

Richmond Hill Baptist Church  
May 16, 2010  
Hope out of Suffering  
Romans 5:1-11

Prelude

Call to Worship: *O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing*

Pray & Welcome: It's good to see you. Welcome - if you are a guest please take a Connect Card and fill it out and drop it in the offering plate when it comes by. Let's take a moment and greet one another!

Sing: *Majestic, All Creatures of Our God & King, Revelation Song, It is Well*

Children's Corner: Formula 4 Hope

Baby Dedication: Today we are going to dedicate Grace Kelly Blough to the Lord. You can come on up. Not all of their family could be here last Sunday and they asked if we could do it today.

There is nothing salvific about a baby dedication. Parents cannot choose salvation for their child by involving them in a ritual of any kind. Each person, whether they are a child or an adult, is saved through faith in Christ. While parents cannot choose salvation for their children they can choose to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and prepare them to some day place their faith in Jesus Christ.

So what is the purpose of a baby dedication?

1. A **promise** by the parents to raise their child in a Godly home.
2. A **partnership** with our church to help you raise your child in a Godly home.
3. A **prayer** of blessing upon your family and your baby.

Let me introduce to you:

1. Grace Kelly Blough (January 20, 2009) Parents: Robert & Tammy Blough

In Luke 2:52 we are told that Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and Man.

Robert & Tammy: Do you promise to raise your children in a Godly home where they like Jesus can grow in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men?

RHBC do promise to help the Robert & Tammy in this amazing task of helping them raise their children to grow in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men? Our church has a certificate of your promise and a gift for you.

Mark 10:13-16: *People were bringing little children to Jesus ..... And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.*

Offering: Thanks to everyone who helped with our Work Day!

Offertory: *The Holy City*

Sermon: **Hope out of Suffering**

Today I want to talk about something wonderful that can come out of our most painful experiences. Hope!

Hope is such a powerful word when we find ourselves in tribulation. Think for a moment about the people in Haiti following the earthquake. I am aware of at least three disaster relief efforts that have included “Hope” in their names:

Hope for Haiti, Hope for Haiti Now, Buckets of Hope (SBC). You will notice in the bulleting that John Stalder is currently in Haiti with one of our Disaster Relief Teams doing demolition work and handing out Buckets of Hope. The plan is to have share about his experience on Sunday, May 30.

Hope – let’s see what the Bible has to say about this idea of hope coming out of suffering.

Romans 5:1-8: *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>2</sup> through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.<sup>3</sup> Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;<sup>4</sup> perseverance, character; and character, hope.<sup>5</sup> And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.<sup>6</sup> You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.<sup>7</sup> Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Note: The word “rejoice” is used twice in this passage.

1. We can rejoice in the future blessings of God: Hope of Glory (Heaven, Eternal Life, Resurrection, Grace, & Peace with God) that comes by faith.
2. We can rejoice in our present sufferings.

Notice: We rejoice in sufferings not for sufferings! How does this happen? Watch how Paul develops this idea:

Suffering            Perseverance            Character            Hope

**Suffering:**

Most everyone understands what suffering is. We have seen it. We have felt it. We have heard it. We have touched it. Suffering is the first step in the refining process.

God wants us to be victorious in and through the sufferings and not try to avoid them or escape from them. Some of the most meaningful lessons are learned in the school of pain, suffering, affliction, and tribulation. Without them you will never reach spiritual maturity.

Suffering produces three things in our lives, which gives us three reasons to rejoice. The first thing suffering produces is Perseverance, which is our first reason to rejoice.

**Perseverance:**

This Greek word is a combination of “hupo” meaning under and “meno” meaning to abide or remain. Which means to stay under a heavy burden or load.

Weightlifting: Snatch or the Cling & Jerk.

It's the quality that doesn't surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. It's staying power, patient endurance with a steadfast spirit. It's the ability to hold up and not fold up; to joyfully keep trusting God in the face of opposition and tribulation.

Perseverance is the developed ability to hold up under heavy emotional and spiritual testing.

In Ephesians 6 we are told to put on the full armour of God and when the day of evil comes we are to “Stand.” Keep standing. Like the boxer.

Suffering produces perseverance and perseverance produces character.

**Character:**

This is the second reason we rejoice in our sufferings. Patient endurance results in strength of character. It denotes that which has been proven by trial. Character describes the quality of being tested and approved. It was used to refer to metal whose impurities had been purged by fire. We like our jewellery and the precious metals that accompany it to come with out impurity.

