



## *God—Our Source of Hope When Life Hurts*

I knew something was seriously wrong the moment I answered my phone. My sister-in-law choked back tears as she told me that a doctor had just diagnosed my 88-year-old mother with a life-threatening condition. “She has twenty minutes to talk with each of her kids and to decide whether or not to have surgery,” she said. Twenty minutes to choose between life or death. The clock was ticking.

When I woke early that morning, I had no reason to suspect that crisis would strike my family before noon. I would never have guessed that within hours I’d leave home to sit vigil at Mom’s bedside until she took her last breath on earth a week later.

Life is anything but predictable. When 2020 dawned, who could have guessed that a mystery virus was about to strike and bring disappointment, loss, and division? Who could have guessed that a pandemic would force us into isolation, upend our plans, throw us into turmoil, and leave us longing for hope?

Life changes in a nanosecond, and it deals blows we don’t expect. How easily those blows can push us into a place of despair unless we stand firm on the truth found in God’s Word. Scripture has given me consolation day after day as I’ve grieved for my mom and for the losses suffered by so many around the world. Romans 15:13 has proven especially meaningful: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

Hope is mentioned not once, but twice in this verse. One Bible dictionary defines it as “trustful expectation, particularly with reference to the fulfillment of God’s promises. Biblical hope is the anticipation of a favorable outcome under God’s guidance.” This contrasts to a dictionary definition of hope as “a feeling that what we want to happen will happen.”

The first mention of hope in Romans 15:13 refers to God as its origin. We anticipate a favorable outcome not based on circumstances but on His person. In this life, we will face disappointments or life-altering detours. We will experience the death of a dream or the loss of a loved one. But no matter how difficult our circumstances, we can have hope because of who God is—powerful, wise, sovereign, and good. He’s our guide, our comforter, our rock that remains steadfast when everything around us crumbles. He’s our constant companion who has promised never to leave us—not even for a moment.

The second mention of hope refers to us as the recipients. God pours hope into us when we choose to believe that He is who He says He is and that He always keeps His promises. When we do this, He gifts us not with a flimsy optimism that everything will somehow work out okay but with a rock-solid anticipation of a favorable outcome under His guidance.

# GRACE FOX

know you are loved



And because we live among humanity desperately seeking hope, He wants our supply to spill over and splash those around us, creating in them a curiosity to know our secret. We can't concoct this hope in our own strength; He makes it possible by the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. Imagine—this is the same power that raised Christ from the dead! (Romans 8:11; Ephesians 1:19,20)

The more I meditate on Romans 15:13, the more God heals my hurting heart. He wants to do the same for you, my friend. We can hang onto hope knowing that someday Jesus will return and set everything right. Someday He will wipe every tear from our eyes. (Revelation 21:4) In the meantime, we can live in hope because the Source of hope lives in us.

*May I pray for you today? "Dear God, we acknowledge You as the reason for hope. When life hurts, help us keep our thoughts fixed on the truth about who You are. Remind us that You live in us by the power of Your Holy Spirit. And fill us to overflowing with a hope that reflects You to those around us. In Jesus' name, amen."*

Grace Fox speaks at women's events internationally. She is an award winning author, a member of the First 5 writing team (P31 Ministries), and co-hosts the podcast "Your Daily Bible Verse." With her husband, Sailor-Man, Grace lives on a sailboat. Connect with her to book her for your next event at [www.gracefox.com](http://www.gracefox.com)

