



# SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

SERIES - HOPE FOR EVERYONE

WEEK 3 - HOPE IN DISTRESS

## MESSAGE BIG IDEA

God is with us wherever we go, so we do not need to be afraid in any situation or circumstance.

## SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-25

## POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

The word phobia comes from the Greek word phobos, meaning fear or horror. We're all aware of some of the most common ones, like those mentioned above, but there some more rare and surprising clinical phobias. For example, onomatophobia, fear of names or pogonophobia, fear of beards, and nephophobia, fear of clouds.

\*There is not a lot about Joseph contained in Scripture. Most of what is found in the Bible is right here in Matthew 1:18-25. But what we discover here is that Joseph was a man we would do well to imitate in many ways. The man whom God would choose to bring up His Son here on earth, in His formative years, would be vital to His plan. And even though there is not much information contained here, what we do find is that Joseph serves as a great example to us all.

\*We've heard this story time and time again, but have you ever paused to think about what it was like for Joseph? He was pledged to Mary. And in that day, to be pledged to marry was the equivalent of being married. You were more than engaged as we think about "engagement" in our culture. In Joseph and Mary's day, engagement was a done deal. To break off an engagement, you had to get divorced. So, Joseph and Mary were in effect 99% married when ***"it became clear that she was going to have a baby."*** Of course, Joseph knew he and Mary had never consummated their relationship. He knew he wasn't the father. Suddenly, the hopes and dreams he had for this relationship were blown apart and replaced with betrayal and infidelity. It's his worst fear coming true.

\*Joseph's faith here is pretty amazing. Many times, we read this story and think about it from Mary's perspective, but what about Joseph? His faith is inspiring, his trust is remarkable, and his strength is unshakable. Despite all he had to fear and all that could go wrong and blow up in his face, Joseph responds in faith, trusting God and obeying what God, through the angel, told him to do. In a very distressing situation, Joseph makes a conscious decision not to live in fear but instead move forward in faith!

## QUOTES

There are two primary forces in this world, fear, and faith. Fear can move you to destructiveness or sickness, or failure. Only in rare instances will it motivate you to accomplishment. But faith is a greater force. Faith can drive itself into your consciousness and set you free from fear forever. – Norman Vincent Peale

Fear is a self-imposed prison that will keep you from becoming what God intends for you to be. You must move against it with the weapons of faith and love. – Rick Warren