

Hope Does Not Disappoint Us

Romans 5:3-5

God is our refuge

In our life we encounter many situations. Some are happy ones, joyful ones. Some are sad and painful. Generally in life, if we cannot find God, if we do not know the Lord, cannot find the way to the Lord, my brothers and sisters, where shall we go? Sometimes I think the Lord makes things happen on purpose. To make us feel there is no refuge in this world, except for Him. When things are going well we do not easily look for refuge. We do not easily reach out to Him, who created this world, without whom not even the smallest flower would bloom, without whom not even one hair on my head would grow.

Gratitude

When things are all going well, I easily forget to thank the Lord for all he's done for me. I start to take the most beautiful things for granted. My life, my parents, my friends, the blue sky, the clear, shining water, so easily I take things for granted.

Disaster strikes!

But then something happens. Something strikes me. As with Job! Job had everything, but then God took it all away. Not just his car, not just his stereo set, not just his machine; no, God took it all away. Yet Job kept hope. He kept hope because he believed in God! He trusted God. Yes, if it had been possible he would have been the one to say (Roman 5:5) "And hope does not disappoint us..."

Sometimes something strikes us. Strikes us very hard. The loss of a loved one. Oh, how hard it is to find comfort! Yet with trust in Him, a blue sky appears after the dark thunder-clouds pass.

Persecution

Lately, I've been thinking. You know, when you're persecuted, something happens to you. It's not like being hit hard, but it's like a long-lasting pain, like a migraine, that is present

during all the time of persecution. It is the type of pain most hard to digest. Yet today one human being still subjects another to it! Still we live in a world full of separation, bigotry, persecution.

(((The white man in a black church)))

As a white man speaking to you, I can feel something of your long-lasting pain! That black people have suffered throughout their years. It is a pain that does not make you say “ouch” but that one can read in your eyes. Yet, I can understand you. You know, as a white man, I am following a yellow preacher from Korea. And because he is despised, a misunderstanding, rejected, because he brings the word of God, untwisted, unsophisticated, as Martin Luther King used to do, because he is rejected, and because I follow him, people do not see a white man anymore. Actually, white people think I am yellow. That’s why we, you and I, we are one in heart, because we understand persecution, rejection, being pushed in the corner, being misjudged. But! But where do we go? Where is our refuge? If not for the Lord, brothers and sisters, where is our refuge?)))

Serving mankind

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us all the lessons of the heart. How to love one another, how to serve one another. While the disciples were arguing about who was the best, who was the most handsome, who was the most clever (reminds me of the presidential elections), our Lord was silent, went to the well, got some water and washed these men’s feet. They were shocked! It caught them totally off guard.

Today, once more we must be ready to wash the feet of mankind, serve mankind, love mankind, yes, give them what we have found when we sought refuge with our God on high! Hope! Love, Vision, something no money can ever buy.

(((As a white preacher, standing here before you, I want to declare to you that this is my place to repent. This is the place to repent for what my ancestors did to your ancestors. In a white church, as a white man, it’s hard to repent.)))

For God, there is no difference of color, of race, of nationality. For God looks for the heart. He looks for the heart that turns to Him. Turns to Him in joy and sorrow, in happiness and in grief.

God’s ideal

Let us make a pledge today that we believe that God is almighty. That, as He does not rest until He sees His children one, that we, with the hope He has given in our hearts, shall not rest until this world is one! Until all evil has vanished from the earth. Until God has wiped away our tears, until our God shall have His tabernacle with men.

For God is our refuge, yes, and hopes make us not ashamed, because the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.

Amen!