

## Rejoice in Your Hope (Romans 12:12a)

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

### WHAT IS THE BASIS FOR REJOICING?

Video clip transcript extracted from the talk: Rejoice in Your Hope by Ernest O'Neill

Rejoice is not an option, it's a command. Rejoice! If you don't rejoice, you're on the same level as committing any other sin, fornication, adultery, stealing, lying, because our dear Creator tells us plainly and directly, "Rejoice, always, and again I will say rejoice". Now if you say, "There's no basis for that. Unemployment is higher than it has been for decades. The international situation is worse in a more widespread way than it has been for decades. Our own economic situation is tragic. Our families are falling apart. What is the basis for rejoicing?"

Loved ones, it's in the verse that we're studying today. Romans 12:12, "Rejoice in your hope". Rejoice in hope. In fact the Greek means, "As far as hope goes, rejoice, as regards hope, rejoice", and maybe you say, "Ah, that I understand. That's the only thing that gets me through the present struggles that I face. The thought that it can't go on forever, it's bound to get better. I understand that, yeah, yeah. I rejoice because I have hopes that it will get better. I understand that, in fact, to tell you the truth, TGIF is a basic principle in my life, really. It's as if I live my life, plan little treats and surprises along the way so I kind of get through Monday because I think well, Friday is coming and I can get through Friday because the weekend's coming and I can get through the middle of the week because my birthday is coming and that's it. I understand that. I see, you rejoice because of the little hopes that you have and my life is full of little hopes. I plan little hopes, little treats for myself that help me to kind of keep a light heart and get a little charge of anticipation. That's right, I understand that. Every cloud has a silver lining and where there's life, there's hope and 'a stitch in time saves nine' and that's it."

Well, loved ones, that isn't the hope that's talked about here at all, and aren't you glad it isn't, because those little hopes are so frustrating and so deceptive and so man-made. We know we're kind of bluffing ourselves. You know it's like hiding a can of Coca Cola in the back of the refrigerator so that you surprise yourself by finding it.

You know it's a put up job and really it's just a game you're playing with yourself. It's not that kind of hope loved ones, it isn't. It's a different hope. You may say, "Well, I didn't know there were two kinds of hopes." There are and they're both mentioned in Romans 4, if you like to look at it and it's talking about Abraham, you remember.

Romans 4:18, "In hope, he believed against hope". See that? In hope, he believed against hope. Now what is the hope he believed against? Well in Romans 4:19, "He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body which was as good as dead because he was about 100 years old or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb." That was human hope and that's what we're talking about when we're talking about the Coke in the refrigerator or the little treats or TGIF, we're talking about confidence that we have based on our perception of the outward human circumstances and how we think they might turn around favorably for our benefit. That's human hope and that human hope is the most frustrating thing that you could experience, the recession has bottomed out, will bottom out, will never bottom out. We've been at all stages.

Almost every economist has tried a different one. The interest rates will go down when the budget deficit is eliminated, when fears of inflation are eliminated, when the tomatoes become red almost. We try everything, every kind of human hope and they're all equally changing and tempering, frustrating, disappointing, self-deceptive, the only certainty about human hope is its uncertainty.

The only guarantee about human hope that tries to look at the circumstances and see how they might turn around from a human angle to our favor is that there is no guarantee. Loved ones, human hope is hopeless and that isn't the hope that is talked about here in this verse in Romans. The hope that is talked about is the hope mentioned if you look at that same chapter, Romans 4:21.

Romans 4:21, "Fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised". That's divine hope. You rejoice in a complete confidence that God is going to do what he has promised to do and God says, "You're to live on the basis of that rejoicing everyday. You're to go rejoicing everyday, not on the basis of human hope, the way things look to your outward eye but on the basis of what I have said I will do for you." Let's look, loved ones, at one of the things he has said he would do for every one of us in this room.

Philippians 4:19, "And my God will supply every need of yours, according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus". That's what God has promised each one of us in this room. And you waken up in the morning and you think of your needs because the elemental spirits of the universe flood you with a general feeling of godlessness that you're on your own and so you waken up in the morning and you think of the repairs that have to be made to the car and you think of the bills that have to be paid and you think of the relationships in your job situation that aren't right and that are most uncomfortable and you are flooded with all those needs and God says, "Those things are permitted by Me, those inadequacies are permitted by Me to come into your life so that you realize that you can only live it with Me. I want you the moment that happens, to immediately turn your eyes up to Me and say, 'Father, I thank You that You are going to supply every need of mine this day and Lord, I set my eyes on that.'"

Full Sermon: Rejoice in Your Hope by Rev. Ernest O'Neill