

# HELP[H]ER

A Churchwide Response for Women in Crisis

Advocacy Training Study Guide

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Although many publishers do not capitalize terms, and particularly pronouns which refer to the Trinity, in this study, CDM publications has capitalized those elements for clarity of reference.

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# Introduction

Welcome to Help[H]er Advocacy Training! The material in this series is based on the ministry described in the book, *Help[H]er: A Churchwide Response for Women in Crisis*. The video training series and companion Study Guide were developed to help churches equip seasoned women as they serve hurting sisters in the body of Christ.

In this ten-session course, women will learn how to apply spiritual wisdom in their own lives and circumstances. Practicing godly responses will provide them with the ability to care for women journeying on the difficult paths the Lord ordains. This is an opportunity for women to grow in their understanding of rich theological truth, minister in relationships as they exist in a sinful and fallen world, and provide meaningful one-another care in the local church.

**Throughout this course, our hope is that the ladies in the training will**

- Grow in relationship with God to be grace-receiving and with others to be grace-giving,
- Learn to understand, minister, and apply Scripture in practical ways to their own lives as well as to those they serve, and
- Live a lifestyle of attentiveness for opportunities to come alongside women in redemptive relationships.

## **Disclaimer**

Names, dates, participants, circumstances, and details have been rearranged and/or changed in order to protect the people associated with our stories. Where similarities occurred, permission to share was required by our contributors and granted by the participant. To the best of our ability we have sought to honor the privacy and dignity of our church members as well as the good character and credibility of our church staff, pastors, elders, deacons, and advocates. The integrity of our shepherding ministries to people in crisis is of utmost concern to our authors and contributors. Any resemblance in these stories to actual persons and/or events should be considered coincidental.

This advocacy training program is intended to equip women of the church to partner with elders to help women navigate crisis from a biblical perspective. It is not intended to equip advocates to replace trained, professional counselors, who may be needed in certain situations.



# HELP[H]ER

## Advocacy Training

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# How To Use This Training

## 1. The Group Gathered: Structure of Your Time Together

We recommend that women gather together in groups to watch the Training and Round Table sessions.<sup>1</sup> There are two, approximately 20-minute Training videos and two, approximately 20-minute Round Table discussions each session for a total of 80 minutes of viewing and listening. In a typical session a group will

- Watch** the first Training video (approx. 20 min.),
  - Watch** the first Round Table discussion (approx. 20 min.), and
  - Discuss** the topic as a group (10 min.).
- Then,
- Watch** the second Training video (approx. 20 min.),
  - Watch** the second Round Table discussion (approx. 20 min.),
  - Discuss** the topic as a group (10 min.),
- and
- Discuss** the Case Study (20 min.).

Allow for approximately *two hours per session* in the Help[H]er Advocacy Training series. We recommend the entire training take place over the course of 12 months. This will allow for a one-month holiday and one-month summer break.

We encourage participants to simply listen to the sessions rather than take extensive notes. A blank page and training outlines are provided in the Study Guide for those who prefer to jot down thoughts as they watch.

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<sup>1</sup>While Help[H]er Advocacy Training is designed to be used by a group, individuals can also work their way through the program on their own.

## 2. The Individual Preparation: Structure and Use of Your Study Guide

Between the Training Sessions you will be asked to read, study God's Word, think, pray, and prepare for each of the gathered sessions. While the video materials can introduce you to the biblical principles of caregiving, the real lessons occur in time spent in study with the Lord.

Each Training Session in the Study Guide includes the following elements:

- ✓ Reading Response
- ✓ Digging Deeper
- ✓ Training Outline Part One
- ✓ Training Outline Part Two
- ✓ Case Study and Discussion Questions
- ✓ Bibliographies

### Reading Response

This form is designed to assist you as you read the required text for each session. It is not a test, and not every question must be answered. The goal is to analyze and remember what you read and apply it to your life and ministry in a meaningful way. For each Reading Response form you will

- Summarize the reading material,
- Interact with the material on a personal level, and
- Build your advocacy toolbox.

### Digging Deeper

Digging Deeper is a personal Bible study completed prior to the group Training Sessions. The study is broken into five parts which take approximately 20 minutes each to complete. You will be asked to look up passages in the Scriptures, answer questions, meditate further on the meaning of the teaching and/or the passages, and possibly complete a word study.

### Training Session Outlines

Lecture outlines are included in the Study Guide.

### Case Study and Discussion Questions

A Case Study with Discussion Questions for the Training Sessions is included. We suggest you read the Case Study and the included Discussion Questions prior to attending each group session.

### Bibliographies

Our qualified teachers from the Help[H]er Advocacy Training series compiled a bibliography and additional reading suggestions. These books are rich resources for further study on the topics from the Training Sessions.

Of course, this training should be soaked in prayer. Training to advocate for women in crisis is a good work (Titus 3:14), one the enemy will fight against. Be sure to prepare for the inevitable spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:12). It might be wise to ask a woman in your church to commit to pray for you as you participate and for the training details throughout the entire process.

*Cast your burden on the Lord,  
And He will sustain you;  
He will never permit  
the righteous to be moved.  
Psalm 55:22*

### 3. Individual Study Helps:

#### Guide to Hebrew and Greek Word Study

When we read Scripture, it is the Holy Spirit who both enlightens truth and enables us to understand. However, because Scripture was not written in English, it is often helpful to look at the original Greek or Hebrew words. Why is this exercise helpful in Bible study? Studying the original meaning of a word gives valuable insight. At times, it elaborates on what our English language has condensed. Word studies allow us to expand on a definition and increase our understanding of the word from the original author's context and content.

Almost every word in the Bible has been assigned a number, which coordinates to the original language—Hebrew for Old Testament words and Greek for New Testament. These numbers are *Strong's* numbers, named after James Strong, creator of the *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. The internet is a great resource for finding the *Strong's* number and the word's definition. There are multiple free resources such as [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org) or [www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com).

In this Study Guide, any Greek or Hebrew word that you will be asked to define is italicized followed by the Strong's number. Enter the Strong's number into your internet search engine. You will often find several websites to consider. Click on your preferred source and read the definitions.

#### NOTE:

- If it is a Hebrew word from the Old Testament, enter *Strong's Hebrew* followed by its number.
- If it is a Greek word from the New Testament, enter *Strong's Greek* followed by its number.

#### Example of a Greek Word Study

Search Strong's Greek *distracted* #4049. You should find *perispaó* and the following information.

**Defined as:** to draw away, figuratively to be drawn around in the mind, preoccupied

**Synonyms:** anxious

**Antonyms:** to take heed, to exercise thought

Go to your preferred website to find

- The Greek transliteration (a word changed from its original alphabet into the English alphabet),
- The part of speech,
- How to pronounce the Greek word, and
- The definition.

Feel free to consult multiple websites for a more elaborate definition. It is important to then substitute your newfound definition back into the verse you are studying. This will enlighten your understanding of the passage.

Your first word study in this Study Guide is *zealous* #2207 on page 18.



#### 4. Note to Facilitators

Your role as a facilitator is not as an expert on the topics covered; rather, it is to help and encourage the participants as they progress through the training process. It might be wise to ask a few women in your church to commit to pray for the participants, for you as the facilitator, and for the training details throughout the entire process.

Prior to beginning the series, decide how you want participants to complete the training. We recommend it take place over the course of 12 months. This will allow for a one-month holiday and one-month summer break.

The format requires each participant to:

- **Read** an assigned book (10 total for the series),
- **Complete** the Reading Response and Digging Deeper: Personal Bible Study prior to attending the group gathering, and
- **Read** the Case Study and prepare for the Discussion Question time.

We recommend that you as the facilitator are prepared ahead of time for the Case Study and Discussion Questions. Try to anticipate what questions your participants may pose and be prepared to discuss. You may also want to add your own questions for further discussion.

#### A few suggestions for the group gathering

- Make introductions.
- Anticipate challenges.
- Allow time for participants to discuss and ask questions. (We learn more from practice and discussion than from just listening.)
- Clarify key points from the session.
- Start and end on time.
- Know your participants ahead of time.
- Communicate with and encourage your participants throughout the training process.
- Be specific about expectations.
- Stimulate discussion to engage the learners.



# Competent to Care

Ann Maree Goudzwaard

## TRAINING SESSION ONE

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# Reading Response

*Help[H]er: A Churchwide Response for Women in Crisis<sup>1</sup>*

by Bernie Lawrence and Ann Maree Goudzwaard

This form is designed to assist you. It is not a test and not every question must be answered. The goal is to analyze and remember what you have read and apply it to your life and ministry in a meaningful way.

## **PART ONE: SUMMARY**

1. What are the most important principles or insights presented by the authors in this book?

2. What are the authors' supporting points?

## **PART TWO: RESPONSE**

1. Do you agree or disagree with the authors? Why or why not?

2. In what ways is the material applicable to your life, experiences, feelings, and beliefs?

3. In what ways might this material be applicable in your work as you advocate for women in the church?

4. Did the book increase your understanding of a particular issue? If so, name the issue(s). Did it change your perspective in any way? If so, how?

### PART THREE: BUILDING YOUR ADVOCACY TOOLBOX

1. List one or more quotes you feel would be useful in ministry.

2. List one or more Scripture verses referenced in the book that would be useful in ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> Bernie Lawrence and Ann Maree Goudzwaard, *Help[H]er: A Churchwide Response for Women in Crisis*. (Lawrenceville, GA: PCA Committee on Discipleship Ministries, 2020).

# Digging Deeper: Personal Bible Study

## **PART ONE: EQUIPPED FOR CARE**

1. What comes to mind when you think about caregiving in the church? Who is equipped for this type of one-another care ministry? Whose responsibility is it?

2. Do you think of yourself as equipped and competent for one-another care? Why or why not?

3. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. How are we equipped for ministry and all good works of the Christian life?

4. What comes to mind when you think of “good works”? What is a “good work”?

5. Read Titus 2:11-14. How are Christians to live in this present age while we are *waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ*?

6. What did Jesus Christ redeem us from? What did He redeem us for (Titus 2:14)?

7. Define the Greek word for *zealous* #2207. Would you consider yourself zealous for the “good work” of one-another care?

8. Read Titus 3:14. What is the Church to learn to do? Why?



9. How does understanding the Source of our equipping help fuel your desire to engage in the “urgent needs” (Titus 3:14) of one-another care?

## **PART TWO: CAPABLE TO CARE**

Read Ephesians 4:11-16.

1. What is God’s gift to His Church?

2. What work did God direct the leadership in the Church to do (Eph. 4:12)?

3. What is the goal of God’s gift of grace for the Church in the leadership (Eph. 4:12-16)?

4. What are we to speak to one another? What good work will this produce in the Church?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Read Ephesians 2:25, 27, 29. What else does God say about how we are to speak to one another? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. How is speaking the gospel (the truth in love) to those in the body of Christ a responsibility rather than a suggestion?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Read Titus 2:3-5. What is the “good work” of the older woman?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What would happen if women neglected their biblical responsibilities? How might the whole body be affected (Eph. 4:16)?

9. In what ways do you see the “good work” of women speaking good (the truth of the gospel in love) and teaching good (the care of other women) as critical to life in the Church?

### **PART THREE: THE CARE OF GOD**

Read 2 Timothy 4:1-2.

1. What is Paul’s charge to Timothy?

2. We understand 2 Timothy as pastoral in nature, but in as far as we imitate the pattern of our leaders as they imitate Christ (1Cor. 11:1), what are we to be ready to do in season and out of season? How are we to do these things?

3. Write out the familiar scripture, Isaiah 55:11.

4. Why is the truth of Isaiah 55:11 critical to understand and be confident in as you care for women who find themselves in crisis?

5. Read Psalm 25:8-15. List the things that God does for the humble. What does this passage teach you about God's faithfulness to instruct you, lead you, and teach you His ways as you steward one-another care?

6. What are the blessings of the friendship of the Lord? How does this encourage you in your walk with the Lord and His commitment to your sanctification?

7. How does Psalm 25 encourage you to know that God will never withhold His promises from those who seek Him? In what ways will knowing this help you as you minister to suffering women?

8. Do you have a habit of dependent prayer? Spend time in prayer today thanking the Lord for His grace towards you in your salvation, sanctification, and future glorification! Our souls indeed dwell in well-being!

#### **PART FOUR: THE PREPARATION OF CARE**

1. What do you think is the necessary preparation for recipient care? Read Romans 12:1-8 to help you respond biblically.

2. In what ways do you use your spiritual gifts for the edification of the Church and the glory of God?

3. What spiritual disciplines do you practice consistently?

4. How have you seen the Lord change you and shape your affections for Christ and, therefore, your affections for others by the use of spiritual disciplines?

5. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8. What does the apostle Paul say about how he *did not* speak (1 Thess. 2:3-6)?

6. How did the apostle Paul relate to those in the midst of much conflict (1 Thess. 2:7-8)?

7. Can you describe a time in the past that you shared *not only the gospel but also (your) own selves*? How did you see the Lord use you in that situation?

8. Are you in the habit of noticing when a woman is missing from Bible study or church? What do you do about it (e-mail, text, a phone call, coffee date, etc.)? Be creative and be intentional! How would you feel if someone noticed your absence and reached out to check-in?

9. What things are you purposely doing to regularly engage women in your church?

10. Ask the Lord for the opportunity to interact with women and for a willing heart to *help cases of urgent need so as to not be unfruitful* (Titus 3:14). Ask the Lord for wisdom as you engage in one-another care (James 1:5).

## **PART FIVE: THE ENEMY OF CARE**

1. What do you anticipate as hindrances to one-another care?

2. Read Ephesians 6:10-20. Define the Greek word for *wrestle* #3823.

3. What do we *not* wrestle against? What *do* we wrestle against? Do you think of yourself as in a battle?

4. Read Jesus' description of the devil in John 8:43-44. What does Satan intend for all believers?

5. How does "battle" imagery help you to better understand the opposition you will encounter when you enter into one-another care? Why would the devil want to intimidate you from not entering into "battle"? Think deeply about this, what does he stand to gain?



6. How are you equipped, right now, to stand against the schemes of the devil (Eph. 6:10-20)? Write a list of your weapons, your spiritual resources, as a help[h]er who is engaged in battle.

7. Read Hebrews 2:14-18. What did the Lord Jesus Christ accomplish through His death on the cross? Why is He able to help you as you enter into the battle of soul care?

8. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. How is weakness an advantage?

9. Read 1 Corinthians 15:57-58. What promises will you cling to? Will you thank God for the victory that has already been won through our Lord Jesus Christ? Ask Him for the grace to enable you to abound in the work of the Lord! He will do it to the praise of His glory!



# Training Part One: Competent to Care

Ann Maree Goudzwaard

## **Everyone Is Equipped with Every Good Gift to Make Us Competent for One-Another Care (Rom. 15:14)**

1. Recognize the position
  - a. The charge
  - b. The ability
  - c. The family likeness
  
2. Recognize the gifts
  - a. Insight
  - b. Empathy
  - c. Servanthood
  
3. Recognize that you have a biblical response to receiving those gifts
  - a. Listen with attentiveness
  - b. Follow through
  - c. Demonstrate humility
  - d. Practice prayer



# Training Part Two: Competent to Care

Ann Maree Goudzwaard

## **Be Prepared to Preach in Season and Out of Season (2 Tim. 4:2)**

1. Recognize that training is ongoing
  - a. There is never a time when you are not participating in a Help[H]er ministry
  - b. Counsel the word
  - c. Preach the word<sup>1</sup>
  
2. Recognize that you can prepare in these ways
  - a. Word
  - b. Deed
    - i. Practice listening
    - ii. Practice practical acts of kindness
    - iii. Practice unity
  
3. Recognize that there will be a response
  - a. By care recipients
  - b. By leadership
  - c. By the enemy

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<sup>1</sup>Several months after filming this series I discovered my pastor (Kevin DeYoung) had written a more nuanced perspective on the meaning of the word “preaching” than my own teaching during this session. I commend his article and ask the participant to take it into consideration for defining “preaching” from a biblical perspective. We also discuss clarifying distinctions in the companion round table discussion. DeYoung’s article is at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/what-is-preaching-and-who-does-it/>



# Case Study: Competent to Care

Cindy is a 27-year-old single woman from your church who has come to you asking for help. Lately, she has been struggling with anxiety—to the point of panic attacks—and she fears for her safety (as well as the safety of others). Cindy is a nurse.

She has only been at your church for a short time, so you know nothing of her past or present situation. She sits down across the table from you at a local coffee shop and shares some of the details of her life.

Cindy tells you that she comes from a broken home. Her mom left her dad when she was just three years old, so the man her mother remarried became her legal father. Her real dad died in a car accident when she was 8.

Cindy remembers asking the Lord into her heart many Sunday mornings when she was a little girl. She never felt transformed, so she wondered why Christ wouldn't *stick*. She worried that God didn't accept her. Eventually, someone told Cindy "you just need to believe and not doubt," so she quit asking the Lord to save her. She was baptized at the age of 12.

Cindy tells you that high school and college were turbulent years for her. A relationship with a young man in high school—one that seemed at the time to be "the one"—became more intimate than it should have. Cindy started drifting from the Lord. She attended church less and less during her college years and moved far from her church home and family shortly after graduating. When she parted ways with her first boyfriend, she entered into a second intimate relationship. This started a decline during which she began walking further and further away from God. Initially, she blamed the distance on needing to sort out her beliefs. In reality, the conviction she felt was just too inconvenient. She no longer wanted to manage the guilt. So, Cindy turned her back on religion and pursued a secular worldview that worshiped freedom, independence, and worldly enlightenment.

Recently, Cindy began attending your church. Her life, she said, seemed to be spinning out of control. She wondered if getting back to her spiritual roots would help.

As you listen to Cindy, you begin to ask questions. Cindy eventually admitted she is living with her current boyfriend. When her tears start to flow, you press in a little further and find out that Cindy recently had an abortion. Through sobs she tells you that she felt she had

no choice. She found herself “stuck” in a tiny house in an impoverished neighborhood with nowhere to go.

The pregnancy was more than a surprise. While Cindy had been using birth control for seven years, she did not realize that the antibiotics she had been taking (for a questionable STD) decreased their effectiveness. Her only thought was, “I can’t be pregnant!” She said she even prayed, for the first time in a long time, “Please . . . do not let me be pregnant!” But when she went to Planned Parenthood, her suspicions were confirmed; Cindy was expecting a baby. When she told her boyfriend, he just laughed. Later he commented that they simply could not afford to have kids. Cindy said she had frequent flashbacks of seeing her boyfriend punch their dog (a chow) when he escaped from the yard and kick her Pomeranian off the bed when the dog annoyed him. Translating that kind of behavior to their child was a frightening thing to imagine. And when Cindy thought about moving out on her own, she got even more anxious. She worked 12-hour night shifts, so she could not figure out how to secure childcare in that situation. On top of that, she was deeply in debt without enough money for the up-front costs of an apartment. After briefly envisioning moving back to Indiana with her parents, she realized that no living situation would eliminate the fact that she would still have to deal with her child’s abusive father during visitations.

Cindy said she felt like she was at “rock bottom.”



# Case Study Discussion

What challenges do you anticipate?

How do you anticipate the enemy's influence in this situation? What does he want for Cindy? for you as Cindy's advocate?

How will you encourage Cindy?

What are the lies that are operative in Cindy's heart? What scripture will you point her to?

How will you advocate for her to the church leaders?

# Bibliographies

## Bibliography from Training Session

Lawrence, Bernie, and Ann Maree Goudzwaard. *Help[H]er: A Churchwide Response for Women in Crisis*. Lawrenceville, GA: PCA Committee on Discipleship Ministries, 2020.

Mehl, Scott. *Intro to Messy Care and Discipleship: The Messy Art of Helping One Another Become More Like Jesus*. Video Series. <https://ibcd.org/messy>.

Mehl, Scott, Rachel Cain, Ann Maree Goudzwaard. *Intro to Messy Care and Discipleship: A Companion Guide*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2021.

Ortlund, Dane. *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020.

## Annotated Bibliography for Suggested Reading

Cogdill, Melanie, ed. *Beyond the Roles: A Biblical Framework for Women and Ministry*. Lawrenceville, GA: PCA Committee on Discipleship Ministries, 2019.

The issues we face—personal and corporate—are varied and complex. Our theology determines our response to them, and our ministry to other women must be grounded in a biblical understanding of what God has said about life's issues. *Beyond the Roles* brings together an ethnically and generationally diverse group of authors to share Bible-based responses to contemporary issues. Collectively, the authors remind us of the gospel truths in which ministry is to be rooted and give us tools to address current challenges while remaining anchored to God's Word. Essays by well-respected leaders in women's ministry address such issues as our need for the Word, developing sound theology, personal image, time management, unity in the body of Christ, cultural and racial diversity, gender dysphoria, singleness, and more to encourage us in our own lives as well as in our ministry to other women.

Hodge, Karen, and Susan Hunt. *Life-giving Leadership*. Lawrenceville, GA: PCA Committee on Discipleship Ministries, 2018.

This book will change your worldview as it relates to leadership. And the authors—the past and present Directors of Women's Ministries in the PCA—both live and inspire the biblical, covenantal leadership their book describes. The book addresses leadership in the Church as *biblical*, modeled on the story of redemption. As Jesus changes our unredeemed status from death to life, He also changes our identity as life-taker to life-giver. This enables us, His image-bearers, to imitate Him in life-giving leadership. The authors also show leadership in the Church as *covenantal*. Contrasted with a corporate view of top-down authority, leaders in

God's family are described as servant-leaders—called to set aside their own “needs” for the sake of others, and rejoice in the achievements of their sisters as if the accomplishments were their own. Biblical, covenantal leadership asks: Whom can I promote? Whom can I take with me? Whom can I help? And it doesn't wait for an invitation (or a place at the table) in order to serve. This book is the perfect precursor to *Help[H]er* as it demonstrates the posture necessary to render the best one-another care in Christ's body.

Owen, John. *Spiritual Mindedness*. Edited by R.J.K. Law. Edinburgh, UK: Banner of Truth, 2009.

“All actions, good or bad, come from our thoughts. So our thoughts are the best and surest way of showing us what we are . . . ‘As a man thinks in his heart, so is he’ (Prov. 23.7).” In his opening paragraph, Owen directs our attention to the inner realm of the heart as it thinks, feels, and chooses. He makes a strong biblical case that, because everything we do is born in that inner realm, we had better be spiritually minded! He then goes on to masterfully articulate how to direct our minds to spiritual objects and matters. The outcome of a worldly focus (no life, no peace, and no rest in God) is contrasted with that of being spiritually-minded, enabled to subdue the cares of the world, and discover true peace in the only One who makes life worth living.

Ten Boom, Corrie. *Tramp for the Lord*. Ada, MI: Baker, 1974.

Do you like the smell of sheep? If you want to minister to people in crisis, it's a scent you will need to get accustomed to. Life is messy. People are messy. Ministry is messy—and messy ministry can be disorderly, and foul, and inconvenient. Not many could claim a better understanding of this than Corrie ten Boom. Her education for ministry was received at Ravensbruck concentration camp during World War II. Afterward, her “golden” years were spent “tramping for the Lord,” meeting people in their pain and suffering all over the world and sharing the beautiful gospel truth. Having lived through almost inconceivably difficult circumstances, her message powerfully translates into a much-needed announcement of hope, faith in the darkest of days, and life—eternal life.