

Small Group Guide THE PROMISE OF HIS LIFE

The Church at Brook Hills

Matt Mason

December 8, 2013

Isaiah 11:1-10

Use this resource as a tool to help Christ-followers move forward in their spiritual growth. To do this well requires that the Small Group Leader is building a relationship with the individuals in the small group and has identified where the people are in their relationship with God. Are they Christ-followers? Are they growing in Christ? If so, in what areas do they need to grow further? As disciple-makers, Small Group Leaders shepherd people to know the truth of Scripture, to understand why it matters, and to apply it to their lives. Small Group Leaders come alongside those whom they disciple to discover how loving God, loving each other, and loving those not yet in the Kingdom should shape how they live. The structure of this resource coincides with moving people from knowledge (Main Truth) to understanding (Why It Matters) to application (Now What Do We Do?). Utilize this Small Group Guide as a flexible teaching tool to inform your time together and not as a rigid task list.

GETTING STARTED

Welcome – Incorporate time for greeting one another, enjoying any refreshments, and making announcements. If guests are visiting, make introductions and help them feel welcomed. Ask for their contact information, so you can follow up with them.

Looking Back – Provide an opportunity for small group members to share what God is teaching them, how they are applying what they are learning, and how He has given them opportunities to share the gospel with others. This can be done as a whole group or in smaller groups. Do the people know each other well enough to share more than surface level information? How can time together be used to foster deeper relationships among those in the small group? Also, what are the struggles and needs of the people in the small group? How can the people in the small group sacrificially serve each other?

Looking Up – Hold prayer as fundamental to small group time rather than supplemental to it. Give adoration and thanksgiving to God in prayer. Submit yourself to Him, confessing sin. Petition God for personal needs and other requests. Pray for the disciple-making efforts of those in the group and for the salvation of the lost in each other's families, spheres of influence, and in the world. The Weekly Prayer Focus below can also be incorporated in the group's prayer time.

Weekly Prayer Focus (from Our Worship Guide)

- *Pray for Our Lives:* Praise God for the gift of His Word. Ask Him to help us discern how each verse and passage of Scripture we read celebrates His Son, Jesus Christ. Thank God for being able to focus on the hope of Christ in the midst of any difficulty we might face. Pray for all those living without hope, and ask how you might be a part of sharing the gospel with at least some of them. Ask the Spirit to constantly remind us of who Christ is as well as all that He has done and said during this busy season of the year.
- *Pray for Our City:* This week we are praying for several Christmas outreach initiatives by Brook Hills members toward the children and families living in Marks Village Public Housing Community in Gate City. We are also praying for Lakeside Baptist Church and Greg Corbin, Pastor.
- *Pray for Our World:* This week we are praying for Brook Hills' field partners who are making disciples, planting churches, and actively training others in North India. There has been rapid growth among believers in the last few years. Now our field partners are primarily working to train national believers to share the gospel and plant church in their communities. Join us this week as we pray for our field partners, local believers, and those who have yet to hear the gospel in India.

Small Group Guide THE PROMISE OF HIS LIFE

The Church at Brook Hills

Matt Mason

December 8, 2013

Isaiah 11:1-10

MAIN TRUTH

Message Outline

THE PROMISE OF HIS LIFE

Isaiah 11:1-10

The Hope of the People (11:1)

- This hope contradicts human intuition.
- This hope exposes every false hope.
- This hope points to a King and kingdom.

"I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." (Revelation 22:16)

The Heart of the King (11:2-5)

- This King is endowed with the Spirit.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. (Luke 2:52)

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. (Luke 2:46-47)

- This King sees the heart and contends for the weak.

"Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." (John 7:24)

"Many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man." (John 2:23b-24)

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

- This King loves righteousness.

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33)

- Jesus: The True and Better Prophet, Priest, and King
- A word about Advent prophecies: The Kingdom has come in part and will come in fullness.

The Hallmarks of the Kingdom (11:6-10)

- This Kingdom signals the end of evil and the establishment of everlasting peace.

"And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming." (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

Small Group Guide THE PROMISE OF HIS LIFE

The Church at Brook Hills

Matt Mason

December 8, 2013

Isaiah 11:1-10

Message Summary

In light of God's impending judgment on Judah by Assyria, Isaiah prophesied of their future hope, One who would come despite the destruction that had overtaken God's people. This Messiah would be an eternal King and would usher in God's kingdom. He would live with the wisdom, understanding, counsel, and fear of the Lord that only the Spirit of God can have, and He would fight for the weak and downcast. He would be perfect in righteousness and would ultimately bring judgment against all sin.

