

Release Women Monthly Email - May 2019

Hello Friend

Rejoice in Hope!



'**Rejoice in hope**' may not be our first thought when we hear of the persecution of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world, and especially not our first action! But they are words found in scripture, in Romans 12 verse 12.

'Rejoice in hope, be faithful in tribulation, be constant in prayer.' (ESV)

Sometimes described as the 'marks of the true Christian', Romans 12:9-13 describes many attributes of Christian behaviour: be sincere in love, hate what is evil, be devoted to one another in love, honour one another above yourselves, don't be lazy, work hard, serve the Lord, share with those in need, practice hospitality. The words of verse 12: 'Rejoice in hope, be faithful in tribulation, be constant in prayer', sit among these other attributes and exhortations. Surely it's not difficult to hate what is evil, to work hard and to serve the Lord? But is it always easy to rejoice in hope, to be faithful in times of trouble and to be

constant in prayer? It may not be easy, but it is what God calls us to do. Verses 14 places these challenges within the context of persecution as it continues with even tougher words: 'Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.'

We don't rejoice that our fellow members of the body of Christ experience persecution; and our hope isn't a vague wish like hoping that it may not rain for a special event. Ours is a living hope through the resurrection of Christ and certainty of a future with Him – this is why we rejoice, even though there may be suffering first, as [1 Peter 1:3-9](#) demonstrates.

Rejoice in hope is the theme for our **National Conference**, to be held on **Saturday 12th October**, at **St Michael's, Chester Square, London, SW1W 9EF**. We will 'rejoice in hope' with Release International partners Hadassah and Peter Hawk from South East Asia. We will hear testimonies of how believers remain 'faithful in tribulation' and we will have the opportunity to 'be constant in prayer'. During the day we will also hear feedback from the Strength to Stand groups you support in Pakistan and hear how being trained in creative skills is giving women the practical tools to have the 'strength to stand' as Christians living under oppression, as well as building them up spiritually. The day will be punctuated by sketches from *Endeavour 831*, a small drama company, who will challenge us throughout the day as they present the issue of women and persecution in dramatic form.

Everyone is welcome to join us, and we look forward to an inspiring and encouraging day of worship, testimonies and prayer. Flyers are available on our website [here](#) and tickets are available on [Eventbrite](#) or from the office on 01689 823491, for £10 each. Doors open at 9.30am for coffee and registration; don't forget to bring a packed lunch or buy one locally!

We look forward to seeing you there!

Blessings,

Release Women Team

Through our international network of missions, Release International serves persecuted Christians in 30 countries around the world by supporting pastors and Christian prisoners, and their families; supplying Christian literature and Bibles; and working for justice.

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