

Holding On to HOPE

How Believing in a Never-Give-Up
God Can Change Your Life



7 SESSION SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



Seventh-day Adventist Church
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

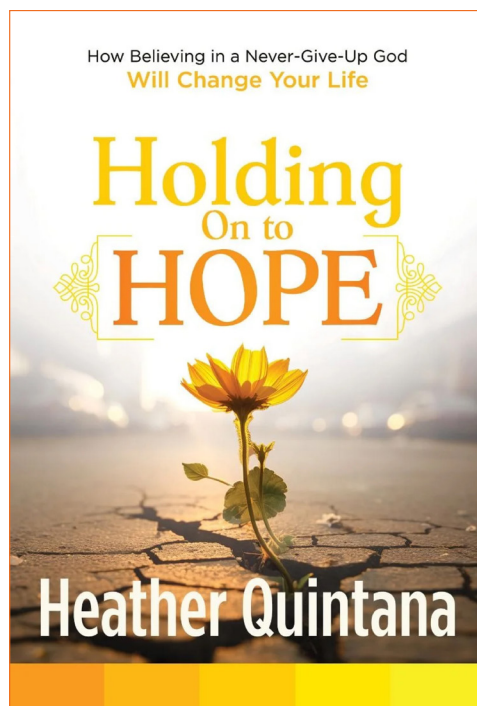
Sessions

1. **Get Your Hopes Up!**
[Corresponds with Chapters 1-5]
2. **Don't Give Up on Hopeless Situations**
[Corresponds with Chapters 6-7]
3. **Don't Give Up on Your Dreams**
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4. **Don't Give Up on People**
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5. **Don't Give Up on Your Health and Well-Being**
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6. **Don't Give Up on Church**
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7. **Don't Give Up on God**
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This small group study is created as a complement to the book *Holding on to Hope: How Believing in a Never-Give-Up-God Can Change Your Life* by Heather Quintana. It provides an opportunity to discuss some of the topics addressed in the book—but if you haven't read the book, not to worry! This study is designed to be enjoyed by anyone, including those who haven't read the book.

The study is divided into seven sessions, which correspond with different chapters in the book.



Each of the seven sessions include the following sections:

Getting to Know Each Other

This light-hearted question will open the discussion in a way that helps participants get to know each other better. It can help break the ice before jumping into heavier topics.

Discussion Questions

Each session is designed to create a natural conversation. We've woven together Bible verses, going-deeper questions, and practical application to help create the rhythm of a discussion among friends.

How to Make Hope a Habit

This section encourages individuals to take action on what they've discussed. Each call to action will help people identify a specific thing they can do to make hope a part of their daily life.

Quiet Moments of Hope

These journal prompts and questions give participants the opportunity for self-reflection. They are designed to be done individually rather than as a group. These can be done before each session, as preparation for the discussion, or after each session, as a way to personalize and reinforce what has been discussed.

Session 1

Get Your Hopes Up!

[Corresponds with Chapters 1-5, *The Hidden Promise of God*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. Show a photo from your phone that makes you feel happy and hopeful.

Discussion Questions

2. Can you relate to this common saying: "Don't get your hopes up—you don't want to end up disappointed"? Why or why not?
3. In which of the following areas do you find it most tempting to give up hope?
 - a. Difficult circumstances
 - b. Difficult people
 - c. Your health
 - d. The dreams you have for your life
 - e. Church life
 - f. God
4. **Read Psalm 39:7.** According to this verse, where should we place our hope? What are some things in which we can mistakenly place our hope?
5. **Read Hebrews 11:1.** What is the connection between hope and faith? Can you have one without the other?
6. Waiting is one of the things that makes it difficult to hold on to hope. **Read Psalm 33:20 and Psalm 27:14.** According to these verses, how are waiting and hoping intertwined?
7. There are often misunderstandings about what hope *is* and *isn't*. What does hope mean to you? What are some misunderstandings about hope?
8. Do you find yourself more or less hopeless as you get older? Why?
9. **Read Philippians 3:13-14.** Sometimes hoping for the future brings up regrets about the past. We're tempted to think that our future would be better *if* we had made different choices in life. How can we focus our thoughts on hope instead of regret?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Is there something or someone God is asking you to not give up on? What is one thing you can do this week to begin to reclaim hopefulness in that area of your life?

