

Hope for Hard Times

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.”
(Romans 15:13)

For the family facing foreclosure... for the father diagnosed with terminal cancer... for the wife struggling to conceive... for the young girl considering abortion... for the thousands who lost jobs and life savings...there is hope.

The Bible says that each of us has been created by God...that he loves us...and that he wants us to have a fulfilling life. *“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly,”* Jesus said. (John 10:10) He meant a life that goes beyond “mere existence” to a fulfilling life lived in harmony with the Creator’s knowledge of us and his desires for us.

But there is something that separates us from this “abundant life” that God intended. The Bible says that *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”* (Romans 3:23) It is because of this sin, this disobedience towards God, that every person is separated from him: *“your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.”* (Isaiah 59:2) And even worse is the consequence of sin, eternal separation from God—*“the wages [cost] of sin is death.”* (Romans 6:23)

However, in his love and mercy, God sent his sinless Son, Jesus, to pay the price of our sins’ debt. Almost 2000 years ago, Jesus Christ died on a cross, was buried, and then rose from the dead on the third day. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) It is only through the death of Jesus that we can be reconciled to God. And through his death, God offers the free gift of eternal life to all who believe in his name. (Romans 3:23, John 3:36)

There is no greater hope than this—the assurance of eternal life offered to us through Jesus Christ, and his promise to stay with us and sustain us in all circumstances:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ...For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor power, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35,38-39)

God offers this hope to you today. To accept his offer, begin by admitting that you are a sinner separated from God and in need of his forgiveness. Then trust only in