

Morning Star Church
Small Group Study Guide
C2 Christmas, Session 2: Hope
December 5-6, 2009

Message Synopsis: Pastor Mike continued our Advent series on Countercultural Christmas (C2 Christmas). He talked about how our busy culture longs for hope, we seek out hundreds of ways to self-help hope into our lives but it doesn't work. God intervened into a hopeless world 2000 years ago in the birth of Jesus. Mike talked about how God brings hope to distressed lives through His Word. Maybe this Christmas we can sharpen our ears to pick up a message that runs up stream against our culture, maybe this year we can hear the hope of Christmas in a baby, Jesus Christ!

"...there was a priest by the name of Zechariah...His wife Elizabeth was from the family of Aaron. Both of them were good people and pleased the Lord God by obeying all that he had commanded. But they did not have children. Elizabeth could not have any, and both Zechariah and Elizabeth were already old. One day Zechariah's group of priests were on duty, and he was serving God as a priest...at once an angel from the Lord appeared to Zechariah at the right side of the altar. Zechariah was confused and afraid when he saw the angel. But the angel told him: Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayers. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son, and you must name him John...your son will be a great servant of the Lord...John will lead many people in Israel to turn back to the Lord their God. He will go ahead of the Lord with the same power and spirit that Elijah had...Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know this is going to happen? My wife and I are both very old." The angel responded, "I am Gabriel, God's servant, and I was sent to tell you this good news.

Luke 1:5-19, CEV

Additional passages to consider: Romans 5:1-5; 1 Peter 1:3; Isaiah 9:6-7

Questions for your small group to consider:

1. Pastor Mike talked about the reasons for a blue Christmas being over-commitments, limited financials, fractured relationships, unfulfilled dreams. Which one of those reasons have created a blue Christmas for you in the past?
2. The message of Christmas brought great hope to Zechariah, but he didn't believe it at first. Have there been times in your spiritual journey when you doubted God's ability to show up?
3. The prophecies about the coming Messiah came true in Jesus Christ. God's people waited a long time for God to give them a new word of hope, He did in Jesus Christ. How has knowing Christ brought hope to your life?
4. Share with your group your hope for this Christmas?

Prayer Requests

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Culture's Christmas

Hope is offered through advertisements and invitations.

Reasons for a Blue Christmas

1. overcommitted calendar
2. limited finances
3. fractured relationships
4. unrealized dreams & desires

Hope Springs (from the) Eternal!

Hope is born when I hear from God.

God's word has the capacity to create ...!

Hearing God's Word

B.C. Prophets and Angels

A.D. Holy Spirit and Bible

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." (Apostle Paul, Romans 5:1-5)

The Hope

1. God has a plan for my life!
2. God's plan is to prosper me!
3. God's plan is possible for me!

For further devotional study ...

December 7	Isaiah 9:6-7	December 10	Isaiah 7:14-15;
December 8	Micah 5:2;	December 11	Daniel 9:25
December 9	Galatians 4:4	December 12	Philippians 2:14-15;
		December 13	Isaiah 60:1-3