

# JESUS: THE INDESCRIBABLE GIFT

## Jesus: The Gift of God's Hope

### Twelve Daily Studies for Christmas

Romans 4:18–24; 8:24–25; 15:13

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

### STUDY



## Quotable

*Hope is a sense of confidence that God is at work.*

*It has nothing to do with age, marital status, or experience from the past. It has everything to do with the living God.*

— Charles R. Swindoll

For centuries, righteous Jews have put their hope in the coming of the Messiah. They've lived on tiptoe, looking toward the horizon for the Promised One to arise like the dawn of a new day to restore Israel as a nation and rekindle the people's devotion to the Lord.

With joy, Paul proclaimed to his fellow Jews in Rome who were awaiting the Messiah, "I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come" (Acts 28:20)! But Paul added, Jesus came to save *all* people, not just the Jews, and to establish the kingdom of God, not just a new nation for Israel. How did the Jews receive Paul's teaching? "Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe" (28:24).

Unlike the skeptical Jews in Paul's day, Christians have received God's gift of Jesus with open hearts. We celebrate the fulfillment of past hopes in Him, and we anchor in Him our hope for the future. Ring the bells on Christmas morning! The hope of the world has come!



### PREPARE YOUR HEART

God's promise to Abraham that "all the families on earth [would] be blessed through [him]" (Genesis 12:3) was fulfilled at the birth of Jesus. Aging Simeon, who had hoped to see the Messiah before he died, saw God's light for the nations in Jesus when he took Jesus in his arms to bless Him,

*"Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace,  
as you have promised.  
I have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared for all people.  
He is a light to reveal God to the nations,  
and he is the glory of your people Israel!" (Luke 2:29–32)*



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Simeon saw in Jesus “salvation . . . for all people” and “a light to reveal God to the nations.” Invite the Lord to shine Christ’s light on you and your family today and fill your home with His peace and joy. Pray for those you love who may be living in darkness. Ask the Lord to open their eyes to the light of hope in Jesus so they can receive Him as their Savior this Christmas.

Now let’s open the Word to discover the hope of Christmas for which the whole world searches.



## TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Most people think of *hope* as the feeling they get when they buy a lottery ticket. They hope they will be a winner but with no certainty. In contrast, God offers us a sure hope because it is based not on chance but on a person: Jesus. Because Jesus is trustworthy and the words of Scripture are reliable, our hope is more than wishful thinking; it’s confident faith. Let’s take a few minutes to look at the crucial connection between faith and hope.



## Observation: The Connection between Faith and Hope

Read the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1.

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*  
(Hebrews 11:1 NASB)

According to this verse, what element does faith add to our hope?



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SEARCHING  
THE  
SCRIPTURES

STUDY

In the previous study, we traced Israel's hope to Abraham. Let's pick up where we left off in Romans 4 to observe the connection between Abraham's hope and his faith.

*Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises. And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous. (Romans 4:20–22)*

What was the reward of Abraham's faith?



#### Interpretation and Correlation: Our Faith Is Credited as Righteousness

Paul explained the significance of Abraham's faith:

*And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. (Romans 4:23–24)*

What is our assurance, according to verse 24?

Abraham's faith is a prototype of the faith of every person who seeks a relationship with God. "It is impossible to please God without faith," wrote the author of Hebrews (Hebrews 11:6). In faith, Mary and Joseph believed God would give them a miracle child, Jesus. In faith, the wise men, like Abraham, came from the East seeking God's promised child (Matthew 2:1–12). And in faith, we cling to our Savior at Christmas and put our hope in the redemption He won for us through His death and resurrection



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S11  
3

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THE  
SCRIPTURES

STUDY



#### Application: Bringing Hope into Life

When we wish for something, we sometimes say, “I’m getting my hopes up!” This kind of hope goes up and down, like a hot air balloon that is carried along by winds of fortune. However, our hope in God is certain. It is based on God’s promises and character in the person of Jesus, not on hot air and shifting winds. Be assured, God *will* make good on His promise and deliver us to the ultimate land of promise: our Father’s eternal home (John 14:1–3).

According to Chuck Swindoll in his message,

Biblical hope begins with an attitude of faith in things we are promised regarding the future. Hope grows as faith counts God’s promises as true.

Close this Christmas study by expressing to the Lord your hope in Jesus, the baby in the manger, in whom our future rests secure.



#### A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, thank You for offering me more than wishful thinking. Others may wish for a better future or have a “hunch” that things will improve, but in Christ, my hope is certain. Once again, I place my confidence in You and the promise of eternal life in Your Son. While I can’t describe the details of how You plan my future, I can depend on You and Your character. In You, I have a future and a hope for today and always. Amen.*



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S11  
4

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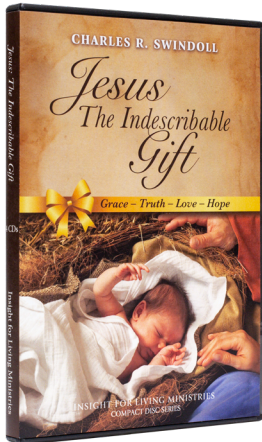
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THE  
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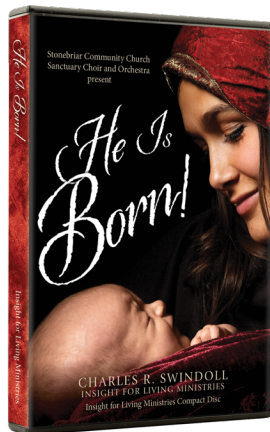
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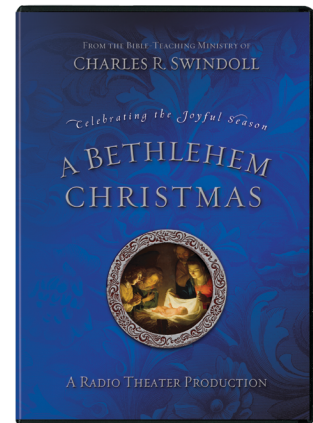
#### Tools for Digging Deeper



**Jesus: The Indescribable Gift**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
CD series



**He Is Born**  
by Stonebriar Community Church  
Choir and Orchestra  
compact disc



**A Bethlehem Christmas:  
Celebrating the Joyful Season  
(A Radio Theater Production)**  
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For the 2018 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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5