

## APPLICATION

- Take time this week to read, meditate on, and reflect on the book of Romans. As you read, ask God for wisdom and revelation to understand and obey His word. Pray that you would hope against all hope even when you face the impossible.
- In different situations and challenges, what makes you feel hopeful or hopeless? How can you hope in God today and every day?
- Think of and pray for friends or family members who could use hopeful encouragement this week. How can you help them anchor their faith in God?

## PRAYER

- Thank God for revealing His love and power through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, and in each day of your life. Ask God to help you see Him clearly and recognize His work in your life.
- Pray that like Abraham you would hope against hope and be fully convinced about who God is and what He can do.
- Pray for a heart that courageously reflects the transformation that Jesus has begun in you, so that others might see God's work and be drawn to Him.

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## Foundation of Our Hope

WEEK 1

## WARM-UP

- What comes to mind when you think of hope? How would you describe the idea of being hopeful to someone?
- Recall a time when you had a radical experience that changed your perspective of something or someone. What happened?
- Tell us about a friend or family member who was in a seemingly impossible situation. What kind of help did you think he or she needed?

**WORD** <sup>18</sup>In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." <sup>19</sup>He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. <sup>20</sup>No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup>fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. **ROMANS 4:18-21**

(Read also **ROMANS 4:13-16, 22-25.**)

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul is recounting Abraham's journey of faith and hope in God. Abraham received a promise from God that he chose to believe, even when it seemed impossible. He knew that God can do and does what no one else can, including giving life to the dead and calling non-existent things into existence (Romans 4:17). In the same way, we can choose where to anchor our hope and who to believe. Today, we will glean three lessons from Abraham's life so that we can understand the foundation of our hope as believers.



## 1 | We can hope against all hope when we have faith in God.

*<sup>18</sup>In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." <sup>19</sup>He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. **ROMANS 4:18-19***

How can one hope against all hope? The circumstances may be dire and disappointing, but at the same time, the truth of God's goodness and power remains. We can put our hope and faith in God because He does the impossible. In what area of your life have you learned to hope in God and rely on Him completely? How do you think this is possible?

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## 2 | We can have faith in God because God is able to do what He had promised.

*<sup>20</sup>No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup>fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. **ROMANS 4:20-21***

Abraham is our example of faith because he did not waver in unbelief about God's promise. Instead, he was fully convinced in the faithfulness and ability of God to fulfill what He had promised. Our faith should be anchored on God, not on

anything or anyone else. We can persevere in hope instead of living in unbelief because God is a promise keeper. What are some of the things we are tempted to believe, instead of God? How can we know God's character and trust Him more each day?

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## 3 | Our faith in God is anchored on the risen Christ.

*<sup>22</sup>That is why his faith was "counted to him as righteousness." <sup>23</sup>But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone, <sup>24</sup>but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, <sup>25</sup>who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification. **ROMANS 4:22-25***

Abraham's faith in God is an example for us now who already have a better picture of God's plan of redemption. Abraham believed God even if he did not see what we know today. The risen Christ is the anchor of our faith, and He is the proof that God can and will do what He has said. If we are believers, we have no other anchor than the risen Christ. What do you think would happen if we put our faith in anything or anyone else?

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