



Trinity's Desert Voice

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus."

(Romans 15:5)

Is There Any Hope?

These are times of great hopefulness. "Why?" you ask. What indication do we have that we should believe things are going to improve?

Certainly, if we were to judge by the way things appear, it seems there are many reasons not to hope. War, natural disasters, political strife and uncertainty in church teachings all point to impending catastrophic things to come.

Something is different, however. Something is new and refreshing. Reality has taken a positive turn for the better. "How?" you ask. "Is there something I'm not seeing?"

Ever since Jesus Christ came into this world, laid down His life to save us from God's eternal condemnation, and rose again victoriously on Easter morning, things have never been the same. Where death and evil reigned, now life and salvation have marched in through Christ's victory.

St. Paul resoundingly declares: "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:3-6).

As a result of Christ's saving work, there is real hope and victory for all who believe. The ability to believe such fantastic news is a gift from God. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). Christ's victory over sin,

death and the devil has become our personal victory by faith in this gift of God.

What does this hope look like in our daily lives? Romans 12:12-13 teaches, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

The very things which would normally presage impending doom — natural upheaval, wars, political disasters, etc. — are providing fertile ground for the Good News of Christ's resurrection hope to be shared and practiced. Sin, death and the devil are meeting defeat everyday as God's forgiveness and peace are brought into the darkest reaches of hopelessness and despair. Countless individuals are finding out that it is not too late to be saved. Many, by God's grace, will know through believers like you and me sharing God's Word and Sacraments that these are great times of hopefulness through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastor Smith