

Series Title: 'Inspired by Hope'

Subtitle: 'Renewing our hope in the LORD amidst all that life brings'

Primary Aim: The theme is "Inspired by Hope" and we are hoping that in addition to getting into the passages (all based on Bible characters and their experiences of hoping in God) we would love to get our teeth into the following questions; (1) How can I experience the power of hope in my life? (2) What really is Christian Hope and why is this hope so powerful and inspiring? (3) How can I hope in Jesus when I feel such pain or disappointment?

1. The Nature and Power of Hope

Passages: Hebrews 6:13-20, Lamentations 3:16-33, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Isaiah 40:28-31

Blurb: We will draw together some of the Bible's teaching on hope we'll try to define Christian hope and think about its power to transform us. Each of the subsequent sessions are case studies on hope which all bring different aspects and angles on this subject.

2. Hope in a Sovereign God: Life of Joseph

Passages: Genesis 37-50

Blurb: Joseph's journey is a fascinating story of hope amidst disappointment. Tossed in a pit by his brothers, sold into slavery, wrongfully imprisoned and yet what was intended for evil God intended for good. We will wrestle a little with God's Sovereignty, His Wisdom and His love as we look at the story of Joseph.

3. Plans for a Hope and a Future: Life of Jeremiah

Passages: Jeremiah 28-29, 32

Blurb: Following a confrontation between Jeremiah and Hananiah (over Hananiah's false prophecy that God would rescue Israel from captivity within 2 years), Jeremiah prophesies 70 years in captivity. Amidst the disappointment God says He has plans to give them a hope and a future and promises that if they seek Him they will find Him. In this session we will consider how we can hope in the promises of God for us now and in the future.

4. Hope, Suffering and Mystery: Life of Job

Passages: Job 1-3, 38-42

Blurb: Job's life is suddenly turned upside down and we see him broken, subjected to poor counsel from his friends and wrestling with questions about hope. With insight from what was going on in the spiritual realms we also will wrestle with these questions and think about how we can learn from his story.

5. Hope when you mess up: Life of Peter

Passages: John 18:15-27, 21, 1 Peter 1:1-9

Blurb: The life of Peter is an inspiring story of how God uses us despite our failures. Peter, so adamant that he would not betray Jesus, does exactly that yet unlike Judas his failure is later turned on its head as hope wins through. Jesus restores him, commissions him and then we read in first Peter how he had experienced this living hope.

6. The Hope of Glory: Life of Paul

Passages: Colossians 1:24-27, Romans 8:18-25, Revelation 21-22

Blurb: Despite all his sufferings Paul considered them as 'light and momentary' compared to our eternal glory. We will consider our eternal hope, the inheritance that awaits us that will not perish, spoil or fade and consider how we can hold onto this hope and live in the light of it here and now.