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Here's Hope  
by Rev. Jerry Rea

### Rejoicing in Hope

Romans 12:12 encourages us to keep "rejoicing in hope." Hope serves as an on-going push to move us to be optimistic. It helps us to see the bright side, instead of just the dark side. Hope picks us up when we fall or fail. Hope helps us to push for the prize, instead of wandering through life. Hope helps us smile, when life makes us frown. Hope in the heart, makes for a wiser head. It is hope that pulls us up, when our struggles pull us down. We can rejoice in hope!

Our hope is first of all, not just for this life, but the next one as well. Those who've trusted Jesus initially are learning to trust Him daily. Each 24 hour piece of life has its own trials, troubles and struggles. We push forward believing as we do that one day it will be worth it all. But all of us are headed for the same end. We will all end our earthly existence one day. However, the Christian has a new home for which to look forward. Our life is not all there is. There is a special forever awaiting all those who are following Jesus. We follow Him to the end of our lives, and then we step over into His forever. Our hope is eternal, not just for this life.

Second, our hope is based on Jesus, not on ourselves. Sometimes I do well, but sometimes I don't. Sometimes I just get up on the wrong side of the bed. Do you? Sometimes most of us fail, and often miserably. If my hope were based on me, then I'd have little hope. My hope would be limited to what I could do, or my own strength. The glory of the gospel is that it isn't based on us. We may not be faithful, but He always is faithful. We may not have strength, but He always has strength. We may get confused, but He always knows where He's going. Our strength may be drained or dry but His is always green and growing. Our hope is not based on us or our abilities. Our hope is based on something higher, and more secure.

Third, our hopes are secure. Hope has a way of evaporating. Have you ever had hope in the morning just to see it dry up by the evening? Have you ever had hope, then the person you trusted, well, let you down? It is extremely frustrating trying to find something secure to "hope" in. On our best days our hopes are up and down. Sometimes we're "on the ball." At other times we're "out in left field." The hope we have in Jesus is secure. It cannot be changed, or altered. It is based on the actions of Jesus. We hope on our "maybes" (in the future). In Jesus we hope in what He's already done. We may rest securely in the finished work of Jesus. He doesn't have to achieve anything, He already has. Our investments vanish quickly. Our politicians change as soon as they move into Washington. Our physicians retire and leave us looking for another one. Our churches are often "pastor led" - and then the pastor leaves. The medications that "used to" work have a way of changing. The wisdom of our therapists and psychiatrists are as changing as the waves at the beach. However, our hope in Jesus is secure. God never changes. We can depend on Him, and His forever work.

I'm Rejoicing in Hope  
Jerry Rea