



# CONNECT GROUP NOTES

## Sunday 26.02.2023

---

“Joyful in Hope”

### **Preacher**

Rev. Dr. Adam Dodds

### **Scripture**

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. <sup>11</sup> Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup> *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.* <sup>13</sup> *Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*” Romans 12:9

### **Thought**

The Bible tells us to be joyful in hope - but what does that truly mean and how do we do that? In our culture, even the word ‘hope’ comes with certain connotations. We hope the weather tomorrow won't be rainy, or we hope the doctor's report is all clear. It's almost as if each use of the word hope carries with it a tinge of anxiety.

This is not at all how the New Testament writers used the word ‘Hope’. The Christian hope, rather, is a confident assurance and an assured confidence. Ultimately, our hope is in a person - Christ. Therefore because God guides history, we can hope in the future.

Jesus said “I am the vine, you are the branches”. Our hope is not found in clinging desperately onto him - for it's actually He that holds us. Our job is to let him; to remain in the vine and allow his life to flow into us, and draw hope from the immovable foundation which is the true vine.



As we open our minds to this truth - the truth of God being our ultimate hope, our response to life's journey will ultimately be a deep joy. We can encourage each other in this truth by reminding each other of what God has done in our lives, by praying for each other and sharing hope with each other. May we truly be a Church which is joyful in hope, patient in affliction and faithful in prayer.

### **Discussion Points**

1. The Disciples of Jesus held certain expectations of what the Messiah would bring, and how hope would unfold in their situation. How did Jesus actually bring hope, and how did this differ from their expectations?
2. Do you think the same applies in our faith journey? Have your expectations of the journey ever differed from how Jesus actually brought hope into your life?
3. How could we practically build hope in those around us - both in the family of God and among those who are yet to meet Christ?

### **Personal application + Prayer**

Jesus,

I thank you today that my hope is ultimately in You and You alone. I thank you that You are my confident assurance and my assured confidence. Lord, help me to truly carry joy through the ups and downs of life as I learn to trust You and to understand that You are the true source of life. May I always remain in You, may I know your heart more, teach me what it means to truly share your character with others. Thank you for holding on to me.

Amen