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Theme: “Hope”

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-2

Romans 12:12 (NIV) *“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”*

A Thought:

I just don't care anymore! I'm going no where fast. I'm frustrated with God. Every time I turn around He throws something at me that I cannot handle. Why are you so difficult God? Does this sound like you or someone you know? Well, don't fret. The scriptures are filled with folks with troubled lives. A few of our God-fearing forebears experienced circumstances beyond the comprehension of souls like you and me. In today's vernacular it is God's version of “tough love.” Many (not all) of the issues we face are of our own making. Although Pride, Ignorance and Sin do come into play. Moses, David, Job, Solomon, Peter, all have something in common...they suffered the consequences of their actions. They also talked to God...and the good Word tells us that they were argumentative, they questioned His edicts, they also had many moments of despair, they lied, they were suspicious of His love and a good life was enjoyed and they sinned. Sound familiar? Romans 15:4 (NIV) *“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide.”* What encouragement and a wonderful teaching lesson on hope to know *“there is nothing new under the sun”* (Ecclesiastes 1:9b NIV). In the end they loved our Father and He loved them. On a personal level our Lord does not expect heroic actions though He does want you to be obedient and to be in harmony with Him.

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

Talk to yourself:

- In your first moments of despair and disappointments who do you reach out to first? Your spouse? A love one? A pastor? God? The Bible?
- Do you pray and talk to God? If not...why not?
- When things are going great do you wander away from the Word, prayer and fellowship? How much time do you spend praying?

Scriptures to read:

- Daniel 1: 1-3; Romans 8:24-25; Galatians 3:26-29, 5:5; 1 John 5:1;
- Hebrews 3:6; 1 Peter 3:15; Psalm 42:5; Isaiah 40:31; Hebrews 11:1

Quote:

Religious author C.S. Lewis on False Hope: *“Satan's attack on hope has been to deceive us into thinking that God will "endorse" our own dreams, passions, and desires if we hold onto them dearly and have enough "faith." Scripture, however, commands us to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Christ in dying to self. We are to hope in His will, His word, His life, and not our own. Self-indulgent "hope" is "on shifting sand" and is really no hope at all-- but mere delusion, rebellion, and disobedience.”*

Bottom Line:

Since the Fall we have had to endure difficulties and problems that confront us daily: Family issues, employment, children problems, caring for our parents and grandparents, medical issues the list goes on. There are 66 books in the Bible a library that exudes stories encompassing morsels of wisdom, hope, joy, holiness, patience, values, love, tough love and much, much more. Don't feel as though you are alone. To get a grip on what I am talking about and to look beyond today it is important that you read and study the following scripture Romans 15:13 (Phil) *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in your faith, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, your whole life and outlook may be radiant with hope.”* What a punch these words have on our respective lives....God of hope, hope and joy, peace in our faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. Finally, the last six words leave no doubt, confusion or dispute....God opens his arms to us with an outlook of radiance and hope. You get it? **NOW....THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE.**

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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