

HOPE IS COMING DEVOTIONAL

By Madeleine Wiedemann

WEEK 4

HOPE IS IN US, IN FULLNESS

“For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.”

Colossians 2:9-10 (NLT)

“To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Colossians 1:27 (NIV)

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

1 Peter 1:3-5 (NLT)

It can be tempting to read about hope and then look at ourselves and get discouraged about our day-to-day struggles. However, there is one aspect of hope that we must never forget: Jesus is hope, and Jesus’ Spirit lives in us in fullness (Colossians 2:9- 10). Therefore, we have living hope in us, whether we feel it or not. We must take that hope, unwrap it, and saturate ourselves with it every day. Remember, hope in God isn’t a wish list; it’s a confident expectation of what we know is true.

Romans 8:23-25 articulates the longing to experience our complete adoption and freedom in God which makes us cry out in eagerness because our current existence is marked by a sense of ‘apartness’ from God. But right after this verse, in vs. 26, we are told to rely on the Spirit to live in this tension. The Holy Spirit is the final answer to how we live a life of hope. He can give us hope; He is hope in us. He can point us to the truth of heaven while we serve and love others in the depths of their sin and suffering. Lean into the Holy Spirit today and ask Him to anchor you in Jesus but also to send you out with a life ring of hope for the world.

What do you hope for? And not just a wish list, but on a deeper level? If you hope for marriage, ultimately, what we often long for is intimacy and acceptance. But what if Jesus’ offer of hope was a promise that we could experience intimacy and acceptance from Him whether we receive the earthly blessing/challenge of marriage, or not? If you hope for a successful career, often buried within that hope is a desire for recognition and achievement. What if you could take hold of the idea that the God of the universe already knows and approves of you? What if that hope meant you were free from the need to succeed in the eyes of the world and free to live for a purpose anchored in heavenly realities?

Earthly hopes will ultimately disappoint because the hope that lasts is found in Jesus alone.

REFLECTIONS

- *What do you put your hope in outside of Jesus? And can you reflect on the times these things/beliefs have disappointed you when you have ‘hoped’ in them (e.g. success/achievement/acceptance of others)?*
- *Do you live like you have a wellspring of hope available within you?*
- *Do you ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with Hope daily? If not, how might this change your day? Why not try it this Christmas season?*

CHALLENGE

Set yourself a new year’s Hope resolution, and set some reminders for the coming months to remember what you’ve learnt about Hope and to remind yourself not to lose this incredible reality as the rush of the year presses back in.