

Lent Devotional March 26, 2025

Scripture

Romans 5:1-11

1 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. 9 Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. 11 But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Devotion

The Rev. Greg Steible '14

I was 16 years old. You've been there? Everything is dramatic, everything is over the top, everything is either the greatest thing on earth or the worst reality imaginable. Come to think of it, that sounds about like my current reality, too. But I was 16 years old and I was new to the faith. I stumbled on this passage one Sunday morning, bored during a sermon, flipping through the blue pew Bible. To say this passage changed my life would be a little bit of an understatement.

We boast in our hope of sharing the glory, and we boast in our suffering. That dichotomous truth struck me as so deeply real, and good, and helpful. Few are strangers to suffering. This season is, in many ways, structured as a remembrance of suffering, and the idea that our friend Paul reminds us that this suffering has transcendent value is powerful. Suffering, endurance, character, and hope in Christ—these, each of them, are gifts. We revel in our suffering, not as masochists enjoying the pain, but as transformed and transforming beloved children of God. These sufferings are opportunities for the most poignant of love, the gentlest of grace, the rowdiest of justices, the fullest opportunities to glimpse Jesus. I didn't get that at 16, but as I've sat with these words in more tangible sufferings, I've come to see a much more full image of Jesus in a suffering world.

Friends, I'd like to invite you into that boasting—into moments of seeing Christ's hope this week. Even as we may see suffering all around, we know that Jesus is right there with us.

Prayer

Holy Christ, suffering and glorifying Lord, sit with us. Help us to see the hope we have in you, which transcends all. Help us to be instruments of that hope in your beautiful world. Amen.