

My Life Testimony at Fishersville Baptist Church

Fishersville, VA

April 01, 2001

Text: I Peter 1:3-9

When I found the passage that talks about a living hope, in First Peter 1, Verses 3 through 5, at the 1995 Youth Ski Mountain Camp, I kept going back to these verses and reading them over and over again. This happened when I joined with Christian friends and tried to find a definition of the word “hope.” As I was doing this, I looked up the Coordinate and came with First Peter 1, Verses 3 through 5. I didn’t have the full understanding of these verses before then. I thought I did in the camp, but I didn’t get the full understanding of this passage until I spent more time with God on this. As many days and months passed by, I kept looking back and reading the same passages and tried to capture the meaning of it.

Let me share with you God’s Word from First Peter, Chapter 1, and Verses 3 through 9. Before I share with you the passage and my testimony, let me tell you what God has been showing me as I take this year to go into accounting training and get ready for the world. As most of us know Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center is the greatest place to train for on the job replacement. But, also, it is not easy to go one day without going through trials and tribulations. Every time, there are some kinds of problems that occur in my life. But I’m taking this opportunity to be in Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center to train for one of jobs I could do for my future living. I’m in the accounting training program. Also, God has provided some

Christian friends and resources while I'm in the center. I do not know whether I will pass this training or not, but God knows. He knows everything that we need and what we desire.

In Mathew 7, verses 7 and 8, it says, "*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*" That is from the New King James Version. And in Matthew 21, verse 22, it says this: "*And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.*"

Especially this year, my prayers have been slowly appearing and God has been leading me to a different path from other people. I don't know why He wants me to lead the Bible study group or communicate to many different people in the center and other part of the community. Maybe He wants me to teach and feed His Word to other people or this is a part of His plan to go with my accounting training or He wants me do both. Whatever He provides for me, I am going to take the step of faith and do His will.

Let me read to you from First Peter, Chapter 1, and Verses 3 through 5, in the New Century Version.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In God's great mercy he has caused us to be born again into a living hope, because Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Now we hope for the blessings God has for his children. These blessings, which cannot be destroyed or spoiled or lose their beauty, are kept in heaven for you. God's power protects you through your faith until salvation is shown to you.

In these first 3 verses of the passage, I can find His promise to you and me. That is hope. The hope, in this passage, is not the same definition from the dictionary. It is not a hope that we are wishing for. But it is a hope from God, a living hope and confidence that He gave each of us.

Although I am a disabled person, God gave this kind of hope in my life, a living hope. Not the dead ones or a questionable hope that we are seeking. He gave me a living hope that He will lead me to the future, to understanding His purpose for my life, and to His promise. Before I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior, I really did not look through myself in this crippled body. I did not know what I would face as I am going through my life as an orphanage boy, before I arrived in this country. Or I did not know what I would be doing in the United States. I had wishes of being a pastor before I arrived in this country, but, now, it's up to God about what I need to be doing since I'm more into mathematics and calculation than English. Let God lead me into one path. He knows I went and searched many different directions and was only making myself tired. It's not easy to search what I want to do with my life without God. It's not easy to pass through all lives circumstances that are waiting for you and me to step into. It's not easy that I am at the altar and sharing my testimony to hundreds of you. This is the first time to stand in front of you and share His Word and my testimony.

But that doesn't mean I am unpleasant about my life while I'm in this crippled body. I am happy with who I am, because God is in my life and is working with me. All of us understand God just didn't make us to suffer and die without finding the purpose of our lives. He just didn't make me as a disabled man, because He has plan for my life.

In Jeremiah 29, verse 11, God has promised to you and me. *“I say this because I know what I am planning for you, says the Lord. “I have good plans for you, not to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future.”*

I thought being an orphanage boy was the only way to survive. No! But my life is kept moving to the next level of living. God didn't stop my life as an orphanage man, but He is taking me to the next level of faith to live life.

Let me read to you in verses 6 and 7.

This makes you happy, even though now for a short time different kinds of troubles may make you sad. These troubles come to prove that your faith is pure. This purity of faith is worth more than gold, which can be proved to be pure by fire but will ruin. But the purity of your faith will bring you praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is shown to you.

Even as I face many difficulties in my life; my faith is growing and strong. I had many tests from God in the past and am still doing so now. He is teaching and testing me how to go through many of life circumstances and live by His plan.

This crippled body, which I'm wearing like a suit, will not last forever. I am happy who I am or what I am. Although I have been going through many trials and tribulations, I have a joy in my life, the joy from my Savior, who identifies Himself as the *Son of God*.

Even though we cannot see Jesus Christ physically in these days and are going through many trials and tribulations in our lives, He is right there and waiting for us to respond to Him. Why? So we can experience the joy with Him.

Verses 8 and 9 say this. *You have not seen Christ, but still you love him. You cannot see him now, but you believe in him. So you are filled with a joy*

that cannot be explained, a joy full of glory. And you are receiving the goal of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

I cannot explain the joy that He gave me to other people, who I live and hang with. I don't know why, but His joy is so powerful, like an explosion. Even as I am facing a lot life challenges with this crippled body, I have a joy in my life. I do not complain to God about my crippled body. He created me as who I am and I cannot take back to God that what He had created. But I can experience the joy that is from the love of God and live my life that He gave me.

Let me ask you this question. Do you have a joy in your life while you are going through many tough decisions and challenges? Even though we are disabled or not, we cannot escape from our daily problems. But we can have the living hope and the joy that comes from our Savior, Jesus Christ. This is the only way to go and live through our daily life crisis. Again, Christianity is not a religion, but it's a relationship with the living God. The world's definition of Christianity may be confusing to us. For example, one person may tell you God's truth and another person may tell you another different aspect of His truth. But we may not have to be confused from the two different kinds of God's truth if we are willing to seek Him first. We have the handbook, which guides us how we to live with God's truth. The Bible. It's not just a book that was filled with many historical events, but it's for how we can have and understand the living hope and the joy that God is willing to give us.

If you would like to receive the living hope and the joy from God, surrender your life to Him. If you are facing a life crisis or having physical pains in your life, just give your problems to Him. This is not my idea or Pastor Johns to let me share God's Word with you, but it's God. He gave this challenge to take me to the next stage of my life. Paul says in Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verse 20, "*With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than we can ask or imagine.*" Now you have the chance to receive and experience the joy that God *has caused us to be born again into a living hope.*

Thank you.