

Week Beginning: 19th April 2020

Worship Series: #1 in series

MOVE
together



lifegroups
live life abundantly

living sharing growing

Theme Verse

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

1 Peter 1:3-4

Remember This Week

You are on the front line of what God is doing in the world. God moves towards you in the Gospel to propel you outwards in the world with a living hope that protects, sustains and enables the real life of Jesus to transform every day.



We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

Psalm 33:20-22

Gracious God, as we navigate these uncertain, changing times, remind us again of how you move in love toward us, giving us a living hope which is our anchor, peace which is our rock and grace which is our refuge in all circumstances. Let the certain identity that we have in you, inspire us to move in hope in the world as a witness to the life that we have through the resurrection of your risen Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.



1. *Share your high and low of the last week?*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *What is your great hope for the world/your church/your family when we come out of this time caused by COVID-19*
4. *"Hope is hearing the melody of the resurrection. Faith is to dance to it." What does that quote say to you and in what ways have you been dancing with hope in the last week?*

Two heads are better than one. Together everyone achieves more. There's no "I" in "team" We are all in this together. If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. Great motivational slogans...but the truth is they point us to what many of us are missing in these days of isolation and distancing. When the church is told it is "non-essential" and we are pushed farther to the margins of society. When it's tempting to simply withdraw from the public square and leave the world to its own devices, Peter, the bold brash big fisherman speaks with great wisdom calling us to remember we are firmly planted in Christ not as isolated individuals but as a community - a gathered body, even if scattered, that together lives in the assurance of Christ's resurrection and into the hope that only the living Jesus can give. It's a living hope that we can share with the world, even if we're forced to stand at a distance from each other for a time.



Read 1 Peter 1:1-9

5. *What key words/thoughts/ideas/questions arise for you as you hear this text?*
6. *How does Peter describe his readers in the first two verses? Why is that important?*

At the time when Peter was writing - sometime in the early 60s AD, during the reign of the emperor, Nero - violent persecutions in the regions to which Peter was addressing his letter had not yet really broken out. Yes they would face martyrdom but it wasn't there yet. Instead, the people were facing social exclusion, social isolation. Their faith was being tested by various kinds of trials that caused them real grief.



The early Church had scattered far and wide and they no longer held a position of cultural influence and significance. They have been pushed to the fringes of things and marginalised. Not too dissimilar to what we are facing in this time of COVID-19 but also culturally over the last few years. Certainly the Church is not seen as an essential community service and Christians are not viewed by many in the community in a positive light. It's in a situation like this that Peter writes to the Churches. His goal - to help them and you discover how to live when you are in the minority, how to live faithfully as scattered exiles in the land.

7. *What is the biggest struggle you face in living out your Christian faith today?*
8. *In verses 3-6, Peter overwhelms the people with the blessings they have been given by God. There are at least six. What are they?*
9. *Which blessing do you most need to claim and remember at this time of your life?*

Often in times of struggle or difficulty, it's easy to batten down the hatches, put up the walls of self-preservation and withdraw from the world. As Christians we can do that too. But what's interesting is that Peter doesn't tell the early Christians to retreat in times of trial and testing, but rather to move out and engage with the world. He doesn't advocate creating a bubble around the Church or institutionalising it, but rather seeing it as an opportunity to **live a life on mission together in that context.**

10. *What does the phrase 'living hope' mean?*
11. *Verses 6-7 show that times of testing are a refining fire that burns off the impurities and shows the genuineness of faith. In what ways are you seeing the current situation as a refining process for the world, and in your own life?*
12. *How are you seeing this time of testing in the world as an opportunity to engage the community or people close to you in the mission of God? How can you do that more intentionally at this time?*
13. *How is the hope of the resurrection evident in the way you are living through this period of time? Explain.*
14. *Read Ephesians 1:18-20; Romans 15:4; Hebrews 10:23; 2 Corinthians 1:8-10. What encouragement do these verses give to you personally when going through trying times?*



God has chosen, called and equipped you to be part of something bigger than the small borders of your own life through the resurrection of Jesus. You have a promised inheritance. You have life now. You are scattered around the community and your mission is to connect people to the resurrection life of Jesus, that links their individual jigsaw piece of life with the bigger picture that God has for them.

15. *Where would you say your current levels are at when it comes to hope and to what degree is that a result to you feeling secure in your identity with God - as someone called, chosen, equipped and cleansed?*
16. *How can you as a LifeGroup move together in hope at this time?*
17. *Who have you noticed around you that needs a dose of 'living hope' at this time? How can you move toward them in hope to share hope in the weeks ahead?*



- * Praise God for his gift of life and hope in Jesus. Thank Jesus for moving in your life to give you a living hope that does not fade, spoil or pass away. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you move in resurrection hope in difficult times as a witness to the life he gives.
- * Pray for our world leaders at this time, that God would give wisdom to them to act generously but appropriately in this time of social exclusion and isolation.
- * Pray for those struggling with isolation at this time.
- * Pray for our health workers on the front line of fighting this virus that God would protect and uphold them.
- * Pray for those in the community who are living without hope, that they may come to know the hope of life with Jesus at this time.
- * Pray for all Churches that are venturing into streaming that God would use them to share his hope with a broader audience and that would lead to more and more coming to know life in Jesus.

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

Name, may you move daily in the hope of Jesus. Amen.

