



## **Week 1**

**Theme: Hope**

**Movie: A Charlie Brown Christmas**

### **Bible Verses:**

Isaiah 40:1-2 – Comfort, comfort my people! says your God. Speak compassionately to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended, that her penalty has been paid.

These words were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Isaiah was giving God's people hope, reminding them that, even in captivity, God was with them and that there would be better days ahead.

**Hope** is such a powerful force. It's the belief in something happening and the confident expectation that it will.

Let's watch a classic Christmas movie that embodies hope – **A Charlie Brown Christmas**.

### **Talking Points:**

- Near the beginning of the movie, Charlie Brown feels certain he won't get a Christmas card...yet he looks in the mailbox anyway. Even though he's struggling with his feelings, we still see the flicker of hope in him.
- Charlie Brown goes to Lucy to talk. He's worried about not feeling happy during the Christmas season. Something feels missing.
- After Sally talks about what she wants for Christmas, this is a good opportunity to pause the movie for a moment and say:  
Many of the characters have things they want.  
What does Lucy want? Real estate  
What does Snoopy want? A prize for winning the Lights and Display Contest  
What does Sally want? \$10s and \$20s
- Charlie Brown wants to find what's missing in his life. All he knows at this point is that material things aren't going to fill the void.
- A want or a wish is different than a hope.  
Remember, hope means believing something could happen and having that confident expectation that it will.  
[Continue watching the movie to the end. Encourage the children to pay careful attention as Charlie Brown and Linus visit the Christmas tree lot.]

### **After-Movie Discussion:**

- The great moment of hope comes when Charlie Brown and Linus go to a Christmas tree lot and Charlie sees the small, dried up Christmas tree. He sees potential in it, even when the normally-optimistic Linus isn't sure it's a good idea.
- Charlie Brown's heart is stirred. He sees something in the tree worth saving, worth investing in.
- How do the others respond when Charlie Brown brings back the little tree? They criticize Charlie Brown, mock him, and laugh at him.
- This almost causes him to lose hope, until Linus recites the Christmas story. This is a powerful reminder that, just as we have our own hopes, so does everyone else. We must be kind in treating one another's often-fragile hopes with care.
- After Linus recites the Christmas story, we see Charlie Brown's hope once again restored. What does he do next? He takes the tree home and tries to decorate it, but it collapses.

• *At this point, it might seem like all hope is lost, not just for the tree, but for Charlie Brown feeling fulfilled. But his act of hope inspired all the others. They follow him home, and what happens? They decorate the tree and it seems to spring to life. Then they all wish Charlie Brown a Merry Christmas as they sing a Christmas carol together.*

**Prayer:**

Loving God,  
We have you,  
And there is hope.  
We have each other,  
And there is hope.  
We wait for Jesus,  
With confident expectation,  
And there is hope.  
Amen.

This family video series by Mark Burrows is a part of the Worship Design series, "I Believe When..." created by Dr. Marcia McFee.