



EVERLASTING LIGHT – PART 3

HOPE IN DESPAIR

CONFIDENT AMID DARKNESS

ISAIAH 59:9-11

So justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us.

We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. ¹⁰ Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like people without eyes. At midday we stumble as if it were twilight; among the strong, we are like the dead.

¹¹ We all growl like bears; we moan mournfully like doves.

We look for justice, but find none; for deliverance, but it is far away.

ISAIAH 60:1-3

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

² **See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.**

³ Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

JOHN 16:33

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

ROMANS 5:1-5

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. **And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.** ³ **Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope.** ⁵ And hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

**Jesus’ people are confident even when surrounded by darkness.
Bringing light into the darkness is difficult and transforming.
We hold to hope that the light will fully overcome darkness.**

DON’T GIVE UP HOPE

ROMANS 5:2-5

And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ **And hope does not disappoint us,** because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

LUKE 1:5-9, 11-13, 18-19

In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷ But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

¹¹ Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³ But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

¹⁹ The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.”

**We must not allow the disappointments of other unfulfilled hopes to temper our hope in God.
In the midst of despair, go ahead and get your hopes up. Way up. God is going to exceed our expectations.**

SHARE YOUR HOPE

1 PETER 3:

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

Right now the world needs Christians who can speak confidently about our hope in God.