

Study Series: Mere Hope

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 Lesson Title: “Look In: Mere Hope’s Fountain”

(pp. 132-143)

Session 11

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The main point of this lesson is: The believer’s fountain of hope flows from the presence of Jesus in one’s life.

Focus on this goal: To help adults draw their hope from Jesus’s presence in their lives rather than the circumstances of their lives

Key Bible Passage: 1 Peter 1:3-9

Before the Session

1. Do an online search for “images amazing fountains.” Prepare to share some of the photos, either sending them to learners ahead of time or showing them in class. (Step 1)

2. Display a large sheet of paper. (Step 7 and the next two sessions)

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Explaining: Today we’re going to look at the fountain of hope. But before we dig into the Scripture, let’s look at a few photos of some literal fountains. Show the images, engaging learners in discussing their beauty and ingenuity.

Ask: What is the purpose of such a beautiful fountain? Explain that, though some fountains are aesthetic only, many are used in ponds or lakes to oxygenate the water, keeping it healthier. Say: Let’s keep these images and information in mind as we consider the fountain of hope today.

Step 2. Finding Hope Within

Invite a volunteer to read (or recite) Hebrews 11:1. Read from the first line of Day One (p. 132): “Belief, trust, and even hope in the unseen dwell at the core of the Christian life.”

Ask: Some people love the mystery and intrigue of the invisible aspects of faith; others struggle to find confidence in something they can’t see or touch. Which side do you fall on? As a group, consider the struggles and blessings that come from the invisible aspects of Christian faith.

Introduce today’s main point by reading the quote by Ched Spellman from Day One (p. 133).

Step 3. Hope Within Because He Lives, Part 1

Invite a volunteer to read 1 Peter 1:3-5. Explain that this exquisitely rich passage is packed with spiritual truths, but we’re going to explore four specific phrases in today’s study.

Draw attention to “born again” in the Scripture. Use the Day Two content (p. 134) to explain that “born again” is a verb in Greek, and points back to Nicodemus’s late-night meeting with Jesus. Invite volunteers to share what they remember of the encounter from John 3.

Read the definition for “regeneration” from Day Two (p. 135). Using the last paragraphs in Day Two (pp. 135-136), delineate God’s role in regeneration (He is the Initiator and Author) as well as our role (we must hear the gospel and believe), stressing that the concept itself is mysterious and impossible to know fully (see Deut. 29:29).

Step 4. Hope Within Because He Lives, Part 2

Read again 1 Peter 1:3-5. Instruct learners to circle the Day Three headings (pp. 136-137) drawn from these verses. Point out that these three phrases all describe different aspects of being born again. Use the content from Day Three (pp. 136-138) to walk through the three modifiers.

After discussing the three ask: Do most believers live out their regeneration like this? For those who don’t, why do you think that is? Keep reminding learners that this is the salvation promised to us and offered to us; if our salvation is hopeless or lifeless, we aren’t walking in Christ’s regeneration.

Step 5. Hope Within and Suffering, Part 1

Invite a volunteer to read 1 Peter 1:6-9 from his or her Bible. Ask: What thoughts likely go through most people’s minds when they experience a trial? According to this passage, how should Christians view trials differently from the rest of the world?

Point out that the Scripture gives us the freedom to grieve and struggle in the face of trials; we need not feel guilty for our feelings of inadequacy. Ask: What are the elements that give us strength through trials, according to these verses? (love, believing, rejoicing, salvation)

Use the Day Four (pp.138-140) to encourage learners that Christ in us allows us to endure trials.

Step 6. Hope Within and Suffering, Part 1

Use the opening two paragraphs of Day Five (pp. 140-141) to help learners consider the life, struggle, and faith of Peter, who wrote the focal Scripture this week (1 Pet. 1:3-9). Share how your own life mirrors that of Peter’s. (You also have been through struggles, but you continue to cling to the hope that Christ is in you and that He will carry you to eternity.)

Read 1 Peter 1:8, stressing the inexpressible joy Peter knew. Say: Regardless of the trials on the outside, we can still have that same inexpressible joy because Christ is on the inside.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

On the large piece of paper, draw a stick person in the center. Draw a very simple foundation below it (such as a horizontal line with two vertical supports) and label that propitiation. Say: Last week, we discussed that our foundation is the propitiation of Christ.

Draw a large heart in the chest area of your stick man, labeling it regeneration. Say:

Close with prayer, asking the Spirit to make these truths solid in your hearts and minds this week.

