

**Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Sept 1, 2019**  
**Abounding in Hope: Christ In you, the Hope of Glory**  
**Pastor Conway (8, 10:30 Sanctuary), Pastor Hall (9:15, 10:30 Selah)**

**Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)**

- Anything to share about personal events since you last met or about applying last weeks message on Hope Overflowing?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

Opener Question: Pastor Michelle shared this week a picture of a fountain with multiple upward spouts of water at varying degrees of height. In an analogy of hope as a fountain, she shared that at different times in her life her sense of hope flowing from the fountain is high and at other times it is low. How would you (group members) describe how strong your sense of hope is right now?

**Review the Sermon (15 min)**

Please read aloud the sermon scripture, Romans 15:7-13. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

<p><b><sup>24</sup> Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. <sup>25</sup> I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— <sup>26</sup> the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people.</b></p>	<p><b><sup>27</sup> To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. <sup>28</sup> He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.</b></p>
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- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- Since we know that Christ’s giving his life on the cross was sufficient for our salvation, how are we to understand Paul’s comments in verse 24 about his suffering? What kind of suffering was Paul enduring and how were others benefiting from it?
- What was Paul’s calling from God expressed in verse 25 and why was he a good candidate for it?
- Generally speaking, what portion of the New Testament was written by Paul?
- What was the primary teaching of Paul that both Jews and Gentiles could understand (vs. 26-27)?

- What is meant by “the hope of glory?”
- When we remind ourselves of this hope, how does it impact our general outlook or reframe how we look upon our life situations or circumstances?
- Paul’s goal was to present all whom he teaches as mature followers of Christ (verse 28). What do you believe he meant by a mature Christ follower? What would be characteristics of a mature follower of Christ?

### **Other Related Readings (10 min)**

- Would a volunteer please read out loud the story of Saul’s Christian conversion in Acts 9:1-20.
- Why do you think Saul was so angry and aggressive in his persecution of Christians and the church (verses 1-2)?
- In verses 3-9 Saul is confronted by a light and voice from heaven who is revealed to be Jesus (vs 5), who asks Saul why he was persecuting Him and strikes him blind for three days. What do you believe was going through Saul’s mind in those three days?
- In verses 10-16, the Lord spoke to a Christian leader Ananias and set up his obedience as the means of Saul’s sight being restored. How did this require big faith on the part of Ananias?
- How was the prophetic word given to Ananias in verses 15-16 fulfilled in the Colossians passages above? How is this view of suffering as part of calling different than the “prosperity gospel” that is often preached today?
- In verses 17-18, Ananias encounters Saul in the divinely arranged meeting and scales fell from his eyes and he could see and was baptized. Why do you think the Lord chose to arrange for Saul’s healing to come through the church he was persecuting?
- In verses 19-20, Saul spent time with the disciples and regained his strength and soon thereafter was preaching Jesus is the Son of God in the synagogues. Why do you believe God picked Saul for this calling as teacher-preacher-evangelist?
- How did Saul’s life experience give strength to his message proclaimed to potential followers of Christ of all different backgrounds?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)**

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional reading above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- This week, if we find ourselves experiencing discouragement at times, what are some possible activities or ways we can find a stronger connection with “Christ in us, the hope of glory” and draw from that well?
- What are the growing edges for us in becoming more “mature in Christ?”
- What practical steps can we take this week to pursue maturity in Christ?

### **Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)**

- What persons around us do we believe to be lacking hope today?
- How can we be more transparent with others this week, about the Hope we have in Christ?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer.