Hope with Skin on...

Becoming a Church Where No one suffers alone

Desperation Doesn’t Always Look Like Desperation

- People can appear happy while struggling deeply
- Faith doen’t make someone immune to emotional suffering
- Silence doesn’t make desperation disappear

We cannot always see what someone is carrying

Even People of Faith Experience Desperation (Job 7:13-15)

- Job experienced overwhelming anguish
- Scripture doesn't hide human suffering
- We should not shame people for expressing their pain

Stuggling doesn't mean someone has stopped believing

Jesus Was Willing to be Interrupted (Mark 5:25–34)

- Jesus noticed the woman
- Jesus stopped for her
- Jesus listened to her story

Sometimes ministry begins when we're willing to stop and notice

Are We Safe People to Talk To?

- People often decide whether it’s safe to share their struggles by:
  - Watching our actions
  - Listening to our conversations
  - Observing how we respond to others

Our response to others may determine whether someone feels comfortable asking us for help

“Do Not Harm Yourself, for We Are Here.” (Acts 16:23–34)

- Paul recognized the immediate danger
- Paul intervened to protect the jailer’s life
- Paul offered reassurance before addressing anything else

Sometimes the first act of ministry is helping someone stay safe

How Can We Respond?

C – Commitment

A – Ask

L – Listen

L – Lead

We don't have to be experts to recognize someone's pain and help them find support

Have the Courage to Begin the Conversation

Commitment: Tell someone who can help
Ask: Be clear, compassionate, and direct
"Are you thinking about suicide?"

Asking directly doesn't put the idea into someone's mind

Listen to Their Story. Lead Them to Help

Listen: Be quick to listen and slow to speak. (James 1:19)

Lead: Focus on safety, not immediately solving every problem

- Stay with someone in immediate danger, if safe
- Connect them with appropriate help
- Never promise to keep suicidal intentions secret

Hope with Skin On...

Hope can look like:

- A phone call
- A listening ear
- A compassionate conversation
- Someone willing to walk alongside another

God’s love becomes visible through the way we care for one another

What Kind of Church Will We Be?

A Church Where:

- People can be honest about their struggles
- Burdens are shared, not hidden
- Asking for help is met with compassion
- No one has to suffer alone

“Bear one another’s burdens...” – Galatians 6:2