

Session 6: Hope.

What has God promised?

ROMANS 8

KEY VERSE:

‘... we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved.’

ROMANS 8.23–24 (NIV)

Key themes

- Justification means no condemnation
- Adoption means privilege and love
- If God is for us, who can be against us?
- Glorification means our physical resurrection
- Hope leads to action
- God entrusts us to care for his creation

Possible issues

CONCERNS OVER THE MASCULINE PRONOUN ‘SONS’

Response: The privileges associated with ‘son’ in a Roman culture are for men and women alike as children of God.

ANDREW SAYS NO HUMAN BEING IS A REJECT, BUT SOME MAY HAVE EXPERIENCED REJECTION

Response: However difficult our human experience, God deeply loves everyone and calls us to do the same.

THE CONCEPT OF ‘FATHER’ MAY HAVE BAD ASSOCIATIONS

Response: God is good, he is a good Father to all.

THE ETERNAL DESTINY OF LOVED ONES WHO DID NOT (KNOWINGLY) BELIEVE IN JESUS

Response: Only God knows, and we can trust him. Take hope in the story of the thief on the cross.

Wrap up

- In summary: Romans 8 is a view from the top, surveying the panorama of salvation. We are not condemned; we are justified. We are not abandoned; we are in God’s family. This world is not it! We are anchored to an eternal hope – Jesus will return. New bodies and a new creation are promised and secured in Jesus Christ.
- Reminder of daily readings
- Next week: Mystery. If God is sovereign, what is our role? We recognise the Divine Director who is unseen but in charge backstage. He controls nations and loves individuals. God has worked out his purposes through Israel. The gospel is inclusive – open to everyone. And the gospel is exclusive – only in Christ.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

- Refreshments
- Welcome and introduction including a brief recap of last week’s session
(4 minutes)
- Optional discussion starter question
(5 minutes):
If you were stuck on a desert island, how might hope of rescue affect your attitude and actions?
- Video part 1
(15 minutes)
- Discussion time (questions in participants’ guide)
(25 minutes)
- Video part 2
(10 minutes)
- Personal prayer/reflection
(10 minutes)