

HOPE

WEEK 3

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction:

We all have expectations: expectations of the weather, our family, and our holiday plans. Even more than that, we expect the world to work a certain way: we expect the rich to be first, the humble to be forgotten, and our facts to determine our futures. Fortunately, God has not made it his mission to fulfill our expectations. Instead, he offers us a radical reversal & an eternal hope through a relationship with Jesus. The hope of Jesus inspires unimaginable vision for our lives & for our world. The question that we have to wrestle with is “Are we willing to let God reverse our facts & redirect our futures?”.

Scripture:

Luke 1:46-49, 53 - “Mary responded, ‘Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior! For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed. For the Mighty One is holy, and he has done great things for me...He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away with empty hands.’”

Matthew 1:18-20, 24 - “Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. ‘Joseph, son of David,’ the angel said, ‘do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit’...When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced something incredible that you didn't see coming?
2. Mary & Joseph both had distinct encounters with God & both experienced radical reversals of the plans that they had for their lives. Before the angel ever gives these unexpected parents a new vision for their lives, he first offers them hope. What is it about hope that unlocks & inspires vision?
3. Before we see Mary & Joseph experience a reversal, we first see them express their willingness to be used by God. What role do you think that our willingness plays in how God uses us? Can he use us without our consent? Does our cooperation let him use us more?
 - How have you found this to be true in your own life?
4. When we experience the hope of Jesus, we have no choice but to see life in a different light.
 - How has the hope of Jesus inspired & changed your vision for our world?
 - For your life?
5. What is the next aspect of your life (no matter how big or small) that you need God to inspire vision for?

Take the Next Step:

We all have expectations & plans, but when we let Jesus dictate the vision for our lives, plans tend to change. In what way is God calling you to buy into a new plan, a radical reversal? How does God want to redirect your future?