

Bible Study Alive

Romans 5:1–5 (ESV)

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Tonight we will study the second and third results that are a chain reaction from suffering. We have already studied endurance or patience as the King James Version puts it. Endurance is said to produce character and character produces hope.

What is Character.

Character is the ESV's translation of a Greek word difficult to put into English. In the King James Version, it uses the word experience. The original Greek word (*dokime*) indicates the result of being tested, the quality of being approved on the basis of a trial.

Endurance produces proven character – that is, the kind of character that has been tested, has gone through the fire, and comes out like pure gold. This proven character brings about dependability in the life of the believer.

What is Hope.

The word translated as “hope” is different than the typical meaning we connect with the word today. Hope usually means looking toward something that might happen, depending on certain circumstances. But true Biblical hope is not wishful thinking about something good that might happen in the future. Biblical hope is a confidence from God concerning His promises, which makes it sure and leaves no room for doubt, because it is based on God's word.

Why Hope will not be disappointed.

Paul said hope does not put us to shame because God has poured his love in us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is described in Ephesians 1:14 as the earnest of our inheritance.

Ephesians 1:14 (KJV 1900)

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:14 (ESV)

14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

The point is this: just as sure as the Holy Spirit has been given to us and is real and present, so are all the promises God has made about the future. The hope we grow into is based on the track record of God giving us His Spirit, sustaining us through trials, and giving us consistent victories over all things.