

CHAMPIONS of HOPE Small Group Study #2

"Revolution of Hope" Ephesians 2:1-10

I. Welcome

II. Introductions: Name your favorite musical group or artist

III. Purpose of the Small Group Study: *"To explore HOPE theologically and spiritually for everyday life."*

IV. Opening Prayer:

A prayer reflection inspired by Romans 4:18, where Paul writes that, *"Hoping against hope..."*

Week One and Two:

Hope nonetheless.

Hope despite.

Hope regardless.

Hope still.

Hope where we had ceased to hope.

Hope amid what threatens hope.

Hope with those who feed our hope.

Hope beyond what we had hoped.

Week Three and Four:

Hope that draws us past our limits.

Hope that defies expectations.

Hope that questions what we have known.

Hope that makes a way where there is none.

Hope that takes us past our fear.

Hope that calls us into life.

Hope that holds us beyond death.

Hope that blesses those to come.

Week Five: All of the Prayer Reflection

~ written by Jan L. Richardson, and posted on **The Painted Prayerbook**. <http://paintedprayerbook.com/>

V. Ice Breakers

- Share high and lows of the week
- Name and date 'revolutions' in history (as best as you can)
- What are the characteristics of a 'revolution'?

VI. Hope Quote: ... *"hope is the thing with feathers that pierces in the soul—and sings the tune with the words—and never stops—at all. And sweetest in the gale is heard—and sore must be the storm—that could abash the little bird, that kept so many warm."* Emily Dickinson

VII. Scripture Background on Ephesians:

The New Testament Book of Ephesians is a letter. St. Paul spent 2.5 years in the large and important city of Ephesus. The church in Ephesus had lost its way. They had become exclusive to people of different cultural backgrounds.

Paul's teachings on Jesus were revolutionary! His emphasis on salvation as a gift of grace and not earned was (and is) controversial! Paul moves religion from a static, far-off god to be appeased, to a God, who in Jesus Christ, came to save us by grace.

VIII. Scripture Study... Going Deeper

“REVOLUTION of HOPE”: Ephesians 2:1-10 (NRSV)

You were dead through the trespasses and sins ² in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. ³ All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵ even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ^[a]—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— ⁹ not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.

- What do you find “hopeful” in this Scripture?
- How does being showered with grace and kindness by Jesus so different than the way the world works? How is this a “revolution” in the way we think about God?
- How might the world look different if we were grace-filled and kind?
- How did Martin Luther and the Reformation change/revolutionize the world?
- “All we do is trust him enough to let him do it.” Why is trusting in God so hard for us? How could trusting in God bring about a revolution of hope?
- Was there anything in this week’s sermon that connected ‘hope’ to your life?

IX. Take-Away

- Consider ways that you can surrender and trust in God with confidence and hope

X. Good Morning/Good Night Prayer

Amazing and Mysterious God, you have revealed your love to us in Jesus and I am anchoring my life on the hope that is in your promise... your promise of presence, forgiveness, and love. May my trust in you ignite a revolution of hope! Amen.