

Growth Group Questions
December 10, 2023
“The Gift of Hope”

Scripture:

Isaiah 11:1-10

¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—

³and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

⁵Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling^[a] together;
and a little child will lead them.

⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

⁹They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

Luke 1:46-53

⁴⁶And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

- ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.
- ⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
- ⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
- ⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
- ⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

Romans 15:12-13

- ¹² And again, Isaiah says,
“The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope.”^[a]
- ¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 22:1-5

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Questions:

1. List all the various ways you have heard the word “hope” used. How does the Biblical view of hope differ from these day-to-day uses of the word?
2. What do you see as the relationship between faith, trust, and hope?
3. What does the Bible tell us about hope?
4. In Isaiah 11:1-20, Isaiah uses the words “root,” “branch,” and “shoot” as metaphors in his prophecy of the coming Messiah. What do you see as the significance of the use of these three different words?
5. In Luke 1:46, Mary says: “My soul glorifies the Lord.” What do you think she meant when she began her song in that way?

6. Pastor Paul spoke of the “great reversal” that we see presented in both Luke 14:46-53 and in Isaiah 11:6-9. What is the “great reversal” and what does it mean for us as Christ’s followers?
7. Pastor Paul told us that everyone needs rest. What kind of rest do you think he was talking about? How does our hope in God lead us to this type of rest?
8. In 1834, Edward Mote wrote the hymn “My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less.” The first line of this hymn is: “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.” If someone were to ask you upon what your hope is based, how would you answer?
9. How can we strengthen or reassert our hope when times are difficult?