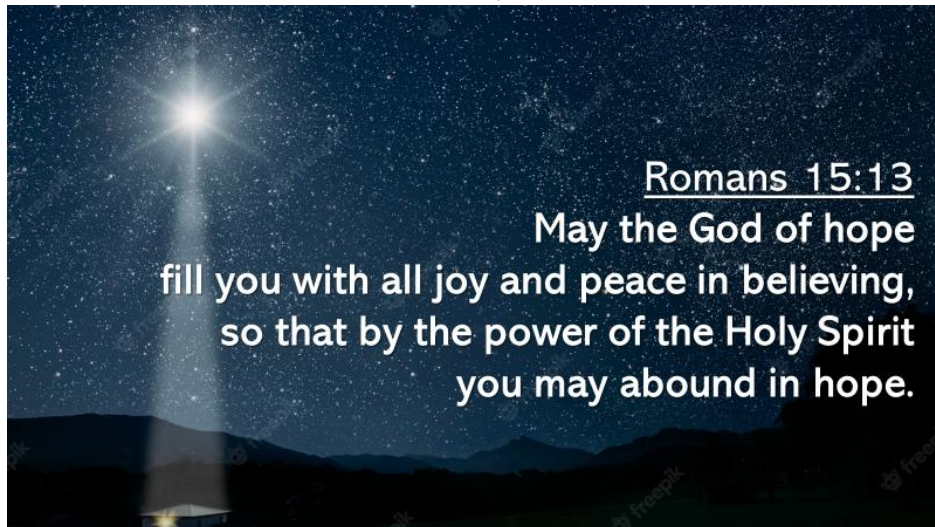




The Bible reveals this about God, Romans 15:13:



This verse doesn't say that God hopes.

It says that God is... the God of hope.

What does that mean?

It means that hope saturates every aspect of God's person – it is who he is.

The Bible also reveals to us that God lives outside of time; he never changes – he is the same yesterday, today and forever.

God has been, is and always will be... the God of hope.

Before the God of hope created all that is, the Father, Son and Spirit lived in an exquisite fellowship with one another.

God did not create the universe and the world and its creatures, including humanity because there was some deficit within himself that he intended the creation and its creatures to fill.

In the relationship of the Father, Son and Spirit – God has all that he needs.

Genesis 1 says that the God of hope created us in his likeness.

What does that mean?

Let me mention several things.

- He created us to be creatures of hope.
- He put eternity into our hearts.
- He created us for the purpose of relationship.... not just with other human beings or creatures, but most importantly, with himself... the Father, Son and Spirit.

What this means is that God created us to relationally live... in close proximity to himself... to have our lives centered and rooted in him.

God created the human heart so that it would find... in relationship with himself, everything it needed.

Listen to this amazing verse, Psalm 36:5-9:

Psalm 36:5-9

Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.
Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.
You, Lord, preserve both people and animals.
How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!
People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

Psalm 36:5-9

They feast on the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.
For with you is the fountain of life; in your light
we see light.

The human heart was created to feast on God – on his unfailing love, faithfulness, righteousness and justice.

God is the fountain of life.

In relationship with him we live the life that is truly life!



We have all experienced homesickness at one point or another.

It is that ache within... that longs... to be with those we love; in the place... we call home; the place where we truly belong.

Every person at varying points in their lives feels homesick for God.

Though we bear his likeness, because of our first parent's decision... we are born without him in our lives... and nothing and no one can fill the vacuum... which his absence leaves within us.

Though we try ... we cannot fix what has been broken; experiences, relationships, things cannot truly fill our inner emptiness.

But what we cannot do to rescue ourselves, God did for us.

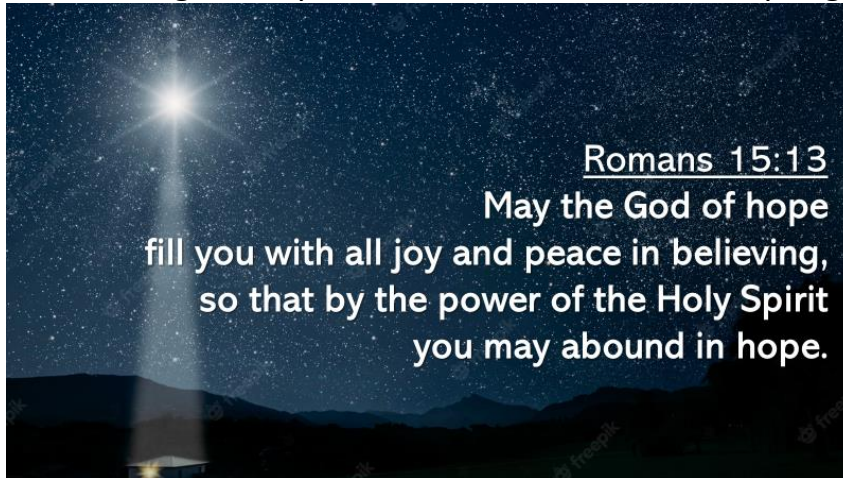
He sent his Son into the world to bring us home to himself.

