

Hope in a Season of Hopelessness

By James S. McIntyre, Sr.

“Even in the inevitable moments when all seems hopeless, men know that without hope they cannot really live, and in agonizing desperation they cry for the bread of hope.”

“When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe, working to pull down the gigantic mountains of evil, a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows.”

“In the midst of outer dangers, I have felt an inner calm and known resources of strength that only God could give. In many instances I have felt the power of God transforming the fatigue of despair into the buoyancy of hope.” Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The year 2020 was without a doubt one that will forever be remembered as the year of great depression, discouragement, and despair for people all over the world. The beginning of 2020 brought with many great prospects of good, optimistic and anticipation of so many wonderful hopes, dreams, and plans. As the year progress much of what was expected quickly turned to disillusion and disappointments for many. The nation and world encountered what has been proclaimed as the unseen enemy called Corona Virus, better known as the COVID 19. Humanity was under attack for the first time by a dreadful contagious disease which rendered us defenseless and without a reasonable explanation of what to expect. Terms and conditions that we would become familiar with such as social distance and shelter in place, became the everyday language and the new normal way of life. What was certain is this contagious dreadful disease was real, and had no respect of social class, economic status, ethnicity, educational level, or age.

Life as we knew it was changed from family and fellowship gathering to social distance, from open expressions of smiles to face covering and from the freedom of moving from place to place with ease to shelter in place. Churches exchanged the comfort of padded pews for drive up parking lot or live stream services. There is a noticeable change in congregations gathering in houses of worship to experience the synergy of fellowship and the energy of spirit filled worship. Our children who were accustomed to sitting in a classroom led by teachers, transitioned to stay at home with parents or caregivers home schooling. Businesses who depended on commerce to pay their bills and their employees, experienced massive layoffs, and shutdowns. Hopelessness fostered a since of Despair, Despondency, and Depression as the order of the day.

One would have thought that such dreadful conditions would have fostered a spirit of empathy or if not at least sympathy for ones fellow man. In a time when unity, sensitivity and understanding for another plight. A nation and yes even the church suffered division through preponderance and politics. Further exacerbating conditions with religion, racial and civil unrest all coming to a head on the steps and in to the halls of the peoples house there in Washington DC.

A nation struggling to preserve life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness now finds itself praying for hope for a brightest and better future.

That hope can only be found in God. The church must take her rightful place to share God's hope in times of darkness and despair. Hope is not wishful thinking. It is a feeling that what is wanted will happen, it is a desire accompanied by expectation. Hope is the essential and fundamental element of the Christian faith, it is the core of Christianity.

Christ is the objects of our hope. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.....” 1 Peter 1:3*

Doctor King's words ring true today for our nation as we sit on the break of transformation, filled with expectation that God will restore us. Yes, without a doubt, in the midst of outer dangers, there is a inner calm, a known resource of strength that only God can and will give.

As His church we must be a light that shines as a beacon of hope in the darkest of times for all the world to see. The word of God tells us that, if in this life we only have hope, we are all men most miserable. However, we are encouraged *“to rejoice in our confident hope, be patient in trouble and to keep on praying,” Rom 12:12.*

There is hope in seasons of hopelessness,

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