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Here's Hope

By Rev. Jerry Rea

"Throw in the Towel"

It was an average Sunday morning in an average church in South Alabama. During the invitation a gentleman approached and laboriously spilled his heart. "I had decided to throw in the towel when I came." Those were his words. I had never seen him before and have never seen him since. It dawned on me with great and grave force how many (so many) are right on the edge. I did not know if he were going to quit the ministry or end his life. It didn't matter; the issues were the same. He'd lost hope. He could see no good end in sight. He was at the end of his rope. The man continued, "But today I've changed my mind."

Every day from morning to sundown, we live in a great desert of hope. Some lose hope because they've received bad news. Perhaps they've heard that their dad has died, or that their son/ daughter is drifting away from any semblance of life and light. When the doctor calls and delivers bad news, it is suddenly and powerfully jolting. When you find out that someone you looked up to (even idolized) is living a double life, it pushes you toward hopelessness. When the faith you'd placed in someone falls harshly to the floor, hope falls with it. When you see an evil side of people it's often hard to hang onto hope. Hope happens, but so does hopelessness. Hopelessness, often happens quickly, but it also can happen over time. Like a slow leak in your car tire, it slowly disappears. It feels like water evaporating. You don't actually see water evaporate, but one moment it's there and the next it's gone. Sometimes this precious commodity we call hope vanishes.

But then, there's the other occurrence. Sometimes when you least expect it, God does something. It often doesn't have to be a big thing. It is often best if it's not a big thing. Then, almost like a... miracle, hope happens. It's like that man in church on that Sunday. He told me he did not live in our community but was just passing through. Hope happened that day for him. He was on the edge, but God renewed his heart. Quickly, often too quick to see, God does or gives what we need. Our head clears, our mind brighten, and our heart jumps.

I pray that God does a "hope" thing in your heart today. I ask God that He give you a superabundant well-spring from within. May God give you what you need. Sometimes we don't even *know* what we need, but God always does. He has what you need. He is what you need. He is the God of all hope.

He is what you need,
Jerry Rea