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

Journal, reflect, or pray about this:

According to Proverbs 13:12, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life."

- Have I become heartsick and hopeless in any area of my life? What Bible verse or message from this study gives me hope about this area of my life?

Session 2

Don't Give Up on Hopeless Situations [Corresponds with Chapter 7 of *Holding on to Hope*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. On a scale of 1-5, where are you on the hope spectrum (if 5 is full of hope, and 1 is barely holding on)?

Discussion Questions

2. When have you watched someone quit something even though you knew they had the potential to be good at it?
3. Why do you think it is easier for us to be hopeful for others than for ourselves?
4. **Read 1 Samuel 16:7.** What's the difference in how God looks at things and how we look at things? Share a time when you misjudged a situation or person based on appearances.
5. When Jesus came to Earth, He was not what people expected. Were there expectations based on their needs? On Scripture? What expectations have you put on Jesus?
6. **Read Romans 5:1-5.** How are hope and suffering connected? According to verses 3-4, how is it that suffering can give us *more* hope instead of *less* hope?
7. In the darkest moments of your life—during times of grief, loss, or despair—what have been some sources of hope for you?
8. **Read Isaiah 61:3.** Describe a time when you saw God bring something good out of a situation that seemed hopeless.
9. When someone else is feeling hopeless, how can we hold on to hope for them? How can we let them “borrow” hope from us?
10. **Read Hebrews 6:19.** What does it mean to have hope as an “anchor for the soul”?
11. In what areas of life do you need more hope right now?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Take the "Three Good Things" Challenge. Every evening, for at least two weeks, write down three things that went well that day. The exercise will help you savor the small pleasures in life and will remind you that even difficult days can hold flashes of mercy and goodness.

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

Journal, reflect, or pray about this:

- Think back on a time in your life when you felt completely hopeless. Write a letter to your past self during that time when you were experiencing hopelessness. Encourage her and tell her what you wish she had known then.
- Now think about a current situation in which you could use more hope. Write down what hopeful message you sense God wants you to know right now.



Session 3

Don't Give Up on Your Dreams

[Corresponds with Chapter 8 of *Holding on to Hope*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grow up?

Discussion Questions

2. When it comes to pursuing a dream, which of these common excuses do you relate to the most?
 - a. There are too many "too's" (e.g., It's too late. It takes too much money. It takes too much time.)
 - b. Other people are already doing it better than I could.
 - c. I don't know if it is God's idea or mine.
 - d. I can't do it.
 - e. I tried and it didn't work.
3. **Read Proverbs 3:5-6.** How can you tell the difference between a personal ambition and a God-given dream?
4. Can you think of a time in your life when you had a dream for something (such as a specific job, house, relationship, or opportunity) but it didn't work out, and now you're glad it didn't happen? What does this teach us about trusting God with our dreams?
5. **Read Proverbs 16:3.** How does this verse give you hope as you pursue your dreams? If a plan doesn't succeed, does that mean it wasn't from God?
6. Do you think everyone has a God-given dream? If so, why do some people struggle to know what it is?
7. **Read Proverbs 16:9.** What is the relationship between our plans and God's direction?
8. Who in your life encourages you to follow your God-given dreams? Who could you encourage to follow their God-given dreams?
9. **Read Ephesians 2:10.** According to this verse, God designed everyone to do good things in the world. Share one of your God-given dreams with the group.
10. If you could ask God one question about your dreams, what would it be?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Identifying your spiritual gifts can help you discover some of the meaningful plans God has for you. Take a spiritual gifts assessment to find out more about the ways God has uniquely designed you to contribute to the world and bless others.

Spiritual Gift Self-Assessment at the end of the document.

