



## Hope Because God Offered Himself Up

**Date:** Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December

**Speaker:** Ruth Page (City Centre site), Becky Stamps (South site)

**Key Verses:** John 3:16

### Talk Summary:

- At Christmas, we spend a lot of time hoping for things. This anticipation of future events and outcomes is uncertain, and the outcomes that we hope for are inevitably temporary. While this is not a very hopeful picture, the Bible offers us a better kind of hope which is quite different.
- In the Bible, the writers talk about hoping **IN** someone.
- A common idea linked with the Biblical word for hope is that it is like a rope: A thread that runs from the past into the present and into the future. That rope is secured to someone (Jesus) and what He has done for us by dying on the cross and in his resurrection.
- We all need this hope, because we have all sinned and have no way of dealing with that ourselves.
- The hope we have in Jesus is secure and will stand through every storm, offering us hope in eternal life in all its fullness.

### **Worship**

*Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.*

*(Small group worship resources can be found at [bvc.so/sgworship](http://bvc.so/sgworship))*

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

*If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:*

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

## Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- What kinds of things are you hoping for this Christmas?
- In what ways do you think hope (as the Bible talks about it) has been like a rope in your life?
- How does the idea of hope as a rope anchored in Jesus help you right now?
- Why is it important that hope doesn't deny the existence of the difficulties of life?
- Who could you throw a life-line of hope out to today?
- You might like to read and reflect on Hebrews 6: 19-20, which is a lovely description of hope as an anchor. I've put the verses in the Passion Translation below.
- "We have this certain hope like a strong, unbreakable anchor holding our souls to God himself. Our anchor of hope is fastened to the mercy seat in the heavenly realm beyond the sacred threshold, and where Jesus, our forerunner, has gone in before us."

## **Witness** - *How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?*

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?
  - Upcoming Events (go to [bvc.so/whats-on](http://bvc.so/whats-on) for details)
    - Christmas Day service // 25<sup>th</sup> December (city centre site only)
    - New Years all age service // 2<sup>nd</sup> January