



“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

—Romans 15:13 (NIV)

What does hope look like?

Theologians, philosophers, artists, and scholars have argued about what hope is, and how it works, for thousands of years. I won't claim to have a definitive answer or suggest that there is only one. Hope seems to be both something tiny and fragile, as well as enormous and transformative.

When I take in verses such as this one, I am taken with the relational nature of hope. God fills us with joy and peace as we trust in Him. Why do we trust in Him? The chapter begins by pointing out that the strong should look out for the weak, build them up, just as Jesus did, and does. Using Scripture, we can learn and grow in endurance and encouragement. Out of this comes hope.

Joy and peace then are the fruits of trusting in God as the community around us comes together to demonstrate what God has done, is doing, and will do in the future. It is not just optimism, based on something we already know or expect to happen. It is looking to the future in which God will do a new thing in our life, even if, or perhaps because, we are uncertain of what that might be.

July 12 is International Day of Hope. We celebrate this day as a reminder that we are called to bring transformation in Jesus' name, especially in difficult circumstances... like Enceng's.

His story is a powerful reminder that hope often grows in the midst of uncertainty.

Hope isn't about a perfect future (except perhaps our ultimate hope for Jesus' return) but a perfect trust. The last half of the verse answers my initial question. Hope looks like you. Looks like me. Just as the strong look out for the weak, so the weak, made strong through hope,



pass that hope onto others who need to experience inclusion, empathy, resilience.

For years, Enceng, from Indonesia, lived without understanding what was happening to his body. When he was finally diagnosed with leprosy, the news shook him deeply. “When I found out my symptoms were leprosy, I felt very shocked and I lost my self-confidence,” he recalls. “I was worried... especially with my family.”

The fear of rejection weighed heavily on him.

“I feared my family would leave me,” he said.

“I feared that my friends would avoid and desert me.” As his treatment began, the visible side effects only added to his anxiety. “My friends and neighbours were scared because of my darkened skin,” he explained.

The journey toward healing was not simple. There were delays in treatment, painful reactions, and long periods where progress felt invisible. At one point, discouragement almost took hold completely. "I felt frustrated because there was no change... I felt that my efforts were in vain."

And yet, even in those moments, he was not alone.

Through the steady care of health workers and the faithful support of his wife and family, Enceng began to experience something different. His community slowly changed as they learned the truth about leprosy. "When the health centre educated my community... my neighbours were able to accept me," he said. "Even though there was a change in my body, my family accepted me. My wife was very supportive."

Step by step, he continued. Finally, he completed his treatment and was declared cured. Looking back, he reflects honestly on just how significant that journey was: "Without treatment, I would have died. At that time, I felt very hopeless. But luckily, the health centre supported me."

But the story does not end with recovery.

Something began to grow within him—a desire to ensure that others would not walk the same path alone. "In the past I was afraid, embarrassed because I had leprosy," he says. "Now I want to eliminate that feeling in the minds of leprosy patients."

Enceng now shares his story openly, encouraging others to seek treatment and offering practical and emotional support. He walks alongside those who feel ashamed or afraid, helping them understand both the physical and emotional challenges of the disease. "I can identify people with leprosy because I have experienced it," he explains. "When I notice symptoms, I approach them and encourage them to get medication."

Where there was once fear, there is now courage. Where there was isolation, there is now connection. Those he supports begin to find strength again. Reflecting on one person he encouraged, he says, "She was down, but now she is raised up and full of spirit."

Enceng's life reflects a quiet but profound truth: hope is not always immediate, but it is transformative.

Hope looked like a health worker who kept showing up.

Hope looked like a family who stayed.

Hope looked like perseverance through long and difficult treatment.

And now, hope looks like Enceng—overflowing into the lives of others, bringing encouragement, dignity, and new beginnings.

Yours in Prayer,

Glen Coleman



**Community Engagement
Coordinator
Leprosy Mission Australia**



Will you pray with us?

Pray for Enceng and others like him to continue bringing hope and transformation in their communities. Pray for joy and peace where once there was fear and hopelessness.

You can share your prayers for people like Enceng, and for all God is doing, by emailing engage@leprosymission.org.au or using the enclosed form.

Would you like to do more?

You can bring hope to people like Enceng in Indonesia through the Comprehensive Zero Leprosy Project (Co-ZLP). **Simply follow the link or scan the QR code** and help reduce stigma and fear and bring community together.

Your compassion today can bring joy and peace to those affected by leprosy.

<https://www.leprosymission.org.au/co-zlp/ppd08>

