

December 23, 2022

[Romans 15:4-13](#)

I vividly remember the excitement that accompanied my family's tradition of getting to open the Advent calendar each morning this time of year. Behind the cardboard flaps for each day leading up to Christmas awaited a piece of milk chocolate. Although the idea of chocolate for breakfast has not lost its appeal for this chocolate-lover, marking the days of Advent have taken on a different rhythm for me this past decade. In November of 2012, I remember receiving an email during the season of Advent from Laura Thompson, the mother of my boyfriend at the time. She was writing to share her favorite Advent Devotional with me. Try as I might, I cannot seem to find that email or remember her Advent Devotional recommendation. Nonetheless, I remember her planting this seed in me of a new, adult way to set aside time each day of Advent to turn to God's word and reflect. About a month after I received that email, Laura passed away from a long battle with breast cancer. It certainly feels like a full circle moment to be able to contribute to Kairos's Advent Devotional.

This particular scripture has resonated with me so much in my own season of waiting and anticipation. Paul reminds the Romans of God's gift of hope and His desire to see each and every one of us filled with joy and peace by believing in Him. I found myself in need of that same reminder the day I read this scripture last year with a group of Kairos women pledging to read the Bible in a year alongside each other. In the Bible reading plan we had committed to, this very scripture was assigned on a particular day when hope seemed so far away for something my heart yearned for—a child. And yet on that day, I read Romans 15:13 in the morning and found out later in the day that I was pregnant. This Word of God was reminding me then, now, and in times to come, to hold fast to hope. The hope we have in Jesus who is and was and will forever be our greatest gift! William, my husband, and I chose this verse, Romans 15:13, for our daughter, Laura "Blair" Thompson.

Beth Thompson