

Growth Group Leader Guide

This “growth group leader guide” is meant to be just that, a guide. Please feel free as the leader of your group to add questions or comments as you feel necessary to fit your group’s dynamics.

Also, don’t feel pressured to cover every question.

Ephesians – “The depth of God’s grace lived out in love.”

Please take some time and pray for COBC as we are looking for our next hire.

- Pray for wisdom for the elders as they move forward with the search.
- Pray for Thomas Neely and his family (wife Becca & daughter Elowen).

Ephesians 1:11-14

- What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.

3 – Points of Sunday’s Sermon

- **Hope of a Glorious Inheritance**
- **Hope to the Glory of God**
- **Hope that is Guaranteed**

I. Hope of a Glorious Inheritance

- What does every Christian live in the hope of? How is that hope best summed up?
- What is the inheritance that Paul mentions in Ephesians 1:11 & 14?
- **Read and discuss** 1 Peter 1:3-4.
- As a group explain what Galatians 4:7 means.
- How did we receive our inheritance? Read Titus 3:5-7 to help explain.
- **Read Romans 8:15-18** and answer the following questions.
 - What is significant about being joint heirs with Christ?

- What is the proof that we will be glorified (Romans 8:17)?
- What scriptures support the fact that Christians will suffer persecution?
- Why should Christians be willing to suffer (Romans 8:18)?
- **Read Eph. 1:11** and explain why we can be sure we will receive our inheritance.

II. Hope to the Glory of God

- **Read Eph. 1:12** and explain how Hope glorifies God.
- How did Adam & Eve's sin attack the Character of God?
- How does obedience out of faith & hope display the Goodness of God?
- Is it wrong to obey God because of a desire to be Joy-filled? Explain. Does that make your obedience self-centered? Why or why not?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** Use Hebrews 12:1-2 as an example.
- How does our pursuing joy in obedience glorify God?
- Read and discuss the following quote by C.S. Lewis.
 - If you asked 20 good men today what they thought the highest of the virtues, 19 of them would reply, Unselfishness. But if you asked almost any of the great Christians of old he would have replied, Love. You see what has happened? A negative term has been substituted for a positive, and this is of more than philological importance...
 - The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and nearly every description of what we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to desire.
 - If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our

desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

- Discuss the difference between living with the motive of selflessness versus living out of the motive to love. What does the Bible say is the highest and best motivation to obey God's commands?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** *Think of the 2 greatest commandments.*
- In day-to-day life do you purposefully obey with the Hope of future Joy? Why or why not?
- Read J. Campbell White's quote and discuss how this perspective would encourage us to boldly obey God.
 - Most men are not satisfied with the permanent output of their lives. Nothing can wholly satisfy the life of Christ within his followers except the adoption of Christ's purpose toward the world he came to redeem. Fame, pleasure and riches are but husks and ashes in contrast with the boundless and abiding joy of working with God for the fulfillment of his eternal plans. The men who are putting everything into Christ's undertaking are getting out of life its sweetest and most priceless rewards.
- What are some practical ways we could change our perspective on why we should obey?

III. Hope That is Guaranteed

Read Ephesians 1:13-14.

- What does it mean to be sealed with the promised Holy Spirit?
 - **Leaders Cheat:** *In antiquity people in authority (especially kings) would have a stamp or a unique mark that would identify them. They would pour soft wax on their correspondence or property, then stamp it with that unique mark as a seal. Sealing a correspondence or a letter made it clear that the authority of that person or King protected it. It really symbolized 3 things: ownership, authority, & security.*
- How is the Holy Spirit our guarantee (down payment) of our inheritance?