

# Seeds of Hope

Your *Lent* reflection guide with Tearfund



# Contents

This booklet is an interactive PDF.

Click a yellow button to navigate to that section.

**Introduction**



**3**

**Week 1: Living in the 'now and not yet'**

**4**

**Week 2: A future worth hoping for**

**5**

**Week 3: Holding hope and grief together**

**6**

**Week 4: Keeping hope alive**

**7**

**Week 5: Agents of hope**

**8**

**Week 6: Hope embodied**

**9**

While the world's problems often feel overwhelming and life is difficult, as followers of Jesus we have access to hope 'that surpasses all understanding'. Join us as we reflect on this hope Christ purchased for us and how we can offer that hope to others.

Each week of Lent, the six weeks leading to Easter, offers a meaningful opportunity to draw closer to Jesus and grow spiritually. Tearfund invites you to come on an inspirational journey with us through weekly scripture readings, devotional videos, and thought-provoking reflections. Together, let's prepare our hearts for Good Friday and Easter Sunday, exploring how Christ's hope can transform the world around us by his reflection in us.



**Find out more about how you can spread hope with Tearfund:**  
**[www.tearfund.org.nz](http://www.tearfund.org.nz)**



**Read: Romans 8:22-25 (NIV)**

**■** We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.'

Romans 8:22-25

**Watch Video 1:** <https://youtu.be/0hUA6RLghxg?feature=shared>**Reflect**

- Did you notice the tension in this passage between the groaning of creation, and the hope in what is promised and still lies ahead? Think about where you see signs of 'creation groaning' in the world around you.
- Is there a situation in your life that feels hopeless, like being 'in the wilderness? Think about how you can invite God into this situation.
- Make a note of the situation(s) you'd like to bring before God during this Lent season.

**Pray**

*Father, in the waiting, teach me faith. In the groaning Jesus, help me to fix my eyes on you and hope. Holy Spirit help me to see where I can be part of your redemption story today. Amen.*

**Read: Romans 8:18-21 (MSG)**

■ That's why I don't think there's any comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times. The created world itself can hardly wait for what's coming next. Everything in creation is being more or less held back. God reins it in until both creation and all the creatures are ready and can be released at the same moment into the glorious times ahead. Meanwhile, the joyful anticipation deepens.'

Romans 8:18-21

**Watch Video 2:** [https://youtu.be/3mH3Jb\\_Fko0?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/3mH3Jb_Fko0?feature=shared)**Reflect**

- What does, "As your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" mean for you, today, and for the things he has placed on your heart that are still to come?
- Cast your mind back to a situation time when God gave you hope when you thought it was hopeless. How can you apply it to a current challenge?
- 1 Peter 3:15 describes: "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope". Take a moment to frame how Jesus would demonstrate hope to someone in your day.

**Pray**

*Lord, thank you for being my constant source of hope. Remind me of the ways you have been faithful in the past and help me trust you for the future. May my life reflect your hope to those around me. Amen.*

**Read: Romans 8:22-23 (NIV)**

**■** We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.'

Romans 8:22-23

**Watch Video 3: <https://youtu.be/zaszWfRXRGU?feature=shared>****Reflect**

- Take a few minutes to honestly acknowledge your grief and disappointment. Invite the Holy Spirit into it, asking for comfort.
- Let's reflect on Archbishop Desmond Tutu's words in this week's video as he shared about facing seasons and situations of immense challenge. *"Resignation and cynicism are easier, more self-soothing postures that do not require raw vulnerability and tragic risk of hope. To choose hope is to step firmly forward into the howling wind, baring one's chest to the elements, knowing that, in time, the storm will pass."* He describes the pivotal, but difficult role hope played in each instance. Think of storms or seasons of crisis in your life. In hindsight can you see how God worked in the midst?
- Is there something weighing on you this week? Simply be real with God about your fear, anger or pain, and invite God into it, extending trust in him. This is called lament, and it's a part of our faith journey as we place our hope in him.

**Pray**

*God, I bring my grief to you, no matter the size of it. Thank you for meeting me in my sorrow and please renew my hope. Show me how to be a source of comfort to others as I release this weight to you. Amen.*



**Read: Romans 8:26-27 (NIV)**

**In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.'**

Romans 8:26-27

**Watch Video 4:** <https://youtu.be/6CdbgFBYSF0?feature=shared>**Reflect**

In this week's video we shared three suggestions of how we can work to maintain our hope in times of challenge and in times of blessing.

- **Draw close to God**, which reminds us of how we can rely on him. Do you have a regular rhythm of spending time with God? If not, perhaps you might like to set aside a specific time this week to be with him. Imagine what could happen!
- **Surround yourself with strong relationships.** It's hard to weather challenging seasons, and it's even harder to do it by ourselves. Do you have someone you can share your grief and disappointments with? What about your stories of God's kingdom breaking in? If not, perhaps you might like to think about who that person people could be.
- **Hope is grown through taking small actions of love and justice.** Have you ever noticed this in your own life? Can you think of places in your life where you could take small actions reflecting Jesus through love and justice?

**Pray**

*Thank you, God that you know me so well. Please use me to intercede for others through my words or actions, teaching me to trust in your guidance and to find strength in your presence. Amen.*

**Read: Romans 8:19-21 (NIV)**

**■** For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.'

Romans 8:19-21

**Watch Video 5: <https://youtu.be/T1WtCzIgBPU?feature=shared>****Reflect****Christ Has No Body**

*Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks Compassion on this world,  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,  
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours,  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks Compassion on this world.  
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

- This truth hasn't changed since the poem was written in the 16th Century by Teresa of Avila, a Carmelite nun. Is there something particular in this poem that impacts you?

**Pray**

*Lord, would you use me as your hands and your feet this week? Holy Spirit, nudge me. Give me courage and compassion, help me notice what I would tend to overlook and show me opportunities to be an agent of your hope this week – for your kingdom, Jesus. Amen.*



**Read: Romans 8:29-30 (MSG)**

■ God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him. After God made that decision of what his children should be like, he followed it up by calling people by name. After he called them by name, he set them on a solid base with himself. And then, after getting them established. He stayed with them to the end, gloriously completing what he had begun.'

Romans 8:29-30

**Watch Video 6:** [https://youtu.be/9joc8\\_ts8Og?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/9joc8_ts8Og?feature=shared)**Reflect**

Each one of us is called to partner with God to see his Kingdom come. You and I do this in our everyday lives as we:

- **Advocate.** Use our voices to expose injustice and the suffering of marginalised people.
- **Act.** By giving our time, skills, and finances we can help bring transformation to the situations God has laid on our hearts.
- **Give.** As we respond with generosity, we empower others to find their place in the Kingdom too.
- Check back on the items you wrote down to pray for, in Week 1. How can you see God's hand and hope in them now? What is one thing you can commit doing this Easter to amplify hope?

**Pray**

*Lord as I become tuned into your Spirit, help me to see as you see and hear as you hear. Fill my heart with compassion for what breaks your heart, guide me to seek justice in areas that anger you, and thank you in faith for Christ-like responses flow when I am in step with you. Use me!*

# Thank you

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Thank you for joining us at Tearfund as we walked together through the lament of Lent, into the hope of Easter. May Jesus inspire you to live boldly, reflect his love, and draw others to the hope only he can offer.

