

LifeLines January 8, 2024

Today's Scripture: 1 Verse

Romans 15:13

**May the God of hope fill you with all joy & peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

WHY WE'RE HERE

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture is inspired by God & is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

CONTEXT

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome about 57 AD, when he was in Corinth. He hoped to visit the church on his way to Spain.

Christ came to serve the Jewish people as the fulfillment of all God's promises to them. We know Christ became the hope of the Gentiles, too. God always wanted to bring Jews & Gentiles together into a unified body in Christ & make it possible for them to access His grace. Early believers (Gentiles & Jews) in Rome were breaking down walls of racial & ethnic prejudice by fellowshipping & sharing meals together.

Paul mentions hope in Romans more than in any of his other letters. His prayer for the Christians in Rome is a powerful statement about what God can do in the heart & mind of every believer. It's a benediction as well as an intercessory prayer. You might want to speak it over your loved ones.

DIFFERENT VERSIONS (Versions not listed are similar to the NRSV.)

AMP

May the God of hope fill you with all joy & peace in believing [through the experience of your faith] that by the power of the Holy Spirit you will abound in hope & overflow with confidence in His promises.

CEV (Contemporary English Version)

I pray that God, who gives hope, will bless you with complete happiness & peace because of your faith. And may the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with hope.

CJB

May God, the Source of hope, fill you completely with joy & *shalom** as you continue trusting, so that by the power of *Ruach HaKodesh*** you may overflow with hope. (*Wholeness that comes from God's complete peace; **The Spirit of the Holy One; the divine force, quality & influence of God over the universe & His creatures)

ERV (Easy-to-Read Version)

I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy & peace as you trust in Him. Then you will have more & more hope, & it will flow out of you by the power of the Holy Spirit.

MSG

Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives, filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

NCV

I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy & peace while you trust in Him. Then your hope will overflow by the power of the Holy Spirit.

SELAH

BREAKING DOWN THE VERSE

May the God of hope... "God of hope" is a glorious title for our Creator God! Faith in God *is* hope! Hope is the expectation that a desire will be fulfilled. In scripture, hope focuses on confident expectation or firm belief in God's promises, as opposed to wishful thinking. Woe to us if we ever place our hope in *something* or *someone* other than God! (This includes politicians!)

fill you with all joy & peace... Notice it says "all" joy & peace, not merely a portion of joy & peace. True abiding hope, joy & peace can only be found in God. They *cannot* be found in the circumstances of our life or people in our life. They are only found in the One who is above our circumstances. We don't have joy & peace *without* hope. These are among God's gifts to both Jews & Gentiles. No one who believes is excluded.

in believing... Faith allows hope to enter us. Believing is a key. When we don't believe, it's difficult for the hope God offers & longs for us to have to permeate that unbelief. When we truly believe, our belief stands firm in all life's circumstances. Even when we are sad or feel despondent, confused, disappointed, alone, raw, or empty, our faith can stand firm. Jesus is the solid

rock, the foundation on which we've built our faith. Our spirit knows this. It is the soul-ish part of us that doubts & clouds our understanding.

As our faith grows, our hunger to know more increases, so we increase our study & knowledge. In doing so, we learn to apply the principle of hope in everyday trials & experiences. Through believing, we exercise our faith & experience the truths & gospel promises God has for us. Faith is the confidence & certainty of the things for which we hope.

so that you may abound in hope... Hope is a demonstration of courage, faith & determination. Hope *feeds on endurance* (Romans 5:3-5, below). Nothing can separate us from the love of God or His peace – unless *we allow it* to do so, & that is *not* His will for us! That's why He wants us to be filled to the brim & overflowing with hope! To abound in hope means an overflowing measure far beyond human capacity to produce, comprehend or describe. Think of "my cup overflows." We cannot produce our own hope or joy or peace. Each is a gift from God to those whose faith & trust is in Him.

by the power of the Holy Spirit... We've studied a good bit about the Holy Spirit's power in those of us who believe & have accepted Jesus as the Lord of our life & our Savior. The power of the Holy Spirit is nothing less than the power of God who created the universe! *Think about it* - Everything Jesus did on earth was through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's power is the resurrection power that gives new life. It's the power that produces holiness in us as we walk a life of dependence on Him. When we trust God & have faith, we can ask the Spirit to fill us with the hope He offers so freely! The Holy Spirit *equips us* with hope!

SELAH

RELATED VERSES (What other verses come to your mind?)

Nehemiah 8:10c, For the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Psalms 39:7, And now, O Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.

Psalms 42:5, Why are you cast down, O my soul, & why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him, my Help & my God.

