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Here's Hope
by Rev. Jerry Rea

Hope from the Bible

Knowing as we do, that hope is important - so very important... where do we get it? Where do we find it? How do we begin to have it? Romans 15:4 gives us a clue. The scriptures were written, so that as we meditate on them, and the struggles and experiences of others, we "have hope."

I believe the thinking is something like this. They made it - we can make it too. Those who have survived breast cancer, are often the best ones to help others maintain hope they can survive it too. We meditate on the lives of past heroes of the faith. They endured, they fought, they were faithful, and so can we. Perhaps the thing that impresses me most as I read the Bible is that the heroes (so often) were not perfect... not even right. They had a life of faith that moved up and down (and even sometimes sideways). They were constantly running into conflict with those outside the circle of faith and those inside the circle. They won some battles and they lost some as well. They remained faithful. They hung in there. And if they can do it, so can I.

Incidentally, if you will read that verse again (Romans 15:4) you'll see that endurance and patience are involved. They did not just magically have hope. But as they "endured," and "learned," and were "patient," hope happened. And having hope they were able to struggle on, to push forward, and to put the next foot in front of the last one. We so like the instant hope idea don't we? Just let me click on that, or push that button, or hold that lever and it happen. Spiritual growth takes time and effort. God isn't in a hurry - and things that are worth a lot often take a lot.

Now, here's the gravy. Romans 15:13 says that the God of all hope will help us. He will fill us with joy and peace in believing - and we'll have hope. "Believing?" Believing what? Well, back up in the verses that precede 13, and see that believing in Jesus (as Messiah) yields hope. He is the key. As always, from what Jesus has done - we have hope in so many directions. Do you have the key? Do you know the key? It's not a secret. It's not just for just a few. "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Hope Happens
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