



# Small Groups

## *Small Group Discussion Guide*

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**When Life Seems Hopeless**  
**Part 3 of “Hope for the Heavy Heart”**  
**The Book of Job**  
*(Discussion Guide by Lisa Smith)*  
**Oct. 3-4, 2020**

We all experience discouragement and hopelessness on occasions and sometimes, it can feel overwhelming. The Bible acknowledges this human condition. Many of the Psalms talk about this struggle against depression and the need to remind ourselves as the Psalmist does in Psalm 62, “Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him.” There is probably no character who suffered more than Job. By examining the interactions between God and Job, we learn how we, like Job, can move from despair and hopelessness to faith and hope.

**Opening Question: What do you do when you feel discouraged? Is there someplace you go, someone you talk with, or something you like to eat, watch, read, or listen to?**

### **I. Worship, Submit, Trust**

*Psalm 43:5 (NIV) “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.”*

*Psalm 13:1-2 (NIV) “How long Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?”*

- 1. Like Job and many Psalmists, when we are discouraged, we tend to feel abandoned by God. What are some Biblical promises, stories or verses that reveal God’s presence is always with us, even when we don’t feel it?**
- 2. Pastor Shawn noted that when we don’t know what to do, we can still worship God because worship “releases our pain.”**
  - a. Why do you think worship helps the process of moving from depression to hope?**
  - b. Share an experience in which worship released your pain and increased your hope.**
- 3. What is an area of your life that you are tempted to control instead of turning over to God? What might help to release it to God and trust Him with it?**

## II. Discern, Reach Out, Accept

Psalm 119:49 (NIV) “Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.”

1 Peter 1:7 (NLT) “These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold – thought your faith is far more precious than mere gold.”

4. **Pastor Shawn encouraged us to embrace the truth about God and reject false ideas of God when we are feeling hopeless.**
  - a. **What are some common false ideas of God that we are tempted to believe when we are discouraged?**
  - b. **What are some truths about God’s character that gives you hope?**
5. **We need to “hold onto what we do know and let go of what we do not know.” What is something you have needed to hold onto OR something you’ve needed to let go of in this pandemic season?**
6. **When we are feeling hopeless, reaching out is usually the *last* thing we feel motivated to do. What helps you reach out to others during difficult times?**
  - a. **Who is your “go-to” person when you are feeling discouraged? What do they do that is helpful for you?**

## III. Hope

Psalm 71:14 (NIV) “As for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more.”

1 Peter 6:10 (MSG) “The suffering won’t last forever. It won’t be long before this generous God who has great plans for us in Christ – eternal and glorious plans they are! – will have you put together and on your feet for good.”

7. **God is always hopeful and always moving us forward, even when we feel stuck.**
  - a. **For you personally, how have you seen your relationship with God deepen through times of discouragement?**
  - b. **What has been a source of hope for you in this difficult 2020 year?**
8. **Who in your life needs your encouragement and words of hope this week?**

**Spend some time in prayer asking the Lord for one way you can grow in being a person who extends God’s hope to those who are discouraged.**