

LIFE Group Leader Handout

Mother's Day, May 13, 2018

Recovering Hope

Pastor Mike O'Connor

Scripture--1 Samuel 1 (verses 21-28 shown)

21 The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow. 22 But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, so that he may appear in the presence of the Lord and dwell there forever." 23 Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him; only, may the Lord establish his word." So the woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him. 24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. And the child was young. 25 Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. 27 For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. 28 Therefore I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord."

Main Idea--God Moves Hannah's Mountain

The Mountain that Needed Moving "...Hannah had no children." (v. 2)

The Obstacles to Moving this Mountain

- Lack of Support
"Am I not more to you than ten sons?" (v. 8)
- Length of the Trial
"And so it went on year by year." (v.7)
- The Silence of the Lord
"The Lord had closed her womb." (v. 6)

Lessons from Hannah

- She persevered in prayer.
"I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord." (v. 15)
- She provided what she promised.
"As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord." (v. 28)
- She prospered in the provision of the Lord.
"Indeed the Lord visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew in the presence of the Lord." (1 Samuel 2:21)

Application--

- In what ways do you identify with Hannah in her need? Did you name a specific mountain when you heard this message?
- How did Hannah's story instruct you?
- How did Hannah's experience encourage you?

UNLEASHING CREATIVE GROUP WORSHIP

By Reid Smith

Although everyone would agree worship is an essential part of our spiritual life, many leaders wrestle with how to incorporate it into their group time without it feeling forced or awkward. One of the ways you can “break the ice” is to help your group members expand their understanding of what worship can look like beyond the church service. For example, worship can mean being still before God and listening for His voice, reflecting on Psalms, or listing things that you are thankful for.

In other words, don't try to replicate a weekend worship service in your group. Rather, discover ways the people you circle up with can worship together that fits your group's unique dynamic and personality. Gradually introduce new forms of worship by offering a few suggestions from the list below and getting a sense as to which one your group resonates with the most.

- 1. Invite your group members to think of something that feels ordinary in their daily lives, but for which they are grateful.** This could include a roof over their head, daily provision for food, their spouse, or their job. Then have each person express their thanks for that person or thing within the group. After everyone shares, let your group know you just had a time of worship by humbling yourselves before God and giving thanks (Psalm 60).
- 2. Ask your group to reflect on the names of God found in Scripture.** Have them share the names of God that stand out to them. Simply Google “list of names of God in the Bible” if you'd like to give them a list to jump-start their thinking.
- 3. Play worship music and ponder the lyrics.** Choose a song or two that is especially meaningful to you. As you play it, have your group simply listen intently to the lyrics and reflect upon God's goodness. Afterwards, invite them to share a word or thought that struck them while listening. Be the first to share, and watch how the Lord uses this to help people express worshipful thanksgiving.
- 4. Read a Gospel account of Jesus' death and resurrection** and invite your group to reflect on God's love for each of them and the world. Expand on this by celebrating communion together.
- 5. Invite your group members to bring a picture** to your next meeting that's important to them and be prepared to share how it reflects God's faithfulness in their lives and what they're believing God for. Pray together afterwards.

Worship is a vital aspect of Biblical community, and the Holy Spirit will help you lead your group to God's throne of grace (Acts 2:47; Hebrews 4:14-16). As the group leader, be spontaneous and vulnerable in praising God because this will empower others to do the same when they're ready.