

If I had to narrow it down, it was a period when we were going through a very desperate time with my youngest son. He was going through some awful challenges at about six years old. We'd tried every intervention we knew. I transferred my hope in helping him from one thing to the next. Eventually, as each option failed, I reached the bottom of the barrel. I'd run out of hope to help my child.

But something very special happened at the bottom of that barrel. It was here that I got a front-row seat to see how God can take very broken circumstances and create something beautiful out of it.

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."* – Romans 8:28 (NIV)

I hoped for many things over the years. I'd been disappointed repeatedly. But this was the first time I took baby steps to put my whole hope in God. Since I was all out of options, there was no back-up plan if things didn't work out. It was a very cautious, tentative hand that I reached out. I remember the tears pouring down my face in my brokenness and whispering, 'God, if you're there, I wish you'd show me. God if you care, I need you to really know me. I hope you don't mind me asking the questions, but I figure you're big enough...'

Even when I felt I was all out of hope, there was still that tiny flicker of one last hope.

Do you know that no matter how small your hope may be today, He can work with it if you will just reach out your hand and let Him take the driver's seat?

Isaiah 42:3 reads: *"A bruised reed He will not break, and a smouldering wick He will not snuff out."*

Of course, God had been there all along – had been reaching for me again and again. He'd never left me. When I reached out from my end, He was standing ready to take my hand. There was no flash of lightning, no rumbles of thunder and burning bushes. He took me as a very broken, fragile child and with baby steps, one by one, revealed His trustworthiness. His care. He was so patient and loving. Through persistence, patience and love God worked with me to build my trust and hope in Him.

Reflecting back, I see how He's taken very broken, tragic circumstances and carved something beautiful out of it. I have first-hand experience of His transforming, revolutionary power and that is what enables me to now look forward with hope. God hasn't broken a single of His promises in His word, and as I journey on, I trust Him completely and believe He has a plan for my life as the Bible says in Jeremiah 29:11.

He has never let me down since I reached out. Not once.

So have I figured it all out and is my life now rosy with rainbows? Not really. I'm a working mom raising two boys. My second husband passed away after an extremely difficult and extended illness that affected every area of our lives. I'm in the daily grind of being the breadwinner and seeing to my family's needs. But through this, I stand on His word.

*"No-one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame." - Psalm 25:3 (NIV)*

I do have hope for many things, but my ultimate hope for them is rooted in God. If none of these things materialize, then it's okay. My world will not collapse, and just as He has worked out the details of trashy circumstances for my good in the past, I'm confident enough to know that He's got it all in hand. It's gonna be okay, no matter what the outcome. It's all under control and I am exactly where I'm meant to be. When I'm surrendered to His will and plan for my life, then I'm in that calm space in the center of the storm. The space where hope can float without being buffeted by the elements around it.

In closing, I leave you with a thought to reflect in your own life. Where does your hope lie? How secure is that hope?

My prayer for you is echoed in Paul's words in Romans 15:13: *"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."*