

# Choosing Hope

## SERMON NOTES AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### I. Introduction

- How do we celebrate Christmas when the world is so broken?

### II. What is Hope?

- Matthew 2:13-18
  - a. Hope isn't blind optimism (wishful thinking or a dream of what could be)
  - b. Biblical Hope is living with conviction that the promises of God are reliable.
    - i. Living Hope
      - 1 Peter 1:3-4
    - ii. Conviction
      - Romans 8:24-25
    - iii. Reliable

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## Discussion Questions

### Sharing Life Together

1. How are you feeling about the world in general? Are you more overwhelmed or hopeful?
2. Does Christmas tend to lift your spirit or does it create more stress? Why do you think you experience it this way?

### Reflecting on the Message Together

1. The story of Jesus is not just "a" story of hope, but it is "the" story of hope. How would you defend this statement to someone who does not believe in Jesus as savior and Lord?
2. Ralph claimed that the Bible tells the best story of the world. It is better able to explain all of life than any other worldview. How would you defend this belief? Where is your biggest area of doubt as to whether this is really true? In other words, where do you sometime struggle in trusting God's truth? How should we deal with these sorts of doubts?
3. Biblical hope is not blind optimism or wishful thinking, it is living with conviction that despite mounting evidence to the contrary, God's promises are reliable. What are situations in your own life where your hope in God was shaken and your conviction that God is reliable was undermined?
4. What are one or two experiences where God has strengthened your hope even through hardship and difficulties?
5. What are practical steps we can take to choose to live by hope?
6. How did God speak to you through this teaching?
7. How can we pray for one another?