
MESSAGE SUMMARY

The message teaches that hope is far more than a feeling. It is a steady posture of trust rooted in the character and promises of God. In Scripture, hope is described through rich terms: *yakhal*, meaning patient waiting; *qavah*, describing waiting with tension and expectation; and *elpis*, a joyful confidence grounded in a Person. The Bible shows that true hope is the confident expectation that God will do what He has promised.

God Himself is His people's hope (Psalm 39:7). His plans are filled with a future and a hope (Jer. 29:11). The Holy Spirit strengthens believers with hope (Rom. 15:13). Through Jesus' resurrection, they are born into a living hope (1 Pet. 1:3).

The Christmas story highlights this truth through the Magi. Their journey shows that hope is not passive they followed the light God provided. They traveled great distances, responding with obedience and worship, while others who lived near Bethlehem missed the arrival of the Messiah. Their pursuit fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy that a great Light would shine into the darkness (Isaiah 9:2). Their example reminds the church that hope isn't something people merely feel - it's Someone they faithfully follow.

MAIN POINTS**1. God Is Our Hope (Psalm 39:7; Matthew 2:1-2)**

Hope begins with looking to God, just as the Magi looked to the star God provided.

2. Hope Is God's Plan (Jeremiah 29:11; Matthew 2:1-2)

Long before the Magi began their journey, God planned to reveal His Son as the true King and Hope.

3. Hope Comes Through the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13; Matthew 2:1-2)

The Holy Spirit leads people toward Christ, just as God guided the Magi step by step.

4. Hope Is Living (1 Peter 1:3; Matthew 2:1-2)

Hope is alive because Jesus is alive and the Magi's worship points toward a Savior who would rise again.

Big Idea: Hope isn't something we feel – it's Someone we follow

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**1. How would you define hope today, and how does that differ from the biblical definition shared in the message?**

(Where do you see the biggest gap between cultural hope and Christian hope?) *Possible Answer: you may define hope as wishing or wanting things to get better. Cultural hope is often uncertain, "I hope this works out." But biblical hope is confident expectation because it's based on God's character and promises, not circumstances. The biggest gap is that cultural hope is unsure, while Christian hope is secure (Psalm 39:7; 1 Peter 1:3).*

2. When you think about seasons of waiting in your life, what has helped you stay hopeful rather than discouraged?

Possible Answer: things that help you stay hopeful may include remembering God's past faithfulness, praying honestly, staying in Scripture, or surrounding yourself with believing friends who encourage you. Waiting becomes hopeful when you trust that God is working even when you can't see it (Isaiah 40:31; Lamentations 3:25).

3. Where is God asking you to take a step of obedience, even if you don't see the whole path? *Possible Answer: you may sense God asking you to forgive someone, start serving, share your faith, begin a new spiritual habit, or trust Him with a major decision. Like the Magi, you might only see the next step, but God is inviting you to move forward in faith (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 3:5-6).*

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Just like the Magi in Matthew 2:1-2 who followed a light that led them to the true King, the gospel shows that God Himself is the source of our hope. He didn't wait for us to find Him; He came to us in Jesus. From the beginning, hope has always been God's plan, and Jesus is the Light who stepped into our darkness to save us. Through Christ's death and resurrection, God gives us more than forgiveness; He gives us His presence. Hope comes through the Holy Spirit, who opens our eyes and draws us toward Jesus. And because Jesus is alive, our hope is living not rooted in circumstances but in a risen Savior who reigns forever. The journey of the Magi mirrors the gospel: God shines His light, we respond in faith, and discover that the One we seek has already come seeking us...Praise the Lord!

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Please see our **Advent Devotionals** through December 25, 2025.