

# Second Hand Preacher

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent*

March 19, 2017

**Romans 5:1-2, 5-8**

Hope is an optimistic attitude of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes related to events and circumstances in one's life or the world at large. As a verb, its definitions include: "expect with confidence" and "to cherish a desire with anticipation". Among its opposites are dejection, hopelessness, and despair. Hope is a favorite virtue of mine helping me to stay focused always wanting the best even when things look lost. I think hope sometimes gets a bad rap for not being realistic. I believe hope is what keeps us getting up in the morning day after day.

St. Paul preached hope. Jesus is the hop that Paul proclaimed to the Romans. Being a Christian in the first century can appear bleak, but Jesus is the one who keeps hope alive. When things look bad for the Romans they just need to remember that Jesus died for them. Risking death to follow Jesus must have been tough. There must have been danger at every turn, but hope is the protector that all of the early Christians needed. Things looked bad at the death of Jesus, but for the Christian, the resurrection was the ultimate sign of hope. Paul wants the new Christians to hang in there and keep themselves connected to the source of all hope.

Jesus is the ultimate definition of hope. It allows us to dream and plan for a future. Hope is the way we can understand who we are and what we were made to do. The virtue of hope fits into salvation history. We are only saved because hope lets us believe the best. Even though we don't deserve salvation, hope makes salvation obtainable. When I think about the merger, sometimes I lose hope. I soon realized that we have a chance to survive if we could all work together. If we have consistent numbers, are financially stable, and have a positive attitude, then our hope for a great community can prevail. Hope is what makes me proud to be a Christian.