

Some thoughts for keeping hope alive

Imagine yourself as a boat! What sort of boat do you identify with at the present time? A small fishing boat, an overloaded container ship, or a luxury cruise liner, for instance? All boats and ships are vulnerable in storms or extreme danger, as we know. It is so easy to lose a sense of direction, or to be “rudderless”, or to start drifting, when circumstances begin to batter us!

Many of you will know the old hymn by Priscilla Owens, “Does your anchor hold in the storms of life, when the clouds unfold their wings of strife?”.

The bible tells us that HOPE in God is our anchor (Hebrews6:19 — “We have hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure”.)

When all around us spells danger and is constantly changing, God is the only source of stability, that we really can count on. Isaiah 26:4 tells us to “trust in the Lord forever, He Himself is the eternal rock”. So, just as our anchor is our Christian hope, the living God is the firm rock, to which we are securely held. Maybe our faith is represented by the rope, that secures the anchor of hope to the Rock, God Himself, and I see each of us, vulnerable boats, as enveloped in a bubble of God’s love. Love is the most powerful force in the universe, and will surely carry our little boat.

That all may sound well and good, but what if you are drifting at the present time or losing your sense of direction or, maybe feel rudderless, and that rope of faith FEELS very flimsy? The Lord knows we are human and struggle at times. That’s why He gives us each other to encourage us when we’re drifting and why He gives us so much encouragement and truth in His word, our bible. He knows we will sometimes need to pour out our questions and anger to Him, as many in the bible did. So many psalms move from lament to recollecting God’s truth and then praising Him whatever is going on. And many of us can testify to this process and to how faithful the Lord is.

But, we need to give Him chance to speak to us and help us. Psalm 34:8 says, “Taste and see that the Lord is good. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him”. Our Lord is always waiting, with arms outstretched, to welcome us and show us His amazing love and faithfulness. As soon as we say we are sorry and ask for a new start, we are back in His loving arms and grace, our compass set to true north again! 1 John 1 tells us that “if we admit that we have gone astray, God is faithful and just and will forgive us and cleanse us”.

Have you ever realised that there is the shape of the Cross in an anchor?

So, cast your anchor on to the eternal rock, little boat, and let our living Lord bless you and carry you in His bubble of love.

Nona Harrison.