

# For Such a Time as This

## A Daily Devotional

### Thursday, January 21, 2021



**From Romans 5:**

**Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**

The above quote may sound familiar; it was part of yesterday's devotion. It is worth holding over for greater consideration. Here Paul assures his readers that they are already the recipients of the grace of God; that such grace is not delayed or reserved for some future moment or time. Such faith and such grace exists in the present – in the here and now.

Karl Barth wrote about that:

**In this hope Paul, the believer, also rejoices; for his present tribulation constitutes the living factor in the paradox of his apostolate. But his Gospel is not more than a Gospel of hope. He possesses no authority to beget the new life; he can but assist at its beginning. He has no greater competence than Socrates had! Faith has no power of anticipation; it travels by no short cut to that future eternity which lies beyond us. We have no secret treasure by which we can avoid the tension of faith or blot out the 'not yet' which confronts us. We cannot transform hope – and deny it – by making of it a present reality. What is, exists, so far as we are now concerned, always in what we are not.**

Faith does not lift us above the fray, as it were, rather it sees us through the fray. Sometimes we are tempted to think that our faith ought to protect us from experiencing suffering of any kind – the rather persistent false hope that a relationship with God would somehow insulate us from the common human tragedies and difficulties. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are not inoculated against the things that befall humanity, we are buoyed up to endure and even overcome for the glory of God.

Larry Neeb, Methodist pastor of the last century, offered the following in this line:

**Hope is better than courage when facing the future. It takes more than courage, more than a 'stiff upper lip' to begin to walk down a road that may lead to the far end of nothing. We cannot break the plane of tomorrow and see what the future will bring ... but with hope, we go there with anticipation.**

Amen and amen ...

**Prayer for the Day: (From *The Valley of Vision*)**

**Thou Great God, apart from thee I quickly die, bereft of thee I starve, far from thee I thirst and droop; but thou are all I need. Let me continually grasp the promise of thine eternal presence. Amen.**

**Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
**Greensburg, Pennsylvania**