

Staff Work

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Hope in the Depths

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Hope in the Depths

Abstract

"The steadfast love of the Lord is greater than the silence and despair, greater than the darkness and grief."

Posting about longing for God from *In All Things* - an online journal for critical reflection on faith, culture, art, and every ordinary-yet-graced square inch of God's creation.

<http://inallthings.org/hope-in-the-depths/>

Keywords

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Disciplines

Christianity

Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

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 [inallthings.org/hope-in-the-depths/](https://allthings.org/hope-in-the-depths/)

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Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 130](#)

[Ezekiel 36:8-15](#)

[Luke 24:44-53](#)

Mother Teresa, a woman who devoted her entire life to God and offered much to others in poverty and abandonment, wrote letters throughout her life to Jesus and others. Later published, after her death, these letters revealed her constant torment and pain, feeling distant and separated from God. She longed to know God's presence, but often felt empty and alone.

She wrote to a spiritual director:

"This untold darkness—this loneliness, this continual longing for God—which gives me that pain down in my heart. Darkness is such that I really do not see—neither with my mind nor with my reasons—the place of God in my soul is blank. I long and long for God—the pain of longing is so great."¹

The author of Ecclesiastes reminds us there is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven. There is a time to be born and a time to die, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. Yet, sometimes it feels like there is more sadness than laughter, more mourning than joy.

The seasons in the depth of darkness can seem so long.

The psalmist writes with words of longing. "Out of the depth," the psalmist cries to the Lord. Desiring peace from the turmoil and redemption from a life in the pit, the psalmist pleads for an attentive ear and mercy from the Creator.

Life is often lived this way—in the experiences of "the depths." Mother Teresa wasn't alone in her suffering. This "[dark night of the soul](#)" is familiar to many—even to me. Voices join the psalmist, crying out for the Lord to hear. We long. We wait. We seek. We cry out.

On our own we are nothing. We are totally and completely dependent upon the divine grace of God.

Although the psalmist writes out of the darkness, the psalmist knows of the Lord's mercy and grace. For this is whom we worship and adore. The Lord does not count our sins, for no one could ever stand before the Lord in that regard. Instead, there is forgiveness. There is grace. There is hope.

The psalmist sings, "I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his words I put my hope." And, the people of God, on their journey through suffering and pain, gather with the psalmist to join in the refrain:

"My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning."

I can imagine Mother Teresa joining in the song. In the despair, she watched for God. In the silence, she served others. Her soul longed for the Lord. And, I know others today who join in the singing, too, as they live in a season of mourning and sadness. They wait. They watch. They sing.

Even if the singing is only as loud as a faint whisper.

Yet, paired with longing, there is always hope. For the steadfast love of the Lord is greater than the silence and despair, greater than the darkness and grief. There is always hope. There is salvation.

And, someday, there will be a new season, filled with dancing and rejoicing.

Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

Footnotes

1. Mother Teresa. Kolodiejchuk, Brian, ed. "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the Saint of Calcutta" (Image, 2009). [↩](#)