



socks & underwear Hope for the Holidays

#npsocksandunderwear

Week 2
2 of 3

December 16, 2018

Bottom Line: We need hope.

Icebreaker: What's the gift you hoped for most that you didn't get at Christmas? Is there a Christmas joke that is traditional in your family? (i.e. giving coal beautifully wrapped).

Key Verse: *I pray that God, who gives you hope, will keep you happy and full of peace as you believe in him. May you overflow with hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.* Romans 15:13

Ruth and Naomi were battling grief, loneliness, bitterness, and anger. We can all identify. Things happen that are the very things from which we prayed God would protect us. We miss out on the things we hoped and prayed and believed God to give us. We wonder if He's just like Santa—He didn't get the list we wrote. He surely didn't hear our prayers. He didn't come through as we believed. He let us down. There's no question, it's disappointing. In those moments, we tend to focus on our loss. We didn't get what we were hoping for and it feels like the end for us.

Ruth and Naomi found out that life doesn't have to be defined by our disappointments and loss. There is always room for hope. There is life on the other side of our hardest days and worst pain. God is always working when things seem bleakest. Ruth got a husband and a son, Naomi got a grandson, and they became part of the family tree of Jesus, the promised Messiah. Unbelievable turn-around in a story of heartbreak and loss. When they actually unwrapped the gift they had been given, it was better than they could have imagined.

Hope is what gets you through the disappointment—not just a hope that things will turn out right, but the hope that is based in Jesus Christ. He knows what you need. He knows the hurts and disappointments, and He knows they aren't the end for you. He wants to fill you with hope because if you have His hope, you will experience happiness and peace while you wait for His plan to come through. You can overflow with hope, not just get by, when you know that God is wise and loving enough to give you what you need, not what you want. He's still working.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

Who is the most intriguing character in the story of Ruth to you, and why? Orpah, Ruth, Naomi, or Boaz?

Have you ever been hurt so badly that you understand Naomi's rejection of her name that meant "pleasant" and wanted to be called "bitter"? Explain.

How have you experienced a loss that could define you? Have you rebounded from that or are you still struggling? If you rebounded, how?

"The experience of loss does not have to be the defining moment in our loss. Instead the defining moment can be our response to the loss." – Jerry Sittser (Discuss)

"We don't get to decide which parts we get to play in life. But we do get to decide HOW we are going to play the parts we are given." (Discuss)

LOOK IT OVER <<<

How would you define biblical hope? How is it different from wishing?

What's your part in trading "loss" for "redemption" in your story? What's God's part?

Jesus' family tree had both Rahab the prostitute and the pagan Moabite Ruth. What does that say to you? How does it inspire hope?

How is Jesus a guardian Redeemer? How has He been that to you?

What do you do when you are barely holding on to hope?

How can you use what you have experienced to transmit hope to others?

How do you need prayer and hope this holiday season?

NEXT STEPS

This week consider taking some next steps together as a group:

- 1) Covenant to pray for the prayer needs mentioned in the group.
- 2) Look for someone who needs hope, and invite them to a Christmas Eve service. Perhaps even arrange to meet them there.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: We need hope.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Ruth 1:12-13

Tuesday: Jeremiah 29:11

Wednesday: Psalm 147:11

Thursday: Job 14:7-9

Friday: Hebrews 6:18-19

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)