

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

LOOKING FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE

Romans 15:4 "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope."

For many, the future is daunting, intimidating, and troubling because it is uncertain. Fortune telling is a booming business because people want to know what their future has in store for them. Others don't want to know their future, even though they are deeply concerned.

Can you look forward to the future with confidence? Absolutely! St. Paul in today's devotional verse directs you to the entire Old Testament with the words "For everything that was written in the past. . ." He knew that the entire purpose of the for God giving humanity the Holy Scriptures was to reveal Jesus Christ as the only hope, the only foundation for confidence for their future. John writes regarding the Holy Scriptures, "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:31) The life here is everlasting, eternal, never-ending life that is promised to all who believe in Jesus Christ as their personal savior.

St. John writes, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure." (1 John 2:2- 3) St. Paul wrote of his Christian hope, "I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death." (Philippians 1:20)

"Your hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. . .on Christ the solid rock you stand. All other ground is sinking sand." (LSB 575)

Prayer: Grant me, O Lord, faith in Jesus to look forward even to all eternity with complete confidence. In His holy name. Amen.

Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; At Thy speaking it was done.
For created light we thank Thee, While Thine ordered seasons run. Refrain:
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, Dark as night and deep as death,
Broke the light of Thy salvation, Breathed Thine own life-breathing breath.
Refrain:

Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous; Bright with Thine own holiness,
Glorious now, we press toward glory, And our lives our hopes confess.
Refrain:

From the cross Thy wisdom shining Breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;
From the cross forever beameth All Thy bright redeeming light. Refrain:

Give us lips to sing Thy glory, Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us, Mouths that speak Thy holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia! May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias, Alleluias without end!

God the Father, light-creator, To Thee laud and honor be.
To Thee, Light of Light begotten, Praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer, Glory, glory be to Thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever Praise the Holy Trinity!
(LSB 578)