

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions and scriptures are designed to help you take the next step.

**With your Bible or Youversion.com read Luke 2:8-14**

This should be a season of good news for all people. We are celebrating God's great gift of His Son, Jesus.

- Do you find it easy to be hopeful during the Christmas season? Why or why not?
- Do you believe that the angels were talking about you when they said, "on earth peace among those whom He favors"? Why or why not?

**With your Bible or Youversion.com read Job 17:15; Romans 15:13 and 1 Timothy 6:17**

- What do you use to measure God's favor? How's that working for you?
- Have you every placed your hope in something or someone that ended up letting you down? Have you don't this more than once?
- How easy do you find it to put your hope in God?
- Would you ever characterize your life as one that overflows with hope? Why, why not?

**Read Psalm 62:5 and Isaiah 40:31**

God invites us to know Him. In fact, the great message of Christmas is that God, in Jesus, took on flesh and became one of us.

- Does knowing God give you a sense of hope?
- When life get's stressful or stormy how quickly do you turn to Him for rest?
- Have you every experienced the promise found in Isaiah concerning those who hope in God? If so, how? If not, can you identify why?

**Read Psalm 119:81 and Lamentations 3:21-23**

The scriptures remind us to hide it in our hearts so that we might

not sin. But we also discover that the scripture does much more for us than just deal with our sin issue.

- What are some ways that scripture has been used in a difficult time in your life to bring hope?
- Which scriptures are most helpful to you during dark or stormy times?

**Read Romans 5:2-4, 8:28**

- Do you tend to focus on the negative events of your life or do those events help you to focus on God's purpose for your life?
- Think of an event in your life where God took a dark time and brought about good. Share that with your group. Was it easy going through the dark time? How do you see that time now in your life?

**Read Romans 12:12 and Jeremiah 29:11**

- Do you know God's purpose for your life?
- Are you living out that purpose? Why or why not?
- Are you glad about God's plans for you or do you struggle with where God is calling you? Why?

**My Next Step Today Is To . . .**

- Choose to trust God, putting my hope in Him.
- Accept God's process and purpose for my life, even when it means going through dark times.
- Commit to disciplines which help me experience the presence and promises of God.
- Meditate and/or memorize Romans 15:13

**Talk It Over with God:**

These prayer tips can guide your time alone with God each day. Praying with a friend or a small group might help you stick to it.

- This week find ways to pull aside and focus on God's presence, especially if things are dark and stormy around you? Praise Him during this time. If life is so difficult that you find it difficult to praise Him then put on some music that does that even while you are struggling.
- Ask God to guide you when it comes to His purpose for your life. If you already know that purpose pray that He will help you to stay on course.
- Ask God to help you as you bless others with "a little something extra" this week.