That is why when a person does believe in God's Rescuer and receives Jesus and his salvation, they often describe the experience of being found by Jesus, and being drenched in God's amazing grace... as coming home.



To those who come to him through faith in Jesus...

- God gives the joy of his welcome
- God gives a profound peace of heart and mind that is the result of him forgiving our sin and cleansing our inner person of its stain
- God gives hope that is the result of him adopting us as his children



When the triune God is welcomed, he gifts us with the Holy Spirit who comes and makes his home in us.

As Romans 15 says... it is the Spirit's presence within that causes Jesus' followers to...



The original Greek verb translated "abound" means "to run over, to be wealthy, to have more than enough, to transcend all boundaries." gotquestions.org

Hope is not wishful thinking.... but a gift from God.

The hope described in Romans 15... spills out and runs over and transcends all boundaries.

It is also a gift that is held onto.

Hebrews 6 explains what it means to hold on to hope.

Hebrews 6:17-20

Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf.

Look at the verbs used – “fled” “... and “take hold.”

Fleeing carries the sense of running from something... to... something.

Taking hold conveys the idea of effort and resolve.

When I first moved to Sooke I kayaked the Sooke River from the Potholes to the campground.

When I came to the first set of rapids, I hit a large rock and flipped my kayak and ended up in the water.

Right where I fell in was a large, but submerged rock that I grabbed hold of.

As the current threatened to sweep me through the remaining rapids, I held onto with desperation and then ever so slowly I began to pull myself to my feet and then even more slowly, step by step, I walked to the bank.

In Hebrews 6 who is it that we flee to? Who it is that we take hold of?

Not an idea, but a person... the God of hope.

Is not this statement incredible... the God of hope, who is our true home... is also an anchor for the soul?!

An anchor holds a boat steady.

It prevents a boat from being tossed about, even capsized.

What is true of a boat is even more true of the human soul.

- It can be tossed about.
- It can be inundated.
- It can feel like it is drowning.

Jesus came into this world to be the hope of every heart.



Jesus is the Savior of the world.
He is the Word of God made flesh.
He is the King of Kings who brings salvation.
He is the friend of sinners.
He is the love song of God.
He is Emmanuel – God with us.

He came for you.
He came for me.

How do we respond to this good news?

We fall on our knees and believe in him.
We make room in our hearts for him.
We place him at the center of our lives to be the One in charge.
We worship and adore him.

C.S. Lewis wrote in Mere Christianity:

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists.

There is food for our hunger.
There is air for our lungs.
There is water for our thirst.
There is sleep for our tiredness.

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists.

If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.

In response to what Lewis wrote, Paul David Trip penned a poem called, Made for Another World

Made for Another World

I give painful evidence every day.
I experience it
in predictable and unpredictable
moments.

I guess I should know better,
but I am often caught
off guard.

Made for Another World

There is an insatiable longing
inside of me,
a thirst
that never seems to be quenched.

This deep hunger doesn't go away
no matter how busy I get
or how hard I work to be
distracted.

Made for Another World

I long for
justice, love, hope
peace, perfection, satisfaction
mercy, contentment, rest
harmony, joy

and none of these longings
ever gets fully
satisfied.

Made for Another World
And so, in my quest for more
I am faced with
the incontrovertible
daily evidence

that this simply is not all that there is
and the sure truth
that I was hardwired
for another world.

We were made to live a life where God is not absent; but is at the center; where fellowship with him fills our hearts with purpose, joy, delight... and hope.

Hope is forward-looking.
It anticipates what is not yet.
It is focused on what will be.

There are three aspects to hope:
desire – to be accepted, loved, forgiven, understood, assured, etc.
object – we look to something or someone to satisfy the desire
expectation – of when, where, how our hope will be realized

We hope