



Hope Because God Knows When to Show Up

Date: Sunday 28th November

Speaker: Kathryn Thorp (South), Emmie Hocking (City Centre AM) , Nessa Chileshe (City Centre PM)

Key Verses: Luke 1:26-38

Talk Summary:

- For those who lived at the time that Angel Gabriel visited Mary, life was hard and people were tired and waiting – waiting for God to show up, so save them as He promised He would.
- God didn't just give a general promise that he would come. Hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, he gave exact details of his plan for redeeming mankind – called prophecies. There are lots of prophecies that link to this passage today, but we only have time to look at one – Isaiah 7:14.
- This shows us God coming exactly as He said he would!
- Sometimes I have dark, difficult and hard days and I need the hope of a God who will show up.
- This bible passage shows us the fulfilment of promises. It shows us that we have a God who wants to be with us. It shows up we have a God who keeps his promises. It shows us the hope we can have in a God who shows up.
- Hope is something we're looking at over advent as a church. Everyday hope is really like wishing – 'I hope you have a good day!'. Hope in God is different – 'a confident expectation of something because we know who has promised it'
- Hope is based on the promises of God – of knowing that if God's said it, He'll do it. We don't know when, but we can be confident. We can have hope. The Angel Gabriel said in this passage 'For no word from God will ever fail'.
- Because we can trust the promises God has for us, because we've seen him fulfil his promises in the past, we know that we can live confidently and have hope in a God who will show up.
- What did Mary say in response to all of this? She answered with confident expectation – with hope - 38 'I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May your word to me be fulfilled.' Basically – if you've said it, it will happen. I'm going to hope in a God with us.

- Because Immanuel, the God who is with us, has promised to be with us. We can hope and trust in that for today and all the days. And we can respond with hope.

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)

- 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)

1. Have a read through the prophecies that we can see be fulfilled in this passage.
 - Do you know any more that aren't listed here?
 - Take note of the prophecies of Jesus' lineage. There are prophecies of the lineage fulfilled through Mary being His mother, but some fulfilled through Joseph being His father, which is not in this particular passage but worth noting as we think about prophecies fulfilled and Gods plan.
 - When you consider that these prophecies were given hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, how does that make you feel about God? Does it enable you to trust and hope more in him and in his promises?
2. Hope from the world is more like wishing for something. Hope in God is confident expectation of something because we know that God will fulfill his promises. The angel Gabriel in this passage - "no word from God will ever fail". Have you found yourself sometimes wishing more than hoping in God? What difference does that make to your life and faith?
3. Henri Nouwen: "While optimism makes us live as if someday soon things will soon go better for us, hope frees us from the need to predict the future and allows us to live in the present, with the deep trust that God will never leave us alone..."
 - Hope is a vision for better days that change us in the present
 - What difference does this make to your 'today'?
 - What do you need to do to reframe your hope in God so it's not just about the future, but gives "confident expectation" for today?
4. Do you see the hope in Marys response to the angel Gabriel? What can we learn from Marys response?
5. Hebrews 10:23 'Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.'
 Hope is based on promises of God being fulfilled. All who have committed to relationship with God through Jesus can claim promises of God through the Bible. Read/think through the promises below. Any more that you hold on to? Are there any that you need to claim for yourself to have renewed hope in God? Promises in the scripture:
 - Isaiah 40:29, Isaiah 54:17, Deuteronomy 31:8, John 8:36, Mark 11:24, Psalm 34:17, Philippians 4:19, Joshua 1:9, Hebrews 10:23, Isaiah 54:10, Isaiah 41:10

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 for details)
 - Week of Prayer // this week!
 - Encounter Night // 4th Dec
 - Carol Services // 12th December
 - Christmas Day service // 25th December