the darkness. Jesus is God's light in the darkness.

### **Share**

Where is your hometown, and what do you like best about it?

What was the sign or symbol in your hometown of someone having "made it" [for example, a big house, being part of a certain club, playing a particular sport]?

### **Study**

Overview: Jesus gets rejected after returning to his hometown of Nazareth to preach.

Read the following verses: Luke 3:21, Luke 4:1, Luke 4:14, Luke 4:18 What is the common theme/element in each of the verses? What does this tell us about the source of Jesus' power?

According to verse 16 what is significant about the time and place where Jesus is preaching?

What are Jesus's 5 goals/missions [verses 18-19]?

How does Jesus fulfill that mission literally and spiritually?

In verse 23, what is Jesus saying when he says, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me :Physician, heal yourself"

What is Jesus saying through the Elijah and Elisha stories [verses 24-27]?

Why did the crowd turn from amazement [verse 22] to anger at Jesus [verse 28-29]?

### **Symbolize**

Which of the 5 mission goals of Jesus do you tend to give the most priority to, and which do you tend to neglect [preaching the gospel, helping people to be free to really live, performing acts of mercy, working for social justice/fairness, and encouraging disheartened people] ?

Who are the "Gentiles" God desires you to care for? How might you care for them?

