

June 28, 2015

Read Romans 15: 13 – May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Today's *Roots* comes from a response I got from the confirmation questions I asked in a previous edition. I will keep the responder anonymous, so unless they wish to reveal themselves, let us just learn from the formative experience this verse had for them. Paul's encouragement and promise to the Roman Christians is a powerful one here in this verse. He is emphasizing that in Christ the promises of old from God are confirmed to be true, which gives both Jews and Gentiles hope.

Think of your own life. Where does your hope come from? First think small. Some hope may come from exciting news you heard about a loved one possibly coming to visit. Some hope may come from the possibilities of a coming vacation. Some hope may come from seeing a child finally understand something you've been trying to teach them. We experience hope in many and various ways. The hope that we get from all of these events, gives us fuel, fuel to get through tough times, fuel to continue what we're doing because we see that it will be worth it. Hope carries us through many and various situations and stages of life. We believe something will happen and that belief carries us on.

Unfortunately, sometimes our hopes are dashed against life that comes hard and fast. A car accident might ruin the eventuality of seeing a loved one. An old habit might ruin all of hours and hours

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of teaching a child something new. Sometimes our efforts just aren't quite enough to get the results we had hoped for in working out, or

putting a project together. But, the hope Paul offers and encourages the Roman Christians and us with is a different kind of hope. It is a hope that is confirmed in Christ. By his death and resurrection we have joy and sure hope in the promise of forgiveness and salvation from our God.

Though our joys in this life may be quelled and our hopes for our future on earth may be ruined, our hope in God cannot be taken from us. Regardless of the disappointments we face in life, Christ will not fail us. His love for us was shown in the nails, beating and spear he took for us. His promise of life is assured by his defeating death on Easter morning. The hope God gives us by faith in Christ is one that will lead us through all of our trials in this world. It is the solid rock on which we stand when everything around us falls apart. Even more than that, it is the joy from God and the hope of salvation in the Son guaranteed by the Holy Spirit who lives and dwells in our hearts that will see us through death and into life everlasting.

We Christians have a powerful hope, a hope guaranteed by the Spirit who sealed us in baptism, a hope confirmed in the gifts of forgiveness and courage we receive from Jesus' body and blood. It is a sure hope. It is a life giving, living hope. May your lives be filled with the hope from the God of hope. Amen.

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