**“Better Than We Had Hoped – Pt 6”**

**May-4/5, 2024**

**Speaker: Tom Hughes**

**Opening:** [15 mins] We suggest you begin with an opening prayer and then a brief “catch up” or “icebreaker” before moving into the *scripture reflection* and *application questions*.

**Scripture Reflection:** [20 mins]Read **2 Cor 4:17 & Rom 8:28.** After allowing the group time to reflect on the passage, ask them to share what most stands out to them.

**Application Questions:** [40 mins](*These questions will help you and your group dig deeper into the weekend sermon. Feel free to edit or use only those which fit your allotted time.)*

1. Tom said, *“Paul didn’t deny his past or try to hide it, but neither did not let it hold him prisoner. True humility is not convincing yourself that you are worthless but recognizing God’s work in you.”*
   1. Are there parts of your past that are still holding you a prisoner to guilt or shame? How do you think Paul was able to live free from shame while not denying his past as someone who persecuted Christians?
2. Tom taught, *“God’s plans are better than we had hoped. God has good in store not just for this life – but also for the life to come.”* 
   1. Share a time in your life when something did not turn out as you had hoped, but God gave you something better? How does the promise of eternity impact your faith when things do not turn out as you hope?
3. Tom shared, *“Our actions matter more than we can imagine. What you do today matters for eternity.”*
   1. What comes to mind as you consider Tom’s statement that your actions matter for eternity? Is there any place where God has been asking you to act, but you have yet to do so? What is one step you can take to start?
4. Tom said, “*People can endure the loss of many things in life and still continue onward, however, there is one thing human beings cannot survive without: hope.”*
   1. Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt hopeless? How was hope in that situation restored?

**Closing & Prayer**: [15 mins]

* Have each person in your group share a prayer request, and then have someone pray.
* Pray for fruitfulness in people’s lives through the, “Better Than We Had Hoped” series.
* Pray for those who made first-time commitments or recommitments to Jesus at Easter.