Dr. Hood is on vacation.
This is a repeat of a meditation from his first book,
Heart & Soul, Meditations to Encourage the Heart & Refresh the Soul

New Possibilities

READ: 2 Corinthians 1:9 (Common English Bible)

“It certainly seemed to us as if we had gotten the death penalty. This was so that we would have confidence in God, who raises the dead, instead of ourselves.”

REFLECT:

It is not unusual to experience, from time to time, a situation that seems completely hopeless. Perhaps a relationship has not developed as we had wished, or our career seems to have stalled, or a chronic illness is beating us down and there is no indication that anything is going to improve. Prayers are offered and patiently – very patiently – we have waited on the Lord. Yet, nothing changes. Paul tells us that in these moments of our life, we feel as though we have received the sentence of death. All that is left is despair.

Speaking to these moments, Paul tells the church that there is an alternative: we can rely on God. Paul is not here suggesting more prayers or more patience. We may have given sufficient attention to both. What Paul is saying is that God’s preference for us may be resurrection, which can only follow a death. The death of a poor relationship opens the possibility of a new one. A stalled career may indicate God’s call to a new vocation. Even a chronic illness that never improves opens the door to a whole new relationship with God, one dependent upon God’s grace, not health, to celebrate life.

God is in the resurrection business. Yet, for God to work a resurrection, we may have to release that which we hold so tenaciously to; to let it die. It is then that we receive something so much better than what we were afraid of losing.

This doesn’t mean we should never struggle to prevent loss, or that we can’t experience grief over something we once held dear. It does mean that we don’t give in to hopeless like those who don’t know God. For if we must finally let go, we know that we can rely on God, the one who raises the dead.
RESPOND:

1. How has this scripture or meditation spoken to you?

2. What insight can you apply to your life this week?

3. What one specific act do you intend to take, an attitude to change, a person to see, or prayer to pray?

PRAY:

*Instill in us fresh hope – hope in a new direction, new relationships, and a new way of understanding your work in our lives. Scatter the darkness of despair and keep us from self-pity that robs us of our future. In the certain name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.*