



“OBAMA EXUDES HOPE”

Romans 5:1-5

Persons who lived through much of the twentieth century will know that it is not easy to be hopeful. Two devastating world wars in quick succession, the second of which cost sixty million lives. Wonderful advances in science and technology used for threatening and sometimes destructive purposes. The Holocaust, followed by continuing inhumanity toward other human beings in Rwanda, in the former Yugoslavia, and now in Darfur (Sudan). The squandering of the earth's precious resources and the simultaneous upsetting of nature's delicate balances with global climate changes is critical. The Violent and senseless waste of human life in Oklahoma City, New York City, and Baghdad highlight the times.

Therefore, it is hard to be hopeful. Yet there is a reason for hope that we must find in the midst of suffering. Paul reminds his Thessalonian converts, that we should not be as those who have no hope (I Thessalonians 4:13). Americans feel that they are suffering through some very difficult, challenging times, which leave them with a sense of hopelessness. Mortgage foreclosures, exorbitant gas prices, no insurance coverage, wholesale job lay-offs, and other unimaginable circumstances are playing havoc with peoples' minds, bodies, and spirits. In the African-American community, there is concern around issues related to health care, environmental injustice, unemployment, injustice, and poor educational opportunities. All of these issues are intricately woven into the fabric of an insensitive, uncompassionate political cloth. When all hope seems to fade, Paul in Romans 5:1-5, assures us that we can firmly stand on God's Word. The text says (v 3), “We gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. (v 4), and endurance builds character, which gives us a HOPE that (v 5) will never disappoint us.”

Senator Barack Obama has been placed on the world scene for such a time as this. A man of indomitable faith, whom, I believe, listens to God and has allowed the Holy Spirit to direct his path (Proverbs 3:5-7). Senator Obama has faced the numerous negative ravages of society and because he had the audacity to hope, and believe in a God who could “turn the page,” there appears to be a rainbow of hope on the horizon. If I understand Paul's purpose in Romans, he is prompting us to recognize that hope lies in God's uniting with us in our vulnerability, pain and suffering. Paul shocked many of the Christians in Rome as he shocks us when he says that we have reason to hope not only in “glory” but in “sufferings,” afflictions, or hardships.

Senator Obama's experiences of life, like those of the Apostle Paul, have taught him that suffering might set off a kind of chain reaction leading to HOPE.

Hardship produces toughness.

Toughness produces integrity.

Integrity produces hope.

As the presumptive nominee of the Democratic Party for the President of the United States of America, Senator Barack Obama EXUDES THE HOPE that comes through him, from God, for a better world. PRAY FOR PEACE.

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