



Inside every one of us is the longing for home - not for a specific street address, but for meaningful relationships in which we can be fully known and loved. Unfortunately, in our fallen world this kind of life-giving community is rare. This is where the church comes in. In God's master plan he made a way for his people, filled with his Spirit to form a new community that transforms the world. This is what we were created for! I hope you will join us in this 9-week series as we learn to show the world there's no place like home.

Discussion Questions: (Leaders please review each question and pick those that will be most beneficial for your group.)

1. Read Psalm 18:2. All of us have someone or something we count on to get us through times of trouble. It may be a person, financial resources, an attitude or ability. Perhaps it is a belief about ourselves and the world in which we live. When people face tough times, to whom or what do they turn to feel safe and secure?
2. Masada (which means fortress) is one of Herod the Great's spectacular fortress-palaces that sits high above the Dead Sea in the middle of the Judean desert. King Herod built Masada as a refuge in the event he needed to flee Jerusalem. It contained fifteen huge storehouses of food, weapons, and cisterns holding a million plus gallons of water, Olympic size swimming pools, a palatial terraced palace and a virtually impregnable mountaintop location. The historian Josephus said that Herod had stockpiled enough material to supply thousands of men for up to ten years. Despite all this Herod still lived in constant fear and insecurity. In what ways like King Herod do you trust in the work of your hands for safety and security? How's that working for you?
3. After Herod the Great died (4 BC), Roman oppression increased and the Jews became increasingly nationalistic and eager to escape Roman domination. Eventually a group of Jews known as the Zealots rose up wrongly believing military force would usher in the Kingdom of God. In AD 70 despite Rome's best efforts to crush the Zealot movement, 967 Zealots escaped to Masada for safety. Rome's 10th legion set up 8 camps around the base of Masada, built a siege ramp to the top and used a battering ram to smash a hole through the fortress wall. However, rather than be captured, the Zealots committed mass suicide. What happens when people wrongly use power and violence to feel safe and secure? Do you ever wrongly use power, or violence to feel safe and secure?
4. According to 1 Samuel 23:14, 24-29 David hid in the Judean Wilderness near Masada when King Saul was trying to kill him. Although he found safe hiding places in the desert strongholds near Masada, what did he consider to be his true protection (See Psalm 18:2, 71:1-3, 2 Samuel 22:1-3)?
5. In Psalm 18:2 David trusts in the LORD as his rock, and fortress and deliverer. How is Jesus Christ the source of security, protection and deliverance? Like David, can you say the LORD is *my* rock and *my* fortress and *my* deliverer, *my* God, *my* rock, in whom I take refuge?
6. In Isaiah 32:1-2 the prophet envisions a time when the Messiah will come and those who trust in him as their Rock (1 Cor. 10:4) will become a rock that provides refuge to others in the desert. In what ways have you found refuge from the LORD in the community of God's people? How can/will your community group, our church body be a refuge to others that are in the desert?