CALLED TO 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 faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

To hope is to cherish with anticipation, to desire with expectation, or to expect with confidence.

JESUS IS THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

He is the:

- **tender hope** who was laid in a manger.
- **radiant hope** announced from the skies.
- **astonishing hope** worshiped by the shepherds
- **esteemed hope** sought by the Magi.
- **promised hope** who was forsaken.
- **cherished hope** who was denied.
- **misunderstood hope** who was rejected.
- **irreproachable hope** who was beaten.
- **faultless hope** who was judged.
- **sinless hope** who was condemned.
- **miraculous hope** who rose from the dead.
- **timeless hope** who came to seek, serve, and call.
- **perfect hope** who came to rescue, forgive, redeem, and save.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. (Hebrews 6:19)

JESUS IS OUR UNIQUE AND EVERLASTING HOPE

Our hope for the past – the assurance that our failures, no matter how many, how big, or for how long, are never greater than His forgiveness and power to transform.

Our hope in the present – the undeniable truth that we are created on purpose for a purpose, loved completely, and we are never alone.

Our hope for the future – the unshakable promise that we will be made perfect and whole—with Jesus forever.

Biblical hope is a settled, determined, and enduring confidence in who Jesus is and what He has promised. Our hope is in Christ alone. The mystery is *Christ in [us], the hope of glory.* We are *a wild olive shoot ... grafted in ... to share the rich root of the olive tree* (Romans 11:17 NRSV), *to share in the nourishing sap ...* (NIV).

HOPE-FILLED VERSES

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)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1)

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)

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. (Romans 5:3-4)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Colossians 1:27)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What does a hope-filled life look like?
- Where do you need hope right now?
- What is your favorite hope-filled Scripture?
- How can we cultivate hope in suffering?
- How does hope shift our perspective on suffering?

A PRAYER OF HOPE

Heavenly Father, we are deeply humbled, for not only do You promise us hope, *You are the God of hope* (Romans 15:13). You promise Your hope will abound, even in brokenness, even in weariness and weakness, for Your hope cannot be earned, is undeserved, and yet, is promised. How blessed we are that *Your hope will not disappoint us or put us to shame* (Romans 5:5). Steep us in Your hope, Lord, and *bring Your good work in us to completion* (Philippians 1:6). In Jesus' name, amen.