*1Peter 1:7: In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. <sup>7</sup> These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

Suffering refines our faith:

1. If a person's faith is insincere it will not last when put to the test.
2. If a person's faith is genuine it will last resulting in praise, honour, and glory.

God is not so much concerned with our comfort as He is with our character. He's more concerned with us being holy than He is with our happiness.

God saved us to conform us to the character of His Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. In our adversity God wants to bring out the qualities of Christ including the Fruits of the Spirit: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*<sup>23</sup> *gentleness and self-control.*

Suffering produces perseverance and perseverance produces character and character produces Hope.

**Hope:**

This is the third reason we rejoice in our sufferings. It is the experience of coming through a time of testing that produces hope.

Our confidence in God's ability and willingness to bring us through difficult times leads to an ever brighter hope for that which lies ahead. Hope is not superficial optimism, but the confident assurance of that which will surely come to pass.

Dr. Jack MacGorman said it this way: "Hope is not the tuition we pay as we enroll in the school of adversity. Rather, it's the diploma awarded to those who by the grace of God do well on the tests."

Hope always burns most brightly in those whose character has been developed through overcoming many sufferings, trials, tribulations and afflictions.

Marisa and I lost a baby in 1999. His name is Scott Walker. On the day of his memorial service we hear a song by Wayne Watson entitled, *Home Free*:

I'm trying hard not to think you unkind, But Heavenly Father  
If you know my heart, Surely you can read my mind  
Good people underneath the sea of grief  
Some get up and walk away, Some will find ultimate relief

Out in the corridors we pray for life  
A mother for her baby, A husband for his wife  
Sometimes the good die young, It's sad but true  
And while we pray for one more heartbeat, The real comfort is with you

You know pain has little mercy,  
And suffering's no respecter of age, of race or position  
I know every prayer gets answered  
But the hardest one to pray is slow to come  
Oh Lord, not mine, but Your will be done, Let it be...

Chorus  
Home Free, eventually  
At the ultimate healing we will be Home Free  
Home Free, oh I've got a feeling  
At the ultimate healing  
We will be Home Free

Sometimes I hear people pray to God with the goal of avoiding suffering. Perhaps our prayer should be: God in my suffering help me rejoice in you, help me persevere in faith, develop my character to be more like you, and when I find myself at the most painful moment give me hope and thank you for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

The truth is nobody gets excited about suffering but when comes hopefully we'll have the right attitude about and we can learn to rejoice in it.

It's this idea that we sing about in the song *Blessed Be Your Name*:

Blessed be Your name, When the sun's shining down on me  
When the world's 'all as it should be', Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name, On the road marked with suffering  
Though there's pain in the offering, Blessed be Your name

We rejoice in our suffering:

Suffering → Perseverance → Character → Hope

In verse 5 Paul reminds us that true Hope is not disappointing and he reminds us that out of Christ sufferings came the true hope that we in God.

Paul says in Romans 5:5-8: *And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*<sup>6</sup> *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.*<sup>7</sup> *Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die.*<sup>8</sup> *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

In just a few minutes we are going participate in the Lord's Supper causing us to reflect in the suffering of Christ on the cross and celebrate the Hope that we have in Him.

The Scripture tells that before we partake in the Lord's Supper we need to examine ourselves before the Lord. As you examine your life I want to ask yourself: Is there anything impure in my life being mindful that suffering is a refining process?

Suffering → Perseverance → Character → Hope

In this moment of prayer ask God three things:

1. ask Him to show you any impure thing in your life
2. ask Him to forgive you for this thing
3. ask Him to help you overcome it

Response: Jesus Draw Me Ever Nearer

## The Lord's Supper:

If you are a believer of like faith and practice we invite you to join us in the Lord's Supper.

Would our servers please join me at the table?

### **The Bread**

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,<sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Prayer: Father we thank you for Jesus and his suffering on the cross. As we eat this bread remind us of your great love and the hope that we have in you. In Jesus Name I pray Amen.

Serve the Bread – In remembrance of Christ take and eat this bread. (*How Deep the Father's Love for Us*)

### **The Cup**

<sup>25</sup> In the same way, after supper he (Jesus) took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."<sup>26</sup> For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Prayer: Father we thank you for Jesus and the forgiveness we have through him because of his blood that was shed on the cross. As we drink this cup remind us of your great salvation and the hope that we have in Christ. In Jesus name I pray Amen.

Serve the Juice – In remembrance of Christ take and drink this cup. Please pass your cups to the inside row and we will pick them up later. (*Forevermore*)

### Announcements:

1. Vancouver Mission Team Meeting
2. Pincher Creek Mission Team Meeting

Postlude: *Hosanna*