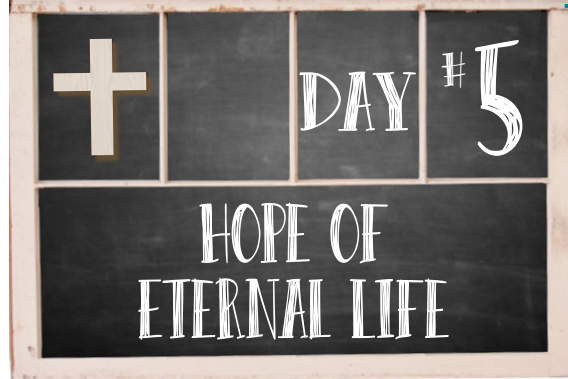


The God Of All Hope



My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have redeemed. And my tongue will talk of your righteous help all the day long (Psalm 71: 23-24a).

Waiting for test results may seem like an eternity. Waiting for the birth of a baby feels like an eternity, especially if there are extended labor pains. Watching an elderly parent slowly fade and die through the process of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, or ALS can redefine our perception of eternity. Yet no matter our earthly definition of eternity, they are all far from God's planned eternity for us. In Him, the hope of eternal life far surpasses our greatest imaginations. We view life in days, months, and years. For God, they all roll into one.

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (2 Peter 3:8).

An eternity of being with Jesus is hard for us to fathom. Seeing His beautiful face, observing the glory of His kingdom, and experiencing His incredible love in its fullness far exceeds any love felt or imagined here on earth. Yet is it? Eternal life is ours today. We received it in our Baptism and now it resides in us, for *whoever believes in the Son has eternal life (John 3:36).*

This is all possible because of all the Father has given us through the Son. *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in*

righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:4-7).

In and through Christ, we have inherited the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), the fullness of Christ Himself (Colossians 2:9), the wisdom and knowledge of God (Colossians 2:2-3), and even the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:9-12). These we receive, not of our own doing, but through His. These are all part of our eternal life today.

Yet, the most amazing hope of eternal life will be that of spending an eternity with the Almighty God and the Savior of our souls, Jesus, and so today, we do not lose heart. *Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).*

Prayer: Father, help me embrace today as a gift, knowing that in my final eternal home, I will be with Christ Jesus. Thank You for the gift of salvation enabling me to spend eternal life with You forever. Amen.