WHY IT MATTERS

Digging Deeper

Looking at the context of this passage is essential to understanding the hopeless future of the Israelites and how the coming of the Messiah was a work of God. Isaiah had been commanded by God to prophesy to Ahaz, a Davidic king of the kingdom of Judah, telling him not to align with the threatening king of Assyria (Isa. 7). In addition to not obeying the commands of God, Ahaz continued to rule in an evil way, even leading the people of Judah in idol worship. Therefore, Isaiah prophesied God's judgment, explaining that God would use Assyria to judge the people of Judah for their disobedience and idolatry (Isa. 10). In light of this judgment, the people of Judah were awaiting the impending invasion of a fiercely violent Assyria. They were waiting for God to cut down their pride and their very identity. Using the imagery of a fallen forest, Isaiah communicated that there were only stumps, a bare remnant of Judah that would be left after God's judgment. As such, the people of Judah would not be able to bring salvation to themselves. The sprout that would come from Jesse's stump would be all of God's working. **How does this metaphor also speak to our inability to bring salvation to ourselves?**

An interesting note concerning the Assyrians is that they were both instruments of God's judgment and recipients of God's judgment. It is a great illustration of the sensitive dance between God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. God allowed the Assyrians to invade His people in response to their great sin and rejection of Him as their God. However, the Assyrians were still held responsible for their evil against Judah. These aspects are also part of the story of Advent, in addition to Easter. **Discuss how God's sovereignty and man's responsibility play a role in the Advent story. How do they come together in the story of Christ as hope for salvation?**

Prophets most often issued prophecies of forthtelling—relaying God's commands and calling the recipients to repentance or obedience. At times, they also issued prophecies of foretelling—relaying events that would happen in the future. Today's passage in Isaiah is a foretelling prophecy that would send a thread of hope to the people of Judah. Yes, they would be judged, but God would neither forsake them nor forget His plan for them. He would bring a Messiah. When the Messiah came, He would usher in the kingdom of God on earth. Yet, the kingdom would not be fully complete. Isaiah's prophecy contained elements of the Messiah's coming and the Messiah's judgment at the end times. Thus, the Messiah would bring salvation, but He would ultimately set out His final judgment, revealing God's kingdom permanently in the lives of humankind. **How does this "already/not yet" truth about the kingdom of God affect how we view God's calling on our lives to make disciples?**

Small Group Guide THE PROMISE OF HIS LIFE

The Church at Brook Hills

Matt Mason

December 8, 2013

Isaiah 11:1-10

NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

Group Discussion & Application

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- Desolation was looming on the horizon for Judah. Isaiah told them that they would be destroyed to a point that even the name of their most treasured king would be forgotten. How does this judgment speak to the serious nature of sin and to humankind's utter inability to bring about their own hope?
- Judah had once put their hope in an earthly king, in alliances, and even in false gods. How did God's judgment and promise of salvation reveal the hopelessness of anything other than God?
- In today's culture, we often put hope in things that are not inherently evil. We may even place our hope in what we see as a blessing from God. What are the dangers of placing hope in blessings instead of the Foundation of our hope, the One who gives blessings—Christ? What are some of the things in which we often place our hope? School? Fitness? Marriage? Children? Careers? Food? Church? Success? How do we even begin to recognize where we have placed our hope?
- How can we focus on the hope of Christ this Christmas season instead of making false hopes a priority?
- Although not wrong to seek God's blessings, His purpose is not to make us happy or to give us everything we desire. How does this change the way that we pray?
- God sent His people hope in the promise of a Messiah—God Himself would come. How is the advent of our Savior more clearly understood in light of God's promise to send His Deliverer to His people? How does that change the way we view the relationship between Easter and Christmas?
- Living on the other side of Christ's first advent, we still live in hope of His coming (the second one). What does this kind of hope mean? How is it different from simply desiring or wishing for something? What does it look like on a day-to-day basis to live in hope of Christ's return?
- Hoping indicates that what has been promised has not happened yet. What does this indicate about the role of faith in the lives of God's people? What must we believe about the character of God to live hopefully in His promises?
- Isaiah described the coming Messiah as a King filled with the Spirit, perfectly just, and perfectly righteous. However, Christ did not come as a king in the tradition that Israel had experienced. Describe how His kingdom was much different from a political rule. What does this indicate about Jesus' purpose in coming in contrast to the people's perceived need?
- Isaiah's prophecies do not distinguish between Jesus' first and second coming and speak to the *already* and *not yet* nature of the Kingdom of God. How can living in this time of waiting, where God is sovereign but evil is still rampant, leave us tired and weary?
- How can we practically live in humility and victory knowing that Jesus has the power and will to bring an end to all hostility, evil, and suffering?