



HOPE Church Summer 2020 Life Groups – week 1 study guide

Welcome to week 1 of your summer life group series. The ministry staff here at Hope Church is very glad to have you join us in this journey. Following God’s path in all seasons is the process He uses to shape our character to be more like Jesus. Our response, whether active or passive, can lead us to (or keep us from) both the character and personal benefits from realizing His blessings for us. While God wants to bless us and lead us, there are also consequences when we act on our own, even under stress. As you meditate upon the sermon’s message and the questions provided herein, think about how the truth of this week’s scripture can be applied within the context of your everyday life – even in the midst of a very difficult season like we are experiencing now.

This week’s sermon Scripture: **Exodus 14:8-12**

“8 And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. 9 The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. 10 When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. 11 They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? 12 Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” 13 And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. 14 The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

For our first session, please make sure you have viewed the July 19th sermon. It can be found at:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=724088111763542&id=1661395687475869&_rdar__ftid=724088111763542

Please be prepared to discuss your own insights into the following questions with the group:

- Please share 5 to 7 things about yourself that describe who you are (2 minutes max)
- How have you been dealing with the changes in your life caused by the coronavirus? Has anything in particular been difficult for you?
- Has the impact of these recent events had a positive or negative impact upon your spiritual life?



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Pastor Keith's sermon pointed out that our God does not do detours and that God has laid out a path for our lives. How we follow and embrace that path can make all the difference in what we gain from our unique path as well as whether we grasp all God has for us along our journey. When the path to that life does not follow what we think it should look like, we may start to believe God has taken us on a detour and we may choose to *tussle with God*.

1. Do you agree with Pastor Keith's statement, "God does not do detours"?
2. What does "tussling" with God look like for you?
 - Do you know what has been the result of this in your own spiritual life?
3. Has "tussling" with God impacted other parts of your life? How so?

Here are some specific questions to guide your reflection regarding this week's scripture:

1. Do you think the Israelite's reaction in this passage is natural? Is it a healthy or unhealthy response to a difficult situation?
2. What do you think is at the core of this reaction in the Israelites?
 - Do we have the same reactions to things in our lives? What does that look like for you?
 - What was the result in the Israelite's lives? Did God just let their constant lack of faith and grumbling go on without consequence?
3. "You only have to be silent." What do you think this means?
4. In your own life, when struggles or disappointment come, how do you tend to respond to them?
5. What does clinging to God's promises have to do with our responses to difficult situations?
6. What results have you seen when you do this in your own life?
7. What might be the negative results when you don't?
8. How can you begin to personally apply the principles shared in this week's sermon to your life?
(Note: Try to think in practical – even measurable – terms)