

**Text:** [Romans 5:1-5 \(CEB\)](#)

**Date:** June 14, 2026

**Title:** "It Does Not Disappoint"

**Theme:** Hope does not disappoint because it's rooted in God's power to overcome, not our own.

## 1

Have you ever had the experience of recommending something to  
a friend – a movie, a show, a restaurant

"You've gotta see this"

"You've gotta go there"

"You'd love this"

And then once you hype it up

If you're like me, you wait a little bit anxiously to hear whether  
they liked it

You don't want your friend to be let down

And it's the great feeling when they say, "I loved it!"

"Absolutely did not disappoint!"

"Did not disappoint"

That's a good feeling, isn't it?

To feel like you haven't steered a friend wrong

Because life often seems to disappoint in various ways:

You don't get the promotion

A friend moves away

They don't love you anymore

I know that I've been through seasons in my life that were so  
difficult – times of really profound disappointment

When some days I just could not see much of anything good

And I imagine you have too

## 2

Paul has a very weird thing to say about those days,  
About disappointment and hardship in the scripture we read today  
He says, “we take pride in our problems”

Now, I don't know anybody who takes pride in their problems  
*Well, ok*, maybe one or two people – you may know one or two  
folks like that too

But he's not talking about those folks who dominate the  
conversation by telling you all about their problems

Let's be real – most people –  
sometimes even your best friends  
The closest people in your life  
Won't tell you what's actually going on with them

We don't take pride in our problems  
In fact, most of us will go out very far out of our way to hide our  
problems  
Our problems, our disappointments are sources of shame  
Never sources of pride

Because we blame ourselves for the things that have gone wrong  
Often times, whether that's actually true or not  
Whether that's deserved or not

Now, I'm not saying we shouldn't assess how we may have  
contributed, where we may have gone wrong  
But I also know a lot of us have a tendency to take the blame for  
stuff that we didn't cause, and couldn't control  
And what's worse, sometimes our bottom-line explanation is  
something like:  
“I think I'm just cursed”  
Or: “God's mad at me for some reason”

We not only take the blame and shame for the things that are going wrong – we lay that blame at God’s doorstep

3

And yet here’s Paul, telling us we have NOTHING to be ashamed of

In fact, he says, “we take pride in our problems”

So what does he mean when he says that?

This passage contains one of my favorite lines in all of scripture  
A chain of ideas that Paul strings together in a kind of cause-and-effect:

*Because we know that trouble produces endurance*

*Endurance produces character*

*And character produces hope*

I love that progression

Trouble produces endurance

Endurance character

And character hope

Remember these verses – Romans 5

The word for trouble here comes from a root that means “being pressed” or “being crushed”

Trouble creates pressure on us

Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually

We feel squeezed

Our ability to endure that pressure

To keep going even though we don’t know for sure what the outcome will be

To be patient and faithful through difficult circumstances

To trust that God hasn’t walked away from us, hasn’t abandoned us

That's endurance

And when we are able – by the grace of God and by the power of  
the Spirit – to endure

What results is character

Now, that may seem like an odd choice of word here

But the word “character” here implies “tested and found reliable”  
Someone who has received God's approval because they held on  
to the integrity of their faith and their principles  
in the face of challenges that might have destroyed someone else

That's the carbon-into-diamond kind of character, Paul says, that  
produces hope

Which again, seems strange

Because how does character produce hope?

One of the things that is funny about this

Is that we usually think about hope as forward-looking

We hope in the *future*

We don't hope in the *past*

But what Paul is saying

Is that our hope for the future

*Is rooted in our past*

Specifically, how we've seen God work all through our lives

We trust God because we've seen what God can do

You know how, when you're watching TV and it's an ad for a  
financial services firm,

they'll always say, “past performance does not guarantee future  
results”?

That's federally-mandated language that says, “just because you  
saw returns in the past, doesn't mean you'll see returns in  
the future”

That makes sense for investments  
You may very well find yourself disappointed by the market  
But God is different  
The writer of Hebrews says: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday,  
today, and forever”  
In other words, God’s faithfulness in the past  
Is God’s faithfulness in the present  
Is God’s faithfulness in the future  
Not only for all time  
But for all eternity!

#### 4

We can boast in our troubles  
Because we know that ultimately, God will see us through them  
We know that someday – in the words of one of my favorite  
hymns – “we’ll tell the story, how we’ve overcome”

Trouble doesn’t last  
Evil doesn’t last  
But character lasts  
And hope lasts  
They’re built through every struggle we endure without losing faith

We can take pride in our problems  
Because we already KNOW what God is going to do

That’s why Paul is able to say, “Hope does not disappoint”  
HOPE does not disappoint  
Because GOD does not disappoint  
And our hope is always rooted in God

While we may sometimes be disappointed by that restaurant or  
book recommendation we get from a friend  
We are never disappointed in God

We can't be

How can a God who has overcome all things – even death –  
ever be a disappointment to us?

In every moment where I struggled to see how things were ever  
going to get better

I was always blessed with one thing – by God's grace:  
Faith in the One who has overcome the world

I may have doubted myself

My ability

My goodness

My understanding

My ability to endure

But I never doubted God

And what God can do

I don't know that I ever wanted to boast in my own troubles while I  
was going through them

But I can tell the story now

Because there is this beautiful cycle that repeats over and over  
again

In hardship and struggle:

Our faith grows

Our character grows

And our hope grows

Trouble produces endurance

Endurance character

Character hope

And HOPE does not disappoint

That's the good news today, my friends  
What God has done in the past, God can (and will) do again

So don't be afraid to boast in your troubles  
Because our hope is anchored NOT in our own power  
But in God's

Hope does not disappoint  
Because God does not disappoint

Amen.

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