

Daily Devotional, March 1, 2021 In Whom My Hope Rests

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. Ephesians 3:1-8 (NIV)

The year 2020 will undoubtedly go down as one of the most distressing years in modern history. Political and racial strife in addition to the pandemic has led to a very divided nation. We all have been impacted by the pandemic in various ways. Some have lost a close friend or loved one, and know of others that now are coping with the virus. Our division has caused bitter and broken relationships, and has resulted in threats to our citizens, our politicians, and others; most recently the storming of the Nation's Capital Building, coming on the heels of a tumultuous election, civil unrest, propagated by racial inequity, overreach by law enforcement, and overall, total distrust on both sides of every issue.

At the same time, we must also remember the good: Those in law enforcement who swerve with integrity, the front line and EMT people who have tirelessly served to maintain our health; the essential workers in places like grocery stores and pharmacies; and those volunteers gathering and distributing food to the needy, those working to keep us safe and healthy, or keep things operating day by day.

I have taken comfort in reading Ecclesiastes which sees the emptiness and futility of power, popularity, prestige, and pleasure apart from God. The word ***vanity*** appears thirty-seven times in Ecclesiastes and seems to express things about life that cannot be understood. Goals and ambitions pursued as ends to themselves lead to dissatisfaction and frustration. Life seems to be filled with inequities, uncertainties, changes in fortune, and violations of justice. It is an intense search for meaning and satisfaction here on earth. Sounds a bit familiar as we now appear to be experiencing many of these same conditions!

May faith and wisdom guide our days and all ways going forward. As Robert Frost wisely wrote, *Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.* May that road lead you to hope, and may hope lead you to peace and reconciliation.

Prayer: Lord, I am feeling uncertain about what I am facing. Please guide me and help me to cope with what is unfolding in my life. Please also grant me the peace that only you can give. Amid my worries, please come alongside me and sustain me, for I know that I can put my trust in you. Please grant me reminders along the way, so that I do not become overtaken by the unknown. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.