

Getting Through What We're Going Through

Life Group Leaders Guide

Objective

This guide contains the information and questions you will need to lead a life group study during our current sermon series. Our aim is to spark Spirit-led, Bible-centered conversations that anyone can participate in regardless of how biblically literate they may or may not be. **The win** that we want you to experience is when your group members **connect** more closely with each other and with God so that they are encouraged to move forward in living out their faith.

Directions

The *Purpose* and *Move* sections are for the leader to read to the group to provide clarity. **Do not feel pressured to cover all the questions.** Decide which ones may work best for your group. You will see brief notes interspersed between groups of questions to help give the group context for their answers. The *Notes and Commentary* section (when included) is optional reading for the leader to get background information and better understanding of the passages before leading the discussion.

Series Overview

Our current circumstances of this pandemic are unprecedented in our times, and we are left wondering how we are going to get through it. Getting Through What We're Going Through is a series that shows us how God gets us through all seasons of life, and the proactive steps we can take to move with him.

Getting Through What We're Going Through Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic
1	4/19	Cry to God
2	4/26	Hope in God
3	5/3	Life Group Socials
4	5/10	B.L.E.S.S. for God

The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

Hope in God

The Big Idea

Hope in God gives us strength to live in the present.

Flow of Study

Icebreaker: What are you looking forward to the most after the stay-at-home restrictions are lifted?

Move #1: Let's begin by considering this week's sermon about hoping in God, and hope in general.

1. What stood out to you most from this week's sermon from Isaiah 40?

It has been said, "You can live for a month without food. You can live for three days without water. You can live for five minutes without air. But you can't live a second without hope."

2. Why is hope so critical for living?

Move #2: Next, let's consider the power of hope in God, specifically.

Read Isaiah 40:25-31 (NIV)

25 "To whom will you compare me?

Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.

26 Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens:

Who created all these?

He who brings out the starry host one by one
and calls forth each of them by name.

Because of his great power and mighty strength,
not one of them is missing.

27 Why do you complain, Jacob?

Why do you say, Israel,

"My way is hidden from the Lord;
my cause is disregarded by my God"?

28 Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.

29 He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.

30 Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;

31 but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

3. Sometimes when we struggle, what we want most is for someone to understand. Do you truly find comfort that God understands us (verse 28)? Why or why not?
4. What has made you most tired and weary (verses 29 and 30) during this season of Covid-19?
5. Share a time you experienced a renewal of strength when you hoped in the Lord (verse 31).
6. What do you find most difficult about hoping in the Lord in the midst of difficulty?
7. How can knowing who God is and what he has done bring you hope?

Move #3: Next, let's consider what it means to live securely in the present through hope in God.

Read Hebrews 6:10-20 (NIV)

10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. 11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. 12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

13 When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, 14 saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants." 15 And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

16 People swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. 17 Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. 18 God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. 19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

8. What does being diligent in our faith have to do with fully realizing our hope (verse 10-12)?
9. How does the promise God made Abraham give hope to us, his spiritual descendants, even today? (verses 13-14). What promises of God give you hope?

Note to Leader: God's faithfulness to keep his promise to Abraham shows us that we can trust him to keep his promises to us. Consider these promises: Matthew 11:28-30, Mark 10:27, John 16:33, John 14:2-3.

10. Why is it important that God's promises and oaths are unchangeable, and that it is impossible for him to lie (verses 17-18)?
11. In practical terms, what does it look like to actively "*take hold* of the hope set before us" (verse 18)?

Note: *The Message* words it this way: ". . . grab the promised hope with both hands and never let go."

12. How does the writer describe hope in verse 19? What does that image bring to mind for you?

Next Steps:

1. Memorize Isaiah 40:31 this week and repeat it to yourself as often as you need hope.

2. If you are seriously struggling in any way, find hope with others by checking out our Celebrate Recovery ministry (pointchurch.com/celebraterecovery).

Prayer: End your study with a time of praying with and for each other. Take requests, but be sure to pray also about what you've discussed today.

Notes and Commentary

The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.

On Hebrews 6

The word rendered "diligence" (*spoude*) means "eagerness, effort, haste" and suggests the state of being meaningfully engaged in something. Such diligence leads to a hope characterized by conviction or assurance. What is called for, moreover, is a perseverance by which the hearers will remain engaged in the work and love of God, thus possessing a confident hope until the end of their earthly journeys.

By contrast, the author does not want his readers to lapse into laziness, but rather "to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised." ...

For those oriented to the Jewish Scriptures the author could have chosen no greater example of faithful perseverance than father Abraham. Especially apropos, the moment at which Abraham offered his cherished son, Isaac, at Moriah (Gen. 22:1–18) forms the backdrop of the discussion at Hebrews 6:13–15. Abraham, caught in a crisis charged with yearnings for his son and even greater yearnings to obey God, believed that the promises of God would not fail (11:17–19). Consequently, he stayed the course of sacrifice through intense, prolonged testing and became a paradigmatic receptor of God's covenant promise. Our preacher to the Hebrews uses the heroic figure of Abraham, therefore, as an especially apt illustration to encourage a community struggling with perseverance under trial. ...

God's reason in giving the oath is twofold. (1) It shows the "unchanging nature of his purpose" in granting to the heirs their promised inheritance (v. 17)... In other words, God gives proof by his sworn affidavit that his will is immutable or "unchanging" (*ametatheton*), a word appearing in wills and contracts of the ancient world to speak of terms or conditions that could not be annulled. So the heirs need not worry that the terms of God's promised inheritance are going to change.

(2) God intends that his heirs, "who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us," might find strong (*ischyran*), or powerful, encouragement from his oath-making (v. 18). That we have "fled to take hold of [grasp] the hope" means that we have turned from our former lives of sin and despair and to Christ for salvation, stability, and security. The foundation for our encouragement, moreover, rests in the character of God, who cannot lie.

Because of his integrity, when God makes an oath he can be trusted to fulfill what he has promised. Not only is he powerful and eternal, but he is also of unquestionable character. As Numbers 23:19 says, "God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?" The implied answer to each of these rhetorical questions is a resounding "no!"