

To All In Need Of Hope:

No matter who we are, or what we have done in and with our life, as long as we are still alive in the flesh, we have **HOPE!** The key to Hope understands what that Hope is based on. I believe that God, and His Faithfulness, Forgiveness, Grace, Love, Mercy, Presence (Spirit) and Son are all bases for our Hope.

Some of the basics of the Christian faith, but not all, are listed here in brief form. **(1)** God knows us intimately, even while we were being formed in our mother's womb, including each day of our life before we live it (Psalms 139:13-16). **(2)** God has not dealt with us according to our iniquities (Psalms 103:10). **(3)** We have all sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God (Romans 3:23). **(4)** The wages of sin is death but the Gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23). **(5)** Salvation is given to us as an act of Grace on God's part through Faith on our part. We cannot earn it (Ephesians 2:8-9). **(6)** God has promised to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (iniquities) if we will confess them to God and ask Him for forgiveness. (I John 1:9) **(7)** Jesus, as God's Son, became the perfect atonement for our sins (sacrifice) as we place our faith in his death and resurrection from the dead (Romans 5:1-11). **(8)** Forgiveness is fundamental to the Faith! Without faith in God's ability and willingness to forgive us, we can never understand how to forgive others or ourselves (Luke 6:37, Colossians 1:14). **(9)** God provides us with reconciliation to Himself, to ourselves and to others, while giving us the privilege and power to boldly come before Him through prayer (II Corinthians 5:17-19, Hebrews 2:17-18, Hebrews 4:18-19). **(10)** God is pleased when our hope is in Him, when we act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him (Psalms 147:11, Micah 6:8).

It does not matter what we have done in our lives, God is waiting for us to come to Him (Matthew 11:28-30). We may always seek the Lord's forgiveness and ask Him to create in us a clean heart and to restore to us the joy of God's salvation (Psalms 51:10-12). In Psalms 51, David talks about his iniquity. He acknowledges it, and how God was able to renew his spirit, and create in him a clean heart (Psalms 51:10). When we consider that David committed murder and adultery for Bathsheba, we can know that God can forgive us of any sin. God said that David "was a man after His own heart" (I Samuel 13:14), and yet God knew about the sins David would be committing later on in his life with Bathsheba...**OH WHAT HOPE WE CAN ALL HAVE IN GOD!**

The challenge in life is to learn to trust in the Lord. We can not trust in ourselves, nor in our parents, nor in others, but in God, our Creator. God can and will use others in our lives, but our focus and trust must be on Him, not on them. We, all of us, must trust fresh and new each and every day, The faith we had, and the Grace God gave us yesterday, will not take care of us today or tomorrow. We need to start fresh in faith each morning.

The greatest hope, the joy and the strength of the Christian faith is one of forgiveness and renewal. It does not matter who or where we came from, or what sins we have committed, the Bible says in I John 1:9 that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Part of receiving God's Grace and Forgiveness is for us to be able to forgive ourselves as well as others.

If God made us, and if He knows us intimately, then when He promised to forgive us of our sins, He surely intended for us to forgive ourselves so that we could start all over new again. Part of knowing us means He knows how many times we are going to fail and fall back before we succeed in trusting in Him and are able to walk with Him on a moment-by-moment basis, one day at a time.

As long as we have physical life within us, God is providing us the opportunity to "start over" and to "get it right". To God be the Glory. Hope in God! (Psalms 42:5). "He takes pleasure on those who fear Him, in those who hope in His mercy" (Psalms 147:11).

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