



Group Life Leader's Discussion Guide

Date: 5/4/2025

Sermon Title: Hope for the Future

Scripture: Isaiah 40:28-31

Gathering:

As you gather with one another be sure to greet each other and check-in. Ask and inquire from group members how their week has gone? Share that we will close with prayer requests at the end of group today.

OPENING PRAYER (Group leader or someone prays this prayer to open or create a similar prayer.)

Gracious and Everlasting God, we gather today celebrating the gift of hope, the strength You provide, and the promise You have for our future. We thank You for the way we have been reminded of Your boundless love and fresh possibilities. As we share and listen together, open our hearts to Your Word and Your dreams for the future. Strengthen our spirits and renew our hope. Amen.

Opening Question:

1. How do the stories we tell in our families and faith communities shape our identity and understanding of who we are?

Looking at Isaiah 40:28-31:

1. What words or images stand out to you most in this passage?
2. How does it speak to you personally when you are tired, discouraged, or uncertain about the future?
3. Isaiah says God is "the everlasting God" and "the Creator of the ends of the earth." How does believing in God's unchanging nature shape the way we face a changing world?
4. How is God's strength made perfect in our weakness, according to this passage?
5. Why is it sometimes hard to admit that we are weary or in need of help?
6. The word "wait" can imply patience, trust, and expectation. What might God be teaching us during seasons of waiting?
7. Isaiah uses powerful imagery: mounting up with wings like eagles, running without weariness, walking without fainting. Which of these images resonates most with your current spiritual journey, and why?

God's Role in Our Future:

8. The passage promises that those who wait for the Lord will renew their strength. What does "waiting for the Lord" look like in your life?
9. How can trusting God with the future give us hope today, especially when facing challenges?

Sermon Questions:

10. The sermon begins with the phrase "Do you not know? Have you not heard?" How does remembering our faith story and God's past actions help us in difficult times?
11. Pastor Allison mentions feeling like you're "surviving, not thriving." Can you share a time when you felt this way? How did your faith play a role in that situation?
12. How can we cultivate this mindset of thriving, or "abundant life" found in John 10:10?
13. Dr. Oliphint shares about the "waiting on the Lord" and reminds us that this is an active waiting, trusting in God, and being in the right position. What does it mean to you to wait actively rather than passively, and how might this change your approach to challenges in life?
14. What spiritual practices or 'exercises' do you engage in to prepare yourself for life's challenges, similar to how Dr. Oliphint used it in preparing for track meets?
15. How does the image of soaring like an eagle speak to you about relying on God's strength rather than your own? How can we balance our own efforts with trusting in God's grace to lift us up in times of difficulty and times we should lean into our faith?
16. The sermon emphasizes seeing the "whole landscape" of our lives. How can stepping back and gaining a broader perspective change how we approach challenges?

Applying it:

17. In what ways do you need God's renewing strength right now?
18. How might God be calling you to encourage or support someone younger in their walk with Christ?

CLOSING PRAYER (Be sure to share any prayer requests or praises and have someone close in prayer.)

God of all generations, thank You for renewing our strength when we are weary and filling us with hope when we feel uncertain. Thank You for the children and youth in our church family, for the light they bring, and the ways they teach us to trust You more. Help us to mount up well this week and soar with you in all of life. Send us out with renewed courage to be bearers of Your good news. Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND (or challenges for you this week)

1. This week, practice "active waiting" in an area of your life where you're seeking God's guidance. Journal about what actions you're taking and how you're trusting God in the process.
2. Find a way to visually represent the "soaring eagle" metaphor in your daily life (e.g., a picture, screensaver, or small figurine). Use it as a reminder of God's lifting power.
3. Share your faith story with someone this week, focusing on how God has been present in challenging times. This can help reinforce your own faith and encourage others.