

01-29-21

Here's Hope

By Rev. Jerry Rea

The Ability to Hope

Dr. Harold Wolfe did a study of 250,000 American soldiers imprisoned by the Japanese during World War II. These men were subjected to long months of harsh treatment, poor food and forced labor. Don't forget, they were far from home with no contact with those they loved. The prospect of making it out alive was small. Many did die and almost all were sick. They lived with the prospect of death ever before them.

There were, however, a very few, who with identical treatment, showed only slight damage from these nightmarish months in prison. Dr. Wolfe and staff were intensely interested in these men, in their perspective, and how they were able to maintain their sanity. Interviews with these men showed no physical superiority, but simply an above-average ability to hope. It seems small that this belief, or attitude, could be capable of totally sustaining persons during dark times that might make others crack or despair.

Dr. Wolf believes that it was hope that kept these boys well. Some even say it was hope that kept them literally alive. Hope inside helped to deal with the crushing circumstances outside. Note that "hope" is a spiritual thing. This again proves that in the realm of the spiritual there are things that are more powerful than the physical.

Do you have hope? Our God is a God of all hope. I'm not sure what burden you carry today, but hope in your heart can help sustain you. The Bible teaches of a hope that this world is not all there is. We are promised that He will always be with us. That means I can always hope to never be alone. By faith we believe there are no totally hopeless circumstances. There is nothing He can't "fix." We also don't want for love. He truly cares about us and our day to day lives.

There is an amazing story of a father's love in Scripture. His son was demon-possessed. The disciples tried to cast out the demon but were unsuccessful. He came to Jesus and asked for help. It was hope that drove him there (that and a father's love). So many are driven from hospital to hospital seeking (in hope) for a cure. Jesus did cast out the demon. The son was restored to health. Notice, though, it was hope that drove him to not give up and seek Jesus. Don't give up; take your case to Jesus. *Hope is key.*

Driven by Hope,
Jerry Rea