



the eND TIMES

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

- **BE COMFORTABLE WITH SILENCE.** Uncomfortable silences are bound to happen. It's okay! A long pause during a group discussion can be powerful. A *pause* gives space for quieter people to break into the conversation; silence allows people to figure out exactly what they would like to say.

Week 3: How to Prepare for The End Times

ICEBREAKER

What is something you had to do but wasn't prepared for? (Ex. Take a test, have a kid, etc.)

INTRODUCTION

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him (*John 3:17*). The End Times can be alarming and even scary. However, it is important to remember that Jesus is coming back for us, for His family, because He loves us. Scripture gives us certainty that Christ is coming back and in His glory He will judge the world and save all those who are faithful. This week we will seek comfort in God's Word to guide us in How to Prepare for the End Times.

READ |

We are born into the world yet we are called to not be of the world. Instead, we are taught to turn away from the temptation of sin in the world and focus on saving ourselves and others through the Word of God and our relationship with Christ.

Pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil people, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

--2 Thessalonians 3:2-5 (NIV)

We have been given a race and are called to run it as though we will win the prize (1 *Corinthians 9:24*). However, we are not running a race of the world but of the Word. Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear the Truth of Jesus, the author and Perfecter of our faith. We must keep our eyes fixed on Him, and call upon His strength and understanding that awards get distributed at the finish line.

Share how your relationship with Christ has been a source of strength in your race. Discuss how you can separate yourself from the temptation, sin, fear, stress and distraction of the world to better focus on living God's Word.

READ |

To ensure we run our race well, the bible gives us wisdom through scripture. In *Matthew 24* after warning that we will not know the hour of the Last Day and that it will come like a thief in the night, Jesus assures us:

*"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns." *Matthew 24:44-45 (NIV)**

Here are three ways we can be faithful and wise stewards of the gifts God has given us:

1) Remain active and put your God given spiritual gifts and talents to work.

Paul urges us to be diligent in doing good, and warns us not to be idle in the End Times.

"We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good.

--2 Thessalonians 3:2-5 (NIV)

God created you perfectly with plans and purposes for this life. God wants you to fulfill these plans by using your gifts and talents to build a life of faithful service to the Kingdom. Focus on His will for you. Serve and give your time for others, and He will steer you into using your gifts as talents for good.

2) Overcome adversity with prayer and discernment in the Holy Spirit.

Christ through His Word and sacrifice has given us all the tools we need to make it through the Last Day. While we will undoubtedly face adversity in our life, we are not meant to be discouraged.

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.
--2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

God wants us to be free of the debt, addiction and reliance on the world. To help set us free he gave us the Holy Spirit and the ability to focus on and harness its fruit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
--Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

To experience the fruit of the Spirit we are told to stay connected to the Vine (in relationship with Jesus) and grow in the Word (learning and obeying God's Word).

3) Trust in His will and do not fear, God is in control.

If you have given your life to Jesus Christ then you know that God is in control and you can relax. Stress and fear distract us from the good we are called to do.

But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. --2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 (NIV)

God chose you! And while salvation is a free gift, we must accept it through our faith in knowing Jesus and giving Him control over our lives. So, if you are unsure in your faith, if you do not have a relationship with Christ, or if there are still areas you haven't given Him control over, **now** is the time to commit.

Which of these three (above) is hardest for you to be consistent in? What can you start doing now to be a more wise and faithful servant/steward of God's grace?

READ I

Regardless of the End Times, every day we have until the Last Day, is a gift from God. Each day is an opportunity to make an impact and save another life. So the best way to prepare for the End Times is by fulfilling the **Great Commandment and Great Commission** listed below:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’
--Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always,” --Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

Praise God that you are in the right place for these times because New Hope Windward is guided by these in our vision to **Love God, Love People, Make Disciples**. So take every opportunity to do right by God, do good for others, invite them to church and share with them the difference that Jesus has made in your life. Don't stop short, go the extra mile and share the truth of our Salvation through Christ and His desire to show them the way.

Share how Jesus has made an impact in your life and how you can use that testimony to help bring others to Christ in preparation for the End Times.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

This week, focus your actions and intentions on how to better:

- Separate yourself from this sinful world to live in God's will for you.
- Use God's wisdom, gifts and talents to be more obedient and have more peace.
- Impact and save others living out the Great Commandment and Commission.

ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS (Optional):

Do the daily devotions this week on the next page.

CLOSE IN PRAYER:

God, You are in control. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit so that I can be a better vehicle for Your will in my life. Thank you for Your Word and giving Your only Son to be my life leader and the example of how I can overcome anything through You. Guide me and give me strength in my race and let my victories be a source of strength for others. Give me purpose in all my work and effort as I use them to glorify You. In Jesus' name, amen.



Make Time to be in God's WORD

Reading God's Word daily re-patterns the way you think & transforms your mind. Doing your daily devotions is an excellent way to record, process, & share what God is teaching you on a personal level. We do this using S.O.A.P.

- S - Scripture**
- O - Observation**
- A - Application**
- P - Prayer**

Here's an example:

S: *Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "*

--Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

O: Jesus said that we can't live on food alone. Our life is sustained through His Word.

A: Just as food is important to me, God's Word is even more because it will sustain me and give me the strength to live out my life.

P: Jesus, thank You for reminding me that I need Your Word to give me the wisdom & strength to follow You. Help me to make time to spend with You daily. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

SCRIPTURES FOR S.O.A.P.

Day 1:

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!

--1 Corinthians 9:24 (NLT)

Day 2:

God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

--Acts 1:8 (NIV)

Day 3:

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

--Psalm 23:4 (MEV)

Day 4:

If you love me, you will obey what I command. I will ask the Father. And he will give you another Friend to help you and to be with you forever. The Friend is the Spirit of truth.

--John 14:15-17 (NIV)

Day 5:

You didn't choose me, but I chose you. I have appointed you to go, to produce fruit that will last, and to ask the Father in my name to give you whatever you ask for.

--John 15:16 (GW)