

STUDY 4

[DASHED HOPES]

STARTER

Share a time when you felt hopeful about something – and perhaps, what sparked that feeling.

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The nature of hope

1. "Hope is risky, so sometimes it feels less painful not to hope. But, hope is needed, as it affects so much else in life." To what extent does this ring true for you? Discuss ways in which hope is connected to other aspects of life.

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2. Read Hebrews 6:19-20 and 1 Peter 1:3.

a. The Christian hope is based on the death and resurrection of Jesus. How does this make our hope different to a 'wishful thinking hope'?

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b. What difference should this make?

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3. The Christian always has hope – the sure hope of forgiveness of sins, of access to God, of an eternal inheritance and of God's loving intentions for us. But particular things we hope for can escape us. The Christian Counsellor, Ed Welch, encourages us to continue to hope for particular things, recognising that God is good, and can help you handle disappointments that come.

a. How do you feel about this advice?

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b. What are the consequences of not taking this approach?

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c. In what ways does this approach require us to trust God?

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Wrestling with hopelessness

4. Read Psalm 42. What can we learn from how the writer responds to his feelings of hopelessness?

You may want to consider for example:

v3-4, 6-7, 9-10

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v5, 11

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God's promises

5. Why are God's promises important in finding hope? Have any of these promises helped you find hope? Are there others?

- God will never leave you (Heb 13:5)
- God will never put you in a situation where a sinful response is the only way out (1 Cor 10:13)
- God will give you grace sufficient for your situation (2 Cor 12:8)
- God will make you fruitful as you abide in Him (Jn 15:8)
- God's purposes will never be thwarted (Eph 1:11)
- God is always working for your good (Rom 8:28)

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TAKE AWAY

6. Write down one take away for you from tonight. See if you can turn this into an actionable step – something to do this week to help you deal with disappointments.

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 **PRAY**
