

# Island Group Discussion Guide

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Week of August 24, 2025

THRIVING IN BABYLON • WEEK 4

HOPE • TITUS 2:11-14; 1 PETER 3:13-15



## OPENING PRAYER TIME

Begin your meeting with 10-15 minutes of prayer using these prompts:

- Thank God for His presence with us today and His faithfulness in all circumstances
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our discussion and help us understand biblical hope
- Pray for trust in God's character and sovereignty, even when we can't see His plan
- Invite Jesus to speak to each person about areas where they need to take steps of faith
- Ask for courage to obey God in both small and large things
- Pray for growing confidence in God's control over all situations

## DISCUSSION

- **Ice breaker:** Have you ever noticed how the same word can mean different things over time or to different people? Can you think of examples like "bad" meaning both negative and awesome?
- **Read Titus 2:11-14.** Pastor Charlie talked about how words change meaning over time. He compared 1 Corinthians 13 in modern translations (calling it "the love chapter") versus the King James Version (which would have been called "the charity chapter"). How does understanding the original meaning help us better understand Scripture?
- Just like the word "charity" has changed over time, the same thing has happened to the word "hope." Pastor Charlie said today hope means "*wishful thinking*" (*hoping your sports team wins*) or "*positive thinking and visualization*." How is biblical hope different from these modern definitions?
- Pastor Charlie explained that "*Daniel had a deep-seated confidence in God's character and sovereignty. He staked his life on it. It was the lens through which he evaluated circumstances, made decisions, and determined his actions.*" How would having this kind of hope change the way you approach daily decisions?
- **Read 1 Peter 3:13-15.** Pastor Charlie said biblical hope should influence four areas of our lives: ***be the organizing principle of our lives, influence our priorities, influence our moral standards, and influence our willingness to be persecuted.*** Which of these areas challenges you most?



- Pastor Charlie asked: *"Do you plan your life around the fact that God is in control and working for His good? Or do you live your life in fear?"* **Application question:** How would you honestly answer this question about your own life right now?
- Regarding priorities, Pastor Charlie asked: *"What are the things that are most important to us? Do they reflect God's priorities and God's character?"* What does your current schedule and spending reveal about your actual priorities?
- Pastor Charlie said, *"Are we absolutely certain of God's control? If so, then why should we fear persecution? Shouldn't it change what we are willing to endure for Jesus?"* How do you respond when your faith is challenged or criticized?
- **Read Daniel 1:1-2.** Pastor Charlie explained that *"growing in Biblical Hope is a Process"* - it's not automatic or overnight. He said, *"It's easy to assume that Daniel just started out with that kind of hope,"* but Daniel was probably *"a pretty average person"* who was *"freaked out"* when captivity happened. Why is it encouraging to know that Daniel's hope grew over time?
- Pastor Charlie emphasized that biblical hope doesn't come *"from studying the Bible, knowing theology"* but *"from obediently walking with God and experiencing His character, seeing His power, and feeling His faithfulness firsthand."* How have you personally experienced God's faithfulness through your own steps of obedience?
- Pastor Charlie said, *"When we obey in the small things, God shows up. When he does, our hope grows stronger."* **Application question:** What "small thing" might God be asking you to obey Him in?
- Pastor Charlie shared his entire testimony of how God led him and Kim step by step from engineering to youth ministry to church planting to hospice work to Island Church. He said, *"If you'd asked me"* at various points if he would take the next step, *"I'd have laughed and told you how stupid you were."* How does hearing testimonies like this encourage you about God's plan for your life?
- Larry Osborne said, ***"With each step along the way, our hope and confidence grow. Every time he solves a problem, walks us through a valley, or stands with us in the midst of a valley, we grow a little bit more like Daniel."*** How have you grown "more like Daniel" through difficult circumstances?
- Pastor Charlie said, *"Maybe today you don't feel like Daniel. Maybe your hope feels small. That's okay. You don't need lions' den faith today. You just need the courage to take your next step."* How does this encourage you if you feel like your faith is weak right now?
- **Application question:** Pastor Charlie said when fear whispers *"Don't take that step,"* we should remember that *"Satan wants you stuck in fear so you never get to see God show up."* What would it look like for you to trust God with your next step this week, despite your fears?

## CLOSING PRAYER TIME

Share prayer requests and concerns with the group. Be sure to write these down and send them to all group members so everyone can pray throughout the week, including those who were absent today.