

The **SHAPE** of you

Session 2: What are my hopes and heart for?

8.00 Our hopes for a better world

As people arrive, ask them to look over a collection of headlines on the table and get them sorted into piles of what they hope for more and less of. (I'll print these from current big stories and recent stories based on topics listed on p28 of SHAPE participant book)

Encourage conversation about why, respect of the fact that people hold different political views (especially on Brexit – let's not spend all night talking about Brexit, please!!?) Do we have any personal connections to any of the issues that might have shaped our interest?

As God's kingdom becomes more visible, how do we hope that the world will be different?

8.20 Our God-given desires

READ Psalm 37:1-6. How do we relate to this? What could "give you the desires of your heart" mean? Is it just about getting whatever we want, or could the desires themselves be a gift?

If so, what desires does God want to grow in us? Clue from last week: fruit! Galatians 5:13-26.

8.40 All our hopes are in...?

Share about my own mixture of motivations as I think about new jobs! Anyone else want to share? What do we look to for reassurance when we feel challenged?

Choosing to hope in God is a faith decision. It's also the product of work God does with us.

READ Romans 5:1-5.

So hope isn't just something we have to manufacture in ourselves. God gives it to us when we meet challenge and suffering with his love, persevering in... what? Loving and serving others.

9.00 What are our hopes?

If we can clarify our hopes, this can help us to decide where to invest ourselves in service. It may be that we have a good idea of our hopes already, or that we need to look from a different angle – what kind of service have we been excited about? Where has God already used us, and it's felt amazing, like it's been life-giving and we couldn't get enough?

(This is one reason we re-ordered topics from the SHAPE course – looking at our Experiences helps us to clarify our Hearts/Hopes a lot!)

DISCUSS: Can you think of a time when you would say God has used you to serve others? Who was it, what were you doing, and how did you feel? Did you have to persevere? What was your hope? Do you still have that kind of hope?

9.30 Writing this down

Give out "Heart and hopes" and "Experiences" sheets. Explain how to fill these in over the next couple of weeks or so. They complement each other – one might bring to mind things for the other.

Aim is to get a realistic snapshot of ourselves – informed by prayer and reflection on experience as well as wishes and desires for the future.

Prayer time – what do we want to bring to or receive from God?