

Devotion – Day 5 – Blessed with Hope – Life Week 2023

Bible readings: Romans 5:2-5, Romans 12:12, and 1 Peter 1:3-4

What do you hope for? An “A” on your final exam? The perfect gift? A soaking rain for the garden and crops? A better-paying or more secure job? Healing for yourself or a loved one? All of us have used the phrase “I hope ...”, but oftentimes our “hope” is based on the Webster’s dictionary definition: “... to cherish a desire with anticipation; to want something to happen or be true.” This hope is based on doubt and uncertainty. More like wishful thinking, right?

God’s Word uses the word hope over 129 times in both the Old and New Testaments. These words, breathed by the Holy Spirit, far surpass our deepest desires or our wishful thinking. In both Hebrew and Greek, the word “hope” means to “anticipate with pleasure.” It is an “expectation filled with a joyful trust and confidence of what is sure!”*

The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 5:2-5: **“Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”**

For those of us living with, and perhaps suffering from, a disability, or for those of us caring for someone who is disabled, we don’t need wishful thinking. We need the power and the strength that comes from God our Father through faith in His Son! We are blessed with hope that is confident and sure! We are in this for the long haul, as seen in Romans 12:12: **“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”**

1 Peter 1:3-4 reminds us that we are born again to a living hope: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you ...”**

This promise, this *living hope*, this joyful expectation will sustain us as we near the end of our days on earth. None of us knows how many days God has written for us in His book, but we know our inheritance is waiting for us—kept in heaven by God Himself. We have been blessed with hope. Encourage one another with these words.

*Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, MacDonald, © Unknown