

HOW TO USE THIS GROUP GUIDE

CONNECT (10 MINS)

- Pick one or more of the warm-up questions and have all the group members give a response to the question(s).
- Make sure everybody gets a chance to speak. Don't let talkative people dominate the conversation, but graciously welcome everybody to participate.

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TRUTH (15-20 MIN)

- Read the scriptures and paragraphs in this section to clearly communicate what the Bible says about the week's topic.
- **"DISCUSS" sections:** These sections get people discussing the practical implications of the truth being discussed. Have one or two people give an answer, but don't spend too much time on these questions.

GRACE (5 MINS)

- Read the grace scripture and section which shows how the passage points to Jesus Christ and God's grace.
- This section is really important, because it shows that life change begins with the grace of God and not our own efforts.

CHANGE (10-15 MINS)

- Have everyone give an answer to each of the change questions.
- Take a good amount of time here. Really encourage people to think through how they can practically put truth into action.

PRAYER (10-15 MINS)

- Read through the prayer focus points and have one or two people in the group pray.
- Make sure not to rush through prayer. The things we want God to change in our lives will often happen through prayer.

DISCIPLESHIP CHECK-IN (2 MINS)

- This final portion aims to get people reading the Bible for themselves and thinking about engaging others with the gospel.

GROUP GUIDE
WEEK 4

SEASON 4
PEOPLE OF THE GOSPEL

ROMANS

CONNECT

*BREAK THE ICE AND
GET PEOPLE TALKING*

- What's changed in your weekly schedule during the quarantine?
- What's one thing somebody did for you during the past week that encouraged you?
- How is your emotional well being right now?

TRUTH

*UNDERSTAND AND DISCUSS
THE SCRIPTURE'S MEANING*

In chapter 15, Paul begins to wrap up his letter, and he brings the focus on himself, to show how the gospel is shaping his own plans and thoughts. The hope of the gospel is the eventual renewal of the whole world, and Paul is going to show us how that hope sends us into the world now. By owning this calling, we share in the apostolic hope of the gospel.

Where Apostolic Hope Thrives

READ: Romans 15:13-16

DISCUSS: What jumps out at you from these verses and why?

Paul wants the Roman Christians to be filled with hope. Notice, however, that Paul himself had a role in it. He encourages them, saying he's "satisfied" with their growth as disciples. But he's also written "boldly" about some areas where they needed correction. If the Roman Christians were going to be filled with hope, they needed encouragement and correction. The same is true for us. Hope doesn't thrive in isolation, and we will only be filled with the apostolic hope in the context of spiritual family, where we can be encouraged and corrected.

What Apostolic Hope Looks Like in Action

READ: Romans 15:17–28

DISCUSS: Why do you think it's important that apostolic hope gets put into action in "word and deed"?

Paul has two very important things on his mind—preaching the gospel in places where it hasn't been yet, and collecting financial aid for the church in Jerusalem. This exemplifies what Paul means when he says that apostolic hope is by "word and deed." Sent ones have a message to preach—the good news about Jesus Christ—and they have a way to bring it—compassionately and powerfully. In our worldwide moment of crisis, we are called to speak the message about Jesus, and we're called to meet the needs of those around us.

What Apostolic Hope Needs

READ: Romans 15:30–33

DISCUSS: Why do you think prayer is essential for believers who are sent into the world?

If anyone could've gone it alone as an apostle, you'd think it'd be Paul. Yet he asked that the Romans "strive in... prayers to God" for him. He knew that the spread of the good news about Jesus and the safety and provision for the church in Jerusalem, wasn't a matter of personal determination, but of God's power. As we take the apostolic hope into our neighborhoods, cities, and world, that mission needs to be bathed in prayer.

GRACE

SEE HOW THE PASSAGE CONNECTS TO JESUS

Notice how, for Paul, the reason for the apostolic hope always comes back to Jesus. Paul calls himself a "minister of Christ Jesus." He's proud of his work for God "in Christ Jesus," but only because of "what Christ has accomplished" through him. He appeals to them for prayer "by our Lord Jesus Christ." We are sent by Jesus to carry this hope into the world because Jesus was first sent to be our hope by his death and resurrection.

CHANGE

*APPLY THE PASSAGE TO OUR
THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS*

- How would you rate your level of hope right now? How can you rely on spiritual family and offer hope to spiritual family?
- Are you praying consistently, personally and with others? What's getting in the way?
- In what ways does Jesus's life, death, and resurrection strengthen your hope?

PRAYER

RESPOND TO THE PASSAGE IN PRAYER

- Pray for the advance of the gospel at this time when people's hope is shaken.
- Pray for wisdom and boldness to be a "sent one" in both word and deed.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're engaging with the gospel?



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