

Small Group Guide



When has someone's behavior during a difficult time made you curious about what gave them strength or hope?

Understanding the Message

1. **The sermon emphasized Paul's pattern of starting with Jesus rather than behavior modification. Why do you think this order matters?** How does starting with rules or moral expectations potentially hinder the gospel message?
2. **Read 1 Corinthians 15:19 together.** What does Paul mean when he says we would be "world-class fools" if our hope in Christ is only for this life? How does this perspective change the way we view suffering or sacrifice?
3. **The pastor said, "The enemy wants to suck us into debates with non-Christians over anything other than Jesus."** What are some common topics we get drawn into debating? How can we redirect those conversations back to Jesus?

Personal Reflection

4. **Think about your own faith journey.** Did someone argue you into faith, or did someone share Jesus with you? What made the difference?
5. **Read 1 Peter 3:14-17 together.** Peter says to "revere Christ as Lord" in our hearts even when facing hostility. What does this look like practically? How do we keep our eyes on Jesus when we're being criticized or opposed?
6. **The sermon stated that "enduring suffering with love and hope and grace is the primary way we share the good news."** Does this challenge your understanding of evangelism? How so?

Application and Action

7. **The pastor shared a story about a woman living contrary to Christian values who started attending church.** His response was, "I'm just telling her about Jesus." How does this approach differ from what you might have expected? When is it appropriate to address lifestyle issues with someone who is exploring faith?
8. **What are some current cultural hostilities or tensions that Christians face?** How can we respond in ways that make people curious about our hope rather than defensive about their positions?
9. **Peter says we should "always be prepared to give an answer...with gentleness and respect."** What is one way you can prepare this week to share the reason for your hope? Who in your life might be watching how you respond to difficulty?