

## **A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME**

### **JOYFUL IN HOPE**

Romans 12:12 "Be joyful in hope. . . "

According to a survey of 2,000 people, two-thirds of Americans don't believe they'll see positive social change during their lifetime. The survey also found that around six-in-ten (58%) say that life for people like them is worse today than it was 50 years ago. In another survey, about 48% of respondents said they felt "down, depressed, or hopeless" for several days in the previous week. (USAFacts.org/Pew Research/Studyfinds.org)

Hope is defined as "to look forward with confidence to that which is good and beneficial." Apparently, many Americans are having difficulty being confident regarding their future as an NBC poll found that only 14% of those they polled were "happy."

According to a CBS news poll, the four things most Americans base their happiness upon are: 1) How things are going with their family, their children, their health, and to an extent with their jobs and careers. 2) Family and home life. 3) Health and friendships. 4) Money (low and high-income earners nearly tied with this answer)

There is something conspicuously missing in this list, is there not? Your faith in your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gives you, says Peter, ". . .a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade." (1 Peter 1:3-4)

A life that looks forward with confidence to a good and beneficial future must be anchored on someone or something that is absolute, never changing, and capable to generate such hope. When your hope is in God, in His Son Jesus and created by the Holy Spirit, it is a hope that God gives you. It is an anchor for your soul, firm and secure.

Your hope, anchored in the grace of God shown you in the sending of His Son for your salvation guarantees you, you have a good and beneficial future. "On Christ the solid rock you stand. All other ground is sinking sand." (LSB 761)

Prayer: Jesus, lead me on my life's journey until my rest is won. In Your holy name. Amen.

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.

Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be. Refrain:  
Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. Refrain:

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain:  
(LSB 809)