

GOING DEEPER: Wednesday 14 June 2023

INTRODUCTION

During this year of praying together we have already looked at celebrating our history. If this was our only view of things, then it would be very narrow. We are also looking towards the future of our mission into the communities to which we belong. The way forward is so very important, and outcomes can be defined by the attitude of prayer that we carry.

In **Hebrews 10:23–25**, the words ‘unswervingly’, ‘hope’, ‘spur’ and ‘promise’ all leap from the page to tell us how to pray for the future.

As we reflect on the promises that we have from God in this time of prayer, may we encourage one another and spur each other in faith and into action.

REFLECTION

Read **Hebrews 10:23–25**, and its corresponding reflections:

²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the **hope we profess**,

Most people understand ‘hope’ as wishful thinking, as in ‘I hope something will happen’. This is not what the Bible means by hope. The biblical definition of hope is ‘confident expectation’. Hope is a firm assurance regarding things that are unclear and unknown (see **Romans 8:24–25**; **Hebrews 11:1, 7**).

for he who **promised** is faithful.

‘For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “yes” in Christ’ (**2 Corinthians 1:20**).

²⁴ And let us consider **how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds**,

‘Love and good deeds’: these are the mission. Jesus, who is fully God, demonstrated what God’s mission looked like in human form—everything done in love. The mission of the Church is the mission of God. God invites us to participate in what he is doing on Earth; he invites us to do love and good works in his name, and leave the outcomes to him.

²⁵ **not giving up meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing, but **encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching**.

So we are encouraged to hold unswervingly to the hope Christ gives us, to intentionally consider how to live out this hope and to remember to not give up meeting with one another.

Some questions to consider:

- What does it mean for you to hold unswervingly to the hope professed in Christ?
- How has God shown his faithfulness to you recently?
- How might you encourage others in their faith this week?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Praying the promises

Remember, scripture is not some sort of formula or spell; it can however be prayed, including the promises. There can be great value in personalising and praying prayers like **Ephesians 2:10**. Find a promise in the Bible that is special to you and pray it continually; try changing the language by personalising it where you can (for example, replace ‘we’ with ‘I’, ‘me’ or your own name).

For example:

‘If [any of you] I lack wisdom [you] I should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be give to [you] me’ (**James 1:5**).

Try these ones out:

- **Joshua 1:9**
- **Romans 10:9**
- **Jeremiah 29:11**

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for discernment about the things of history that we take with us into the future, and those things that need to be remembered and left in the past.
- Pray for wisdom for how to encourage others (and ourselves) to step out in faith, boldly going where God calls us.
- Ask God to remind you of the promises that he has for you and all those who follow him.

PRAYER

Father God, so often we look towards the future with doubt and anxiety, wondering if we are headed in the right direction. Father, help us to remember that the Bible is full of promises for us. Help us to bring to mind the promises that we need for every situation that we find ourselves in, as we look into the future with hope and excitement, continually spurring each other to do great things in your name and walking the pathway you direct us to. Amen.