

Use This Truth to Stop the Devil From Stealing Your Hope

The twist cone is my favorite. I would never order plain vanilla, but it's a nice complement to chocolate. These days I'm thinking about how sorrow and joy squeeze out of the same spigot and come served to us always intertwined.

Last week, my son gave a sparkly to his girl, and now my husband and I are whispering joyfully in bed at night about this beautiful match and how happy we are with the blessing of this young woman coming into our son's life. The whole arrangement keeps us smiling. Then I lay my head on Matt's chest, and he prays for these kids and their upcoming wedding.

But he also prays for my sweet auntie, as cancer brings her every day closer to the gates of heaven. And we pray for her sisters and their heartache at the thought of letting her go on ahead of them.

Always the joy twisted with the sorrow.

Lord, I ask, How do we live in a world like this? I have had this prayer on repeat for a few weeks. Last Sunday morning, I was especially groaning to the Lord, as I reeled under some very sad news that touched a family in my writing world. *Lord, how do we keep hope when there's the happy but always the sad, too?*

He answered me, because He sees and He cares.

On Sunday mornings I've been watching a sermon on Facebook live, by a Spanish-speaking pastor out of Chicago. (Pastor Freddy Deanda, if you're interested.) He had one point to his sermon that he repeated over and over again. His finger aimed at me, and he said with fire in his eyes, "The devil wants to steal your hope. If you start to lose hope, you'll know that

he is lying to you.”

The devil wants to steal your hope, the Spirit pressed into my thoughts.

Reminded me of a concert Matt and I went to years ago in Texas. A black family was sitting in front of us, and their little boy was whining. The mom looked at him and said, in a powerful tone that I think only a black momma can pull off with style, “Don’t you let the devil steal your joy!”

Her short but persuasive sermon has stayed with me all these years, and I wish I could thank her for it. Her voice came to me again, as I listened to the sermon on Facebook, “Don’t you let the devil steal your hope!”

Hope is mine because from his throne God says, “I am making all things new” (Rev. 21:5b).

Can you sense the stealthy approach of the enemy, with his sticky fingers latched on to your hope? Whirl around and grab hold of it. Don’t let him swipe it. Hope is yours. It belongs to you.

Yes, the pain swirls in with the happy times, but *never* without hope. {eoa}

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