

September 24, 2017

Peculiar Hope

ROMANS 5:1-8

Finally, we are a people of hope. Hope is an eschatological word. It's a hope that struggles in the tension of already/not yet. This hope is forged in suffering, as a recollection that the justified life is not a cakewalk. Persecution is a real threat to these Roman readers. But, hope is never a disappointment because, while the hope of final glory—full restoration of the Garden—is not realized, we do live in full realization of the love of God. Its effects are tangible and overwhelming. This hope should color the way we see the world. It should remind us to not be afraid, because the suffering of this world is no longer the final punctuation of our story. God's full, coming redemption is the final word (Timothy Brooks, 2017).

When we are reconciled to the God Who is our Father, we discover He wants not simply to enjoy this one-to-one relationship, but to enlist us in His service in working for His kingdom. That will bring all kinds of pressures and problems which will require us to hang onto faith and hope, even when we don't sense His presence or feel as though there's anything happening. We mustn't imagine our feeling of being close to God is a true index of reality. Paul is summoning us to understand the reality, the solid rock beneath the shifting sands of feeling (NT Wright, 2004).

The Gospel must be good news for everyone or it isn't good news at all. If the Gospel doesn't save everyone, it doesn't save anyone.

Next week: Signs You're in a Relationship — With Jesus

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Therefore, since we have been **made righteous** (*dikaioo* - justified, acquitted, freed) through His faithfulness, we have **peace** (*eirene* - exemption from rage & the havoc of war, rest, safety, tranquility) with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have **obtained** (*echo* - possess, hold in our hands) **access** (*prosagoge* - our acceptance by God into close relationship with Him) by faith into this grace in which we stand through Him, and we **boast** (*kauchaomai* - exult, consider a bonus) in the **hope** (*elpis* - confident expectation, foundational belief) of God's **glory** (*doxa* - approval, brilliance, majesty).

But not only that! We even take pride in our **problems** (*thlipsis* - tribulation, pressure, trouble, oppression), because we know trouble produces **endurance** (*hupomone* - persevering, steadfastness, trustworthiness), endurance produces **character** (*dokime* - proven, tested, and found worthy), and character produces hope. This hope doesn't put us to **shame** (*kataischuno* - disappoint, disgrace), because the love of God has been **poured** (*ekcheo* - distributed lavishly, without portions) out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Who has been **given** (*didomi* - supplied, furnished) to us.

While we were still **weak** (*asthenes* - helpless, feeble, sick, unimpressive), at the right moment, Christ died for ungodly people. It isn't often someone will die for a righteous person, though maybe someone might dare to die for a good person. But God **shows** (*sunistao* - demonstrates, establishes, brings together) His love for us, because while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

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