

## Message Notes – December 3, 2023

### *Fully Human, Fully Divine* *- The Foundation of Hope* \*

#### Thursday, December 7

Read Romans 5:1-5. Pastor Jack shared that while he was writing his proposal for his Doctorate Project, he enlisted the help of a church member who shared with him that “Hope is not a strategy.” If you read carefully Paul’s words to the church in Rome, you might detect the mechanics of how hope is generated. First, we see that the world is not perfect and because of that we suffer and “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 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.” (Verses 3-5)

We might see how hope is generated but then it matters where you place your hope – upon our loving Creator or elsewhere. Hope doesn’t disappoint us because it is rooted in God’s promises. There is work to do when you hope for something in your life and for other in the world. What might hope in God look like in your life? Write your ideas here.

#### Friday, December 8

Yesterday we mentioned that hope is not a strategy. That means hope is not passively waiting for something to happen but rather we partner with our God and with each other as together we work for the good of all creation. The thing about partnering with our Creator God is we need to look around and see what God is doing through the people in the church and in the community. What are the needs of the community in which we live, work and play? What do you see God working in our community? What work is God blessing in our community? Contemplate these questions and write your responses here.

- I. Are you a \_\_\_\_\_ person?
  - A. In her book, *Fully Human, Fully Divine*, Whitney Simpson encourages us to \_\_\_\_\_ and hope.
  - B. Another question: \_\_\_\_\_ are you a hopeful person?
  - C. Advent is a season of anticipation and \_\_\_\_\_.
    1. But it is not a time of passive \_\_\_\_\_.
    2. There is \_\_\_\_\_ to do during the Season of Advent.
  - D. A third question: To be specific, \_\_\_\_\_ are you hoping for this Advent Season?
  - E. I am reminded of the last stanza of the first verse of *O Little Town of Bethlehem*: “The \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of all the years are met in thee tonight.”
- II. Psalm 130 is a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. It was likely sung by \_\_\_\_\_ on the way to Jerusalem.
  - B. The “\_\_\_\_\_” were understood as chaotic forces that confront human life with destruction, devastation and death; it is often symbolized by deep water.

---

\*Psalm 130 and Romans 5:1-5

C. There is this sense of individual \_\_\_\_\_ as well as a reliance on God's goodness and \_\_\_\_\_.

1. Verse 5 proclaims, "I \_\_\_\_\_ for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I \_\_\_\_\_."
2. The Common English Bible, the CEB Version puts it this way: "I hope. My \_\_\_\_\_ hopes, and I wait for God's promise."
3. This is what is meant by \_\_\_\_\_ this Season of Advent and experiencing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love in new and deeper ways.
4. To embody hope means to \_\_\_\_\_ with our God toward the redemption of all creation.

III. Hope becomes the foundation of our faith in God, and according to the Apostle Paul that become apparent when we \_\_\_\_\_ about the world in which we live.

- A. The world isn't \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. Our whole being hopes, and waits for God's promises of redemptive \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. Let the waiting begin as we seek God's \_\_\_\_\_ this Advent and Christmas Season – Fully Human, Fully Divine.

## ***Daily Devotional Guide***

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

### **Monday, December 4**

What do you think of when you hear or read the word "hope?" The message began with three questions about hope: 1) Are you a hopeful person? 2) How are you a hopeful person? and 3) What are you hoping for this Advent Season? You may not have even thought of Advent as a season marked by hope. Think about your

hopes and how those hopes connect with your faith. Meditate on these questions and write your reflections here.

### **Tuesday, December 5**

Read Psalm 130 and Romans 5:1-5. During this season of Advent we will be talking a great deal about embodying the themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. To embody means to give life to something; to personify an idea or concept by incorporating that idea or concept into your daily living. Building on your reflections from yesterday's devotional time, how do you embody hope? How do your hopes shape your character and daily life? If you can't fully embrace the idea of embodying hope yourself, think of other people who you think are hopeful. You might think of them as positive or perky, but would also describe them as hopeful? Mediate on these ideas and write your thoughts here.

### **Wednesday, December 6**

Read Psalm 130. Verse 5 reads, "I hope, Lord. My whole being hopes, and I wait for God's promises." What does it mean to you to hope with your "whole being?" What are your deepest hopes? What are your hopes for your life? What are your hopes for your family? What are you hope for our church? Deeply felt hopes are indicated in the word from *O Little Town of Bethlehem*: "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." Think about these questions and write your thoughts here.