

## **LIFE GROUP STUDY**

For the week of September 13, 2020 – For Life Groups or Personal Study

### **WHAT DOES IT SAY?**

Read Isaiah 35  
Summarize what it says.

Read Isaiah 35:3-4 three or four times, slowly, deliberately, one word at a time.  
What words stand out as you read these two verses?

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

What was, or do you imagine was, happening in the lives of those who first heard these words?

The prophet Isaiah has been very outspoken, and clear, about the disobedience of God's people (chapter 1 is an example of this), the arrogance of the enemies of God's people (chapters 15-24 are examples of this), and the judgment of God (chapter 34 is an example of this). Why are the words in 35:3-4 important for God's people at this time in their lives?

What other examples in the Old Testament offer the same encouragement, and affirm these same promises? (one suggestion: take a look at Joshua chapter 1)

### **WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?**

Think of a time when you were afraid, outnumbered, discouraged. What helped you get through that time?

Who do you turn to for help when you feel overwhelmed and hopeless? Write down one or two specific names and the qualities that makes them a source of strength and hope.

There are some who believe God promises that Christians will live a trouble-free life. Does that belief match the experiences of the real lives we encounter in the Bible? Read Jesus' words Matthew 6:34.

Consider a crisis you have recently gone through, or are currently in the middle of; how does, or why doesn't, today's passage (Isaiah 35:3-4) help?

September 13, 2020- Curt McFarland

**PRAYER REQUEST**

As I write this, September 11, 2020 I am reminded of that horrible morning in 2001. Fear grabbed on to me that day ... and on to our nation and world.

Fear has increased over the years since. I have heard the words fear or afraid more in these past months than I have at any other time in my life. Fear of an unseen virus. Fear of the destruction of the environment. Fear of fire and hurricane. Fear that one candidate or the other will win the election. Fear of the economy. Fear of the loss of a job. Fear of a health crisis ... So much fear. There is good reason to be afraid ... listen to the news! Fear sells newspapers, it makes us sell out our neighbors, it keeps us from listening, or responding to others with grace and love, it causes us to buy products that shamelessly promise to protect us but never do. That's not how we are supposed to live! For those who trust God, who love Jesus, trouble will come ... but it does not have the last word. It cannot capture or enslave us. Our savior has come. That takes a bit of reminding with all that is happening around us and to us.

Confronted by those who shouted, "Be afraid!", "Crucify Him" and "We have no king but Caesar," there was One who walked right into the heart of trouble. He faced the hostility of the crowd. He was led to a hill outside the city, stretched out His hands, said things like, "Father forgive them ...", "Into Thy hands I commit my spirit", and "It is finished." And with that act of love the worst of our fears lost all its power over us.

This Fall please consider joining our ten-week all church study (by joining a ten-week group) focused on the book "AHA." I've just started the book and see why Bill chose this for us as we return home!

As we spend time in prayer, let us ask God to meet us in the midst of the trouble we are, or have been, in. May we remember, when we find ourselves discouraged, that He is our source of strength and hope. When we find ourselves discouraged, when the lies of the evil one, the lies whispered in our ear, tell us everything is lost and we are alone, that we have no future, that all is dark, that the tears will never end, may we remember the words, and the Source, of today's passage, "He will come and save you."