

Joyful in Hope – 37 – April 29, 2020 (thoughts and ideas to encourage and challenge)

*“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
Romans 12:12*

JOIN US THIS EVENING ON ZOOM FOR HERITAGE PRAYERS.

Nine Reasons to Hope in God’s Goodness by [Rick Warren](#)

For many around the world today, the last few months have been full of stress. You’ve probably experienced it as well.

On the surface, it’s easy to think your stress centers on whether you or someone you care about gets COVID-19 or on the growing economic challenges surrounding the pandemic.

But those aren’t the real reasons stress has skyrocketed lately.

It’s because we have forgotten how good God is.

Anticipating God’s goodness is the foundation of all hope. We can’t have hope unless we believe God is good—and will be good in the future.

If God isn’t good, we have no rational, logical reason for hope.

One of the Bible’s most famous verses reminds us: *“For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the LORD. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope’”* (Jeremiah 29:11 NLT).

We serve a good God who has only good plans for our lives and our ministries, even in the middle of this pandemic.

Psalm 23 gives nine different benefits of God’s goodness—reasons why people can have hope no matter what is happening with COVID-19. By the way, pastor, these nine truths aren’t just for the people you lead. They are for you, too!

God will meet your needs when you’re worried!

“The LORD is my shepherd; there is nothing I lack” (Psalm 23:1 HCSB). Because God is good, you don’t need to worry about any of your needs.

God will teach you to relax when you’re stressed out!

“He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters” (Psalm 23:2 NIV). God will lead you to a place of peace. He’ll teach you how to relax when you’re stressed.

God will replenish your strength when you’re empty!

“He refreshes my soul” (Psalm 23:3 NIV). In the midst of this pandemic, many of you are completely out of gas and have been running on fumes these last few weeks since Easter. God promises to give you the resilience you need for any trouble you encounter today or tomorrow.

God will guide you when you’re confused!

“He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake” (Psalm 23:3 NIV). Indecision is stressful, but God promises to guide you. You don’t need to worry about tomorrow’s challenges because God will help you with whatever you face.

God will walk with you in your dark and fearful days!

“Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me” (Psalm 23:4 HCSB). The last couple of months have been dark for many around the world, but God hasn’t abandoned us. We will go through more dark periods in the future, but God will walk through them with us, too. If God is with us, it doesn’t matter who is against us.

God will protect you when you feel insecure!

“Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4 HCSB). A shepherd used a rod and staff to help protect the sheep. God protects us when we feel powerless against outside forces. He gives us assurance of our future during any trouble.

God will publicly show his favor on your life!

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows” (Psalm 23:5 NIV). God doesn’t just promise to show his favor on your life; he promises to do it in front of the people who attack you. He promises to not just meet your needs but to give you abundance if you trust him.

God will be good to you no matter what happens!

“Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life” (Psalm 23:6 HCSB). You may not feel as if you can count on anything right now, but you can count on the goodness of God. Other people may not be good to you in the future, but God will. You can count on his consistency and benevolence—no matter what happens.

God will take you to heaven one day!

“I will dwell in the house of the LORD as long as I live” (Psalm 23:6 HCSB). No matter what you experience on earth, God promises you an eternal home with him in heaven. Your future is guaranteed.

Many people in our world and in our churches are trying to receive these nine benefits through their careers, their relationships, or their savings accounts. Many are seeing the frailty of those crutches right now, and they are looking for hope from somewhere else.