



Christmas at The Cove

Week 3 – Finding Hope This Christmas

Discussion Guide

The time between that last book of the Old Testament and the New Testament is referred to as “the 400 years of silence.” From the time that Isaiah prophesied of the virgin birth as a sign of the coming Messiah until the birth of Jesus was approximately 700 years. A steadfast hope that God is Who He says He is and will do what He says He will do, kept the Israelites looking for the Promised One. What are you waiting for today? What hope do you have or need?

What you will need: A Bible or your Bible app, a notebook, pen, and highlighter. The verses highlighted below are linked so that you can easily access them during your study time.

Jump Start

1. Everyone experiences the excitement and nerves of Christmas Eve. Tell a “couldn’t wait” story from your life or family.
2. **GET UP.** Read [Mark 1:35-37](#) and [Psalm 119:147](#). List some reasons to rise early. What should you do at that time? List some obstacles to this and practical ways to overcome them. What are some other ways or areas where you need to rise up in your life?
3. **PUT YOUR HOPE IN HIS WORDS. READ THE BIBLE.** It may seem simplistic to remind believers to read God’s Word, but we fall out of the habit. Read [Romans 15:4](#), [Hebrews 4:12](#), and [Psalm 119:28, 25](#). What do these verses tell us Scripture can do?
4. **WAIT FOR GOD. LISTEN FOR GOD.** For “get ‘r done” type people, this may be the most difficult part of finding hope and peace in God. Read [Psalm 62:5](#), [Romans 8:25](#), and [Isaiah 40:31](#). What is the word common to all these verses? Why (or is) this so hard? When we sit in silence, what happens? Share about a time when you waited, and God answered? As you listened, how did you hear Him? What are you waiting for right now?
5. **DECIDE TO PRAISE GOD AGAIN.** Read [Psalm 43:5](#) and [Luke 2:28-30](#). What do you do when you are overwhelmed, when you feel you’ve been waiting too long? How does praising God change things? Why is the word “again” important? What turmoil or long-deferred hope and prayer do you need to praise God through again so that you are once again encouraged to hope? Share some ways that you praise God in your life right now. Share some ways you need to start praising.

6. **SURROUND YOURSELF WITH HOPE-FILLED PEOPLE.** As a Life Group, discuss the atmosphere of your group meetings. How can you be more encouraging and committed to gathering together? Do you support one another and discuss hard issues? Do you “turn the corner” and end with faithful, hopeful, trusting prayer? Are people uplifted after you discuss and pray for their needs? This is a time for evaluation and commitment. **Action step:** verbally commit to clear your calendar and try to attend. If there are other believers in your life that God is telling you to reconnect with, tell your group.

Deeper

7. **Read [Romans 15:13](#).** How does this verse promise that this can still be a good season, maybe even the best season? What are the keys to that, as outlined in this passage? What are some practical things you do to stir up hope in your own heart?
8. **Read [Luke 2:25-35](#).** God spoke to Simeon and moved him to go to the Temple. What was important to Simeon? Would this meeting with him be important to Mary and Joseph? How? What does this have to do with your life? Does it encourage you?
9. Immediately after Mary, Joseph, and Jesus meet Simeon, they encounter Anna. **Read [Luke 2:36-38](#).** What do you notice about Anna’s life? How did that impact her ability to hear from God?