



Calvary LifeGroup Leader's Guide

Week of 10/17/21

Warm Up

LifeGroup leaders—This week's passage focuses in on God's promises. You could begin by asking your group to think of promises from Scripture that are especially meaningful to them. During your prayer time, have one person read one of the verses out loud, then other group members can prayerfully thank and praise God for the promises in the verse.

Here are some great verses for your prayer time if you're having trouble coming up with examples on your own:

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!
1 Chronicles. 16:34

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
James 1:17

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
Psalm 34:8

It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.
Deuteronomy 31:8

Icebreaker: What thoughts come to your mind when you hear people making promises today?

This is a central issue in our passage this week—God's promises. It would not be surprising if people mention how untrustworthy promises can be today as we think of examples from public figures that turn out to be unreliable.

Discussion Questions for Hebrews Chapter 6:13-20

Building Christ-centered communities of people fully devoted to loving God and loving others.

Read Hebrews 6:13-20 as a group, then select 2-3 questions from below to discuss together. For this week, it would be helpful to include 6:9-12 as well since this week's passage flows directly from those verses from the previous week.

1. The words of verse 14 are quoted from Genesis 22:16-17. (It may be helpful to read all Gen 22:1-18). Where in this account from Abraham's life do you see an example of faith and patience (from Heb 6:12)?

Gen 12-22 show that Abraham's life was a combination of trusting and failing to trust God's promises; however, this account with Isaac is remarkable. Abraham's faith is on display in his words recorded in verses 5-8. Previously, Abraham had waited 25 years for Isaac's birth and now he is waiting for God to provide in the moment in the face of this impossible situation.

2. Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to swear that something was true or take an oath to verify your words? What was the situation?

Answers could vary widely here. Examples might include everything from an informal yet earnest "cross my heart and hope to die" statement to a formal swearing to tell the truth in court. Marriage vows or an oath of office could be included here as well.

From verses 13-17, why does God swear by himself to Abraham?

Verse 17 says that God desired to "show more convincingly...the unchangeable character of his purpose." Commentators help explain this as God "stooping down" to our level to emphasize the truthfulness of his promise. His word is just as valid without an oath on top of it, yet he made an oath to inject an even greater confidence into us.

3. Promises are broken all too often and one culprit is that our human purposes can shift over time. Can you think of an example of when this might be true (or has been true in your life)?

An example could include marriage and divorce, financial commitments, or other agreements. Be aware of how these could be painful examples!

What difference does it make that God's purposes are unchanging (vv. 17-18)?

It's no accident that the word "unchangeable" is repeated twice in these verses. We don't have to worry that the motivation behind God's promises from the past will change at some point in the future. His promises reflect his purposes and those purposes are constant.

4. What do you think the author means when he describes himself and his listeners as "we who have fled for refuge" in verse 18?

It's helpful to remember that the context for Hebrews is increased pressure and threat of persecution on Christians. They might seek refuge by compromising their faith, which was warned against already in the book and this chapter. The refuge the author wants them to find, though, is the refuge that comes from trusting Christ even more. It may not alleviate their physical/material problems, but it will prove to be a refuge that only God can provide.

Building Christ-centered communities of people fully devoted to loving God and loving others.

What does this (or could this) look like in your life?

What does it mean for us to flee for refuge today? It might include how we choose to be in community together. We commit to reading and conforming our lives to Scripture. We make prayer the center of our lives. These are some examples.

5. When you read the descriptions of verses 18-19—"fled for refuge," "strong encouragement to hold fast," "sure and steadfast anchor"—what do these phrases suggest about what we should expect to experience as Christians?

They suggest a stormy life! They suggest challenges that cause us to grip tightly to what God has said and done. Sometimes our expectations for life as Christ-followers aren't realistic. We may think life should be full of ease and acceptance by others. Instead, these descriptions challenge us to see life in a way that isn't as well manicured or calm as our social media posts might indicate.

6. Hope is critical to our faith and patience. How do you think hope in the sense of this passage is different from other ways we might think of "hope"?

In simple terms, hope in Hebrews 6 is a matter of waiting, not wishing. Also, hope in this passage accounts for the sometimes harsh realities of life (i.e., full of storms). Hope in a more general sense of "wishful thinking" can be overly optimistic about the future rather than accounting for what's realistic. Biblical hope takes into account the thorns and thistles of life.

7. Verse 20 says that Jesus is our forerunner. In a world of "storms," what difference does it make that Jesus has gone before us?

Literally, he has gone before us into the throne room of God, signified by the Holy of Holies image of verses 19-20. Using the metaphorical language, we might say that Jesus has gone through the storm we all face, that he has overcome it, and that he knows how to deliver us through it as well.

Wrap Up

Consider doing what we suggested at the start above—including a time of giving thanks to God for the promises expressed in Scripture.