Psalms 71:5, For You, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth.

Psalms 71:14, But I will hope continually, & will praise You yet more & more.

Proverbs 23:18, Surely there is a future, & your hope will not be cut off.

Jeremiah 17:13, O hope of Israel! O Lord! All who forsake You shall be put to shame; those who turn away from You shall be recorded in the underworld, for they have forsaken the fountain of living water, the Lord.

Jeremiah 29:11, For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare & not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

Lamentations 3:21-23, But this I call to mind, & therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

Isaiah 41:10, Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My victorious right hand.

Romans 5:1-2, Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; & we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.

Romans 5:3-5, And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, & endurance produces character, & character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Romans 8:24-25, For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Romans 12:12, Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

Romans 15:4, For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness & by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:12, And again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the One who rises to rule the Gentiles; in Him the Gentiles shall hope."

1 Corinthians 15:19, If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

2 Corinthians 1:10 (In this verse, Paul is referring to the deadly affliction he & others experienced in Asia.), He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on Him we have set our hope that He will rescue us again.

2 Corinthians 1:20, For in Him every one of God's promises is a "Yes." For this reason it is through Him that we say the "Amen," to the glory of God.

Ephesians 1:3-6, Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy & blameless before Him in love.

Ephesians 2:12, Remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, & strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope & without God in the world.

Philippians 4:6-7, Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer & supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts & your minds in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 1:27, To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1 Thessalonians 1:5a, Because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power & in the Holy Spirit & with full conviction;

1 Timothy 1:1, Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior & of Christ Jesus our hope.

Titus 2:12b-13, Live lives that are self-controlled, upright, & godly, while we wait for the blessed hope & the manifestation of the glory of our great God & Savior, Jesus Christ.

Titus 3:6-7, This Spirit He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified through His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hebrews 6:19-20, We have this hope, a sure & steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 11:1, Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

1 Peter 1:3-5, Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, & into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled & unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 John 3:2-3, Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when He is revealed, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is.

SUMMARY

God is a God of hope. Biblical hope is fixed & founded on God. In the Bible, hope & faith are sometimes synonymous. There is no hope *without* God in our lives. Hope is a gift to us from God. Hope gives us assurance of God's promises which fills our hearts with joy & peace. Again, hope isn't a *wish*. It's a solid, expectation founded on God's unchangeable Word. To have & increase in abundant hope, we must spend time in God's Word & keep believing to build that faith & our trust.

God promises that when we place our trust in Him, the Holy Spirit will fill us to overflowing with hope rather than sadness & disappointment. The more we surrender to God, die to self, live for Christ, rejoice in the Lord, pray without ceasing, grow in grace & mature in faith, the more we participate in the ongoing process of sanctification (being set apart from sin & made holy). Through that process, we have the miraculous peace of God within us & the glorious hope that is ours in Christ. Think of *all Christ has done* for us, *is doing* for us as we journey through life, & *all He has promised us* in the days to come. What are some examples?

CONCLUSION

Would our family, friends & fellow church-goers describe us as someone who abounds in hope? It's a good question to ask ourselves – *Do I abound in hope?* If not, why not? Hope, joy & peace are a triad representing the attitude of Christians looking toward the future. They reflect the depth of our spiritual experience. Faith opens the door to the Spirit.

Jesus stated that in this world we would have tribulation/face persecution, & He reminded us that He had overcome the world. *He is our hope*. He's the *Source* of all hope, as well as the *Object* of our hope.

Perhaps you've experienced a *season* of hopelessness, despair, depression or discouragement. Depression affects all ages, from preschoolers to seniors. It's thought to be the second largest killer after heart disease.*** Everything in your "world" may not be rosy. That's because we still live in a fallen world. What do you do when you don't feel joy & peace? When you feel as though you're losing hope? The answer, the antidote is to *believe!* Keep believing! Never stop! We are filled with joy & peace *in our believing!* We are able to do this because *our God is a God of hope!* Reread Isaiah 41:10, above.

In Jesus, we have life & hope & all the Fruit of the Spirit. These gifts will never be withdrawn from us. We are the ones who must maintain our faith & trust in Him. This LifeLines benediction-prayer can only be accomplished through the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit dwelling in our heart & in our spiritual life. Like so many other things, we access hope, peace & joy through faith. They are gifts from the Most High God, our Creator, our Heavenly Father, through His Spirit in us. Thanks be to God!

*May the God of hope
fill you with all joy & peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Let Romans 15:13 be a *LifeLine* for you!

SCRIPTURE IS OUR –

LifeLine!

Take a minute or two & write something you want to remember about this LifeLine:
