



APC Advent Devotional – December 20th, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Rejoice in our suffering

Today's Scripture: Romans 5:3-5 (NIV)

During Advent 2020 naturally we not only look forward to preparing ourselves for Jesus in celebration, but also reflect on what has been an “unprecedented” year. Many new words and phrases have become the new normal, such as new normal, unprecedented, social distancing and “it’s been a hard year, a year of suffering”; after all, at the moment we are in a lock-down.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 5 of exactly who we are in Jesus. Paul writes “we glory in our sufferings” through which he enthusiastically shares with us the gospel of grace and reminds us about justification; grace through faith and hope in Christ. Furthermore, Paul adds: “not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance”.

He is not saying that as Christians we are doomed to suffer hardship and difficulties and that we must bite on our teeth, grin and bear the hardship as best as we can. Paul specifically says we must advance in our distresses and rejoice in our sufferings. It is by no means a normal reaction to hardship. Paul, however, does not call us to rejoice **because** we are suffering, but to rejoice **in** our suffering. We should maintain an attitude of praise and thanksgiving by rejoicing in the Lord, no matter what problems we may experience, while we are getting ready for Jesus.

Paul explains further that rejoicing in our hardship brings perseverance which develops character and character brings hope. Our hope in Jesus will never be disappointed, because the love of God has been “poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Who has been given to us” the moment we trusted Christ for salvation.

Let us take to heart this urging to rejoice in our hardship, for as Christians we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing, not only now, but in future, in His holy name.

By DeWet Herselman