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

Create a Dream Plan. Answer the following questions to get started:

- What dreams do I carry in my heart?
- What is God calling me to do for His glory?
- What excuses are holding me back?
- If there are dreams or goals I have abandoned, did I give up too soon? If I pursue those dreams again, what can I do differently next time to change the outcome?
- What steps can I take to move in the direction of my God-given dreams?



Session 4

Don't Give Up on People

[Corresponds with Chapter 9 of *Holding on to Hope*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. Tell us about one of your favorite people.

Discussion Questions

Read Romans 12:9-21. In these verses, Paul gives practical counsel on how to have healthy relationships.

2. What pieces of advice in this passage do you think are especially helpful when dealing with others?
3. Which of these commands is easiest for you? Which is the most difficult?
4. What relationship in your life needs this kind of love the most right now?
5. Consider how God treats us when we make mistakes. What can that teach us about how to treat others when they are making bad decisions or not living up to their potential?

Read Matthew 22:34-40.

6. What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself? Considering we are called to love others as ourselves, do you think it is more difficult for us to show love to others if we have a hard time showing love to ourselves?
7. Why did Jesus say to first love God and then to focus on loving others?

Setting Boundaries

8. While the Bible calls us to love everyone, it does not say we must be in close relationships with everyone. What do **the following verses** teach us about setting healthy boundaries with others?
 - Matthew 5:37
 - Proverbs 22:3
 - 1 Corinthians 15:33
 - Titus 3:10
 - Hebrews 12:11
9. What is the most important takeaway for you about boundaries with others?
10. **Read Philippians 1:6.** How can this verse help us not give up on others? On ourselves?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Who comes to mind when you think about not giving up on people? Think of a way you can show that person love this week, whether it is praying for them or sending them an encouraging card or text, etc.

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

We can't change other people, but we can love them. We learn to love as we follow God.

- Write out 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, replacing the word "love" with your name. (For example, "Lisa is patient, Lisa is kind. She does not envy, she does not boast.")
- Then read through what you wrote and identify the sentences that seem the least true about you. Which of these areas do you struggle with the most? For example, if you read "She does not envy," does it make you realize that is an area you need growth? Once you identify the areas in which you'd like to become more loving, write out a prayer, asking God to help you grow in love.



Session 5

Don't Give Up on Your Health and Well-Being [Corresponds with Chapter 10 of *Holding on to Hope*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. If you could pick one of the following healthy luxuries, which one would you choose?
 - unlimited massages
 - a personal chef who makes healthy food
 - a personal trainer who makes exercise fun

Discussion Questions

2. When people think about getting healthier, the first things that come to mind are often diet and exercise. What are some other ways to improve whole-person health (mind, body, and spirit) that are often overlooked or neglected?
3. What do each of the following verses teach us about our health?
 - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - Proverbs 17:22
 - 3 John 1:2
 - Proverbs 16:24
 - 1 Corinthians 10:31
4. According to research, when you are making healthy changes, it is more helpful to show self-compassion than to be self-critical. Do you find it difficult to be compassionate toward yourself when you are growing and changing? What damage can self-criticism do to your efforts and your spirit?
5. Why do you think so many of the prayer requests that people share are related to health instead of other areas of life?
6. **Read Matthew 14:14.** Jesus spent more time healing the sick than preaching. Why was healing such a central part of His ministry on earth?
7. One approach to changing habits is called “crowding out”—focusing on adding good habits until you crowd out bad ones. Can you think of an example of this in daily life or in the Bible?
8. How can having hope in God help you achieve your health goals?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Do you have an accountability partner, someone who provides support and accountability as you work toward your goals? If not, think of someone with whom you could share your health goals and make a plan to regularly check in with each other.

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

Journal, reflect, or pray about these questions:

- What is one practical thing I can begin to do to improve my health?
- Are my thoughts helping or hurting my overall well-being? What thoughts would I like to replace? What are the replacement thoughts I would like to have instead?

Enjoying this author? You may want to check out www.vibrantlife.com



Session 6

Don't Give Up on Church

[Corresponds with Chapter 11 of *Holding on to Hope*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. What is your favorite church potluck dish? And which one do you always try to avoid?

Discussion Questions

2. What do each of the following verses tell us about the purpose of the church?
 - Hebrews 10:24-25
 - Matthew 18:19-20
 - 1 Corinthians 12:12-27
3. In the following verses, what behaviors and attitudes is the church warned not to have?
 - Romans 16:17-18
 - Titus 3:9
4. The term "church hurt" refers to experiences in which someone is emotionally, mentally, spiritually, or physically hurt within a church community. What emotions come to mind when you hear the words "church hurt"?
5. What are some common things that can cause someone to experience church hurt?
6. Have you ever experienced or witnessed church hurt? How did it impact your faith?
7. **Read Galatians 6:10.** Why do you think God said to be especially good to those in the church?
8. What are some practical ways we can help individuals who have been hurt by church?
9. What can we do to create a church culture that is safe and healing rather than hurtful?
10. Despite all the things that can go wrong within a church, why do you think God invites us to be part of a church rather than go on our spiritual journey alone?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Think of someone who has been hurt or neglected by a church or religious community. What can you do this week to reach out to them and help them feel loved and valued?

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

Journal, reflect, or pray about this:

- What blessings have I experienced from being a part of a church?
- When have I been hurt by a church experience? Is there anything I need to do to surrender that experience to God and gain healing?

Looking for more resources to deepen your walk with Jesus?
You might like: itiswritten.study/home
www.voiceofprophecy.com/bible-studies
jesus101.tv/store



Session 7

Don't Give Up on God

[Corresponds with Chapter 12 of *Holding on to Hope*]

Getting to Know Each Other

1. If God could send you a text message right now, what do you think it would say?

Discussion Questions

2. According to each of the following verses, why can we confidently put our hope in God?
 - Hebrews 10:23
 - Joshua 23:14
 - Numbers 23:19
 - Jeremiah 29:11
3. If someone asked you why they should put their hope in God, what would you say?
4. **Read Romans 15:13.** According to this verse, what causes us to overflow or abound with hope?
5. Tell us about someone you know who overflows with hope.
6. **Read Zechariah 9:12.** What does it mean to be a “prisoner of hope”? What does that look like in daily life?
7. **Read Isaiah 40:30-31.** According to this verse, if you’re feeling weak, tired, or overwhelmed, what specific blessings will you get when you put your hope in God?
8. Some people hope God will do something in an area of their life, but they don’t take action themselves. What does hope in action look like?
9. As we’re completing this study about hope, where are you now on the hope meter (with 5 being full of hope, and 1 being hopeless)?
10. In what situation or area of life would you like others to continue to pray for you?



How to Make Hope a Habit

Take Action!

Choose a Bible verse about hope and memorize it. Display the verse where you will see it often by making it the mobile wallpaper on your phone or writing it on a sticky note and putting it on your bathroom mirror or refrigerator.

Quiet Moments of Hope

Personal Reflection and Journaling Prompt

Take a Hope Inventory. Make a list of ways God has brought hope into your life, including unexpected blessings, people who have loved you, difficult times you've made it through, and even small, everyday ways He has helped you. As you recall how He has brought hope in the past, let it encourage you that He has hope for your future too.

For more Bible Studies by women for women: www.nadwm.org/bible-studies



10 Encouraging Bible Verses About Hope

There is nothing more hope-filled than the words of the Bible. Here are some of the most beloved verses about hope:

**"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faith."**

Isaiah 40:31

**"But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior;
my God will hear me."**

Micah 7:7

**"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in
God,
for I will yet praise him, my savior and my God."**

Psalms 43:5

"We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield."

Psalms 33:20

**"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you
and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."**

Jeremiah 29:11

"But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you."

Psalms 39:7

"For you have been my hope, Sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth."

Psalms 71:5

**"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."**

Romans 15:13

"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love."

1 Corinthians 13:13

"We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."

Hebrews 6:19

**All verses are from the New International Version.*



What Are My God-Given Spiritual Gifts?

Instructions

For each statement, rate how true it is of you using the scale below.

- 1 = Not true at all
- 2 = Rarely true
- 3 = Sometimes true
- 4 = Often true
- 5 = Almost always true

Spiritual Gift Self-Assessment

- _____ 1. I like to encourage others and help them see their potential.
- _____ 2. I enjoy organizing people or resources to accomplish a task or goal.
- _____ 3. I have deep compassion for people who are hurting or in need.
- _____ 4. I am moved to pray for others, often sensing their needs before they express them.
- _____ 5. I enjoy explaining ideas in a way that others can understand.
- _____ 6. I am comfortable sharing my beliefs with others.
- _____ 7. I am happy to share my money and resources with others.
- _____ 8. I notice injustices and wrong behaviors that others don't seem to notice.
- _____ 9. I can see the big picture when looking at a project or situation, recognizing how different pieces fit together.
- _____ 10. I am willing to serve behind the scenes to support others.
- _____ 11. I am drawn to help strangers or people who feel excluded.
- _____ 12. I am sensitive to people's spiritual struggles and want to help guide them.
- _____ 13. I can discern whether something is from God or not, even when it's unclear to others.
- _____ 14. I experience joy in singing, playing an instrument, or creating art that glorifies God.
- _____ 15. I often have a strong sense of faith that God will provide or act, even in difficult situations.
- _____ 16. I find fulfillment in helping people grow in their spiritual lives.
- _____ 17. I have seen miraculous answers to prayer and unexpected outcomes after praying.
- _____ 18. I enjoy researching and studying to gain deeper understanding of spiritual truths.
- _____ 19. I find it fulfilling to help people with their physical or practical needs.
- _____ 20. I trust that God will provide the direction and resources I need in life.
- _____ 21. I enjoy doing creative projects, such as interior decorating, baking, crafting, graphic design, or writing.
- _____ 22. I am happy to give to others without seeking recognition.
- _____ 23. I naturally motivate and inspire others to take action.
- _____ 24. I enjoy developing long-term plans and strategies to help people or organizations thrive.
- _____ 25. I feel deep sorrow when I see others suffering and am compelled to help.
- _____ 26. I have a strong desire to pray persistently for people and situations.



- _____ 27. I love discussing and teaching biblical truths in a way that deepens understanding.
- _____ 28. I look for opportunities to share my faith with others.
- _____ 29. I enjoy helping others financially, even when it requires personal sacrifice.
- _____ 30. I sometimes receive insights or strong impressions about future events or spiritual matters.
- _____ 31. I enjoy doing practical tasks that allow others to focus on their work.
- _____ 32. I like to add beauty to the world through creative endeavors, such as photography, writing, making my home inviting, performing music, etc.
- _____ 33. I often sense the spiritual needs of people before they mention them.
- _____ 34. I enjoy mentoring and guiding others in their spiritual journey.
- _____ 35. I find joy in taking responsibility for organizing or leading a group toward a common goal.
- _____ 36. I have confidence that God will accomplish great things, even when circumstances seem impossible.

Scoring Guide

Write down your score for each of the questions in the designated spots below. Then add up your score for the numbers associated with each gift. The areas with the highest totals represent your primary spiritual gifts.

Spiritual Gift	Questions	Total
Encouragement	1. _____ 11. _____ 23. _____	
Leadership/Administration	2. _____ 9. _____ 35. _____	
Compassion/Mercy	3. _____ 19. _____ 25. _____	
Prayer/Intercession	4. _____ 17. _____ 26. _____	
Teaching	5. _____ 18. _____ 27. _____	
Evangelism	6. _____ 15. _____ 28. _____	
Giving	7. _____ 22. _____ 29. _____	
Discernment/Prophecy	8. _____ 13. _____ 30. _____	
Service/Helping	10. _____ 19. _____ 31. _____	
Creativity/Artistic Expression	14. _____ 21. _____ 32. _____	
Faith	15. _____ 20. _____ 36. _____	
Shepherding/Pastoring	12. _____ 16. _____ 34. _____	

The spiritual gifts I scored highest in: _____.

Ways I could use my spiritual gifts to glorify God:

