

LEADERTREKS **SERMON SERIES****MARK OF A DISCIPLE**

Disciples of Christ have a living hope for salvation through faith in Jesus.

SCRIPTURE

1 PETER 1:3–13

SERMON OVERVIEW

Today we are starting the first lesson in our Be Prepared series and focusing on the hope Jesus brings to his people. Nothing on this earth can compare to the glorious reality that awaits those who trust in Jesus. Because Jesus is alive, our hope is alive.

OPENING**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

-
-

GAME AND ICE BREAKER QUESTION

- We recommend **Median Foods** or another screen game from **Deep Discipleship Games**.
- What's the longest you had to wait for something that you really wanted?

MESSAGE

Use the following teaching points and suggested illustrations as a starting point to build your message.

READ 1 PETER 1:3–5**POINT 1: Jesus provides a living and eternal hope**

Jesus is alive. His resurrection from the grave conquered death, so Jesus now lives eternally by the Father's side. Because our hope rests in Jesus, we have a living hope. Not only is it living, but it lives eternally with no chance of decline or decay.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about something you put your hope in that didn't work out—a friend let you down, you didn't get the job, or you didn't make the team.

What happened to me and [above illustration] will never happen with Jesus. Our living hope in Christ will never change because he will never die.

READ 1 PETER 1:6-7

POINT 2: Following God involves trials

Just because we choose to follow Jesus doesn't mean everything will go our way and we'll never have to face any struggles. The Old Testament prophets dealt with adversity. Jesus faced opposition everywhere he went. The apostles were persecuted. Jesus warned that we will "be hated" because of his name (Matt. 10:22). BUT these trials are only temporary (v. 6) and result in a tested and proven faith (v. 7).

When we go through trials and feel as though our faith is being tested, this is not for God's benefit. He doesn't allow opposition to come our way so that *he* knows our faith is genuine. He knows everything, so he already knows the strength of our faith. The testing of our faith proves to *us* the value of our faith and strengthens it with every trial. Every time our faith is tested, it grows stronger and is ready to face the next test.

READ 1 PETER 1:8-9

POINT 3: Faith in Jesus brings salvation

Even though we haven't physically seen Jesus, we can still put our faith in him. God's Word and our own experiences point to the truth of who Jesus is.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about something you believe to be true even though you can't physically see it—gravity, wind, love, George Washington.

There are plenty of things we can't see but can experience or see their effects. Jesus said we would be blessed for believing in him without being able to see him (John 20:29). This belief in a Christ we cannot see is called faith. But like many other things we can't see but believe in (gravity, love, happiness, etc.), we can see the effects and evidence of God all around us. Creation itself speaks to the glory and proof of a creative Creator (Rom. 1:20). And the outcome of our faith in Christ is "the salvation of your souls" (vs. 9).

CLOSING REFLECTION

Use this prompt to wrap up your message and leave your students with a challenge to apply.

- Why do you think it's important that our hope in Christ is a "living" hope?
- How do you think going through trials can make our faith stronger?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Pick a few questions from below to discuss. Close with prayer.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When was a time you looked forward to something? How did you feel? How did it end up?
- What is something you put your hope in other than Christ?
- What are the adjectives used to describe our inheritance?
- Why do you think our faith will be tested while we're on Earth?
- What are some obstacles to keeping our eyes on Jesus and our inheritance?
- If you are a Christ-follower, how is your life different from your friends who aren't?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- What is something you can do to demonstrate that you live for your future inheritance over present comforts?

PRAYER

Close by praying or invite someone to pray for your group.

Use this space to keep track of any prayer requests.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.

Any reference within this piece to Internet addresses of websites not under the administration of LeaderTreks is not to be taken as an endorsement of these websites by LeaderTreks; neither does LeaderTreks vouch for their content.