11.08.22026 Small Group Bible Study Lesson: “Choose This Day—Remember, Tell, and Wait in Hope”

Theme: Covenant faithfulness and watchful hope. God’s saving story calls us to remember his grace, choose to serve him, pass the faith to the next generation, grieve with resurrection hope, and remain ready for Christ’s return.

Scripture Focus: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

Big Idea: Because God has acted faithfully in history and promises resurrection hope in Christ, his people are called to respond with concrete covenant loyalty, intergenerational witness, and patient readiness.

Summary

In Joshua 24, Joshua gathers Israel at Shechem and retells God’s saving acts before calling the people to “choose this day whom you will serve.” Israel renews covenant loyalty and puts away foreign gods. Psalm 78 calls God’s people to hear and tell the story of God’s faithfulness so that the next generation will set their hope in God. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 comforts believers who grieve: because Jesus died and rose, those who die in Christ are not lost, and all believers will be gathered with him. Matthew 25:1-13 calls disciples to watchful readiness during the delay of Christ’s return—wise waiting is sustained faithfulness, not last-minute panic.

Together these passages ask: Will we remember God’s story, choose faithful service, tell it to others, grieve with hope, and stay ready for Christ?

Key Points

1. Grace comes before choice.

Joshua 24:1-3a reminds Israel that God took the initiative with Abraham. The call to “choose” is a response to God’s prior faithfulness, not a way to earn his love.

2. Covenant loyalty is concrete.

Joshua 24:14-25 calls for sincere and faithful service, putting away "foreign gods." Choosing God is not merely an inward feeling; it involves public commitment and practical reordering of life.

3. Remembering is for telling.

Psalm 78:1-7 links memory and mission. The faith is passed on when one generation tells the next about God's deeds, so that hope is placed in God rather than forgotten.

4. Christian grief is hopeful, not hopeless.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 grounds comfort in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The dead in Christ are not abandoned; they will be raised and gathered with him. Paul's aim is mutual encouragement, not date-setting or speculation.

5. Readiness means sustained faithfulness during delay.

In Matthew 25:1-13, the wise bridesmaids are prepared for the bridegroom's delay. The parable warns against presuming on time and calls for watchful, persevering discipleship. The main point is readiness—not a last-minute religious transaction.

6. The passages form a rhythm:

Remember God's story → choose faithful service → tell the next generation → grieve with resurrection hope → wait with ready lives.

Discussion Questions

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25

- Why does Joshua retell Israel's history before asking the people to choose whom they will serve? What does this teach us about grace and response?

- What "foreign gods" compete for our loyalty today—things like comfort, security, status, entertainment, or self-reliance? What would it look like to "put them away"?

- Joshua calls for service "in sincerity and in faithfulness." How can a small group help one another make concrete covenant commitments?

Psalm 78:1-7

- Who first told you the story of God's faithfulness? What made that witness memorable?

- What happens to faith when one generation fails to tell the next? How can we be intentional about intergenerational witness?

- What practices help us remember God's deeds—journaling, testimony, family worship, corporate worship, or sharing answered prayers?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- How does Paul's comfort differ from empty reassurance or simple "they're in a better place" language?

- Why is the resurrection of Jesus central to Christian hope? How does this passage help us grieve with hope?

- What should we say—and not say—to someone who is grieving? How can this group encourage one another with these words?

Matthew 25:1-13

- What distinguishes the wise from the foolish bridesmaids? Why does the delay matter?

- How is readiness more than a last-minute decision? What does a "ready" Christian life look like over time?

- How does this parable challenge both complacency and anxious striving?

Integration

- How do these passages correct both passive waiting and frantic effort?

- Where is God inviting you to choose, tell, hope, or watch this week?

Application

Personal application

- Write a short "faithfulness timeline" of God's work in your life and share one part with someone else.

- Identify one “foreign god” or competing loyalty and take one concrete step to reorder that area toward Christ.

- Grieve with hope: pray for someone who is mourning, send an encouraging note, or share 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 gently.

- Practice watchful readiness: each day ask, “Am I living now in a way that makes Christ’s return a hope I’m ready for?”

Group application

- Plan a simple testimony evening where younger believers or children can hear stories of God’s faithfulness from older members.

- Create a care plan for grieving members—meals, prayer, ongoing presence.

- As a group, write a short covenant statement: “As a small group, we will remember God’s story, reject competing loyalties, tell the next generation, and wait with ready hope.”

Weekly challenge

Choose one act of covenant loyalty and one act of hope: for example, remove a competing habit and replace it with prayer, or share a story of God’s faithfulness with a child or younger believer.

Closing Prayer

Faithful God, thank you for your saving story. Help us remember your grace, choose to serve you with sincere hearts, and tell the next generation of your faithfulness. Comfort us in grief with the resurrection hope of Jesus, and keep us watchful and ready for his return. Form us into a people of covenant loyalty and patient hope, for your glory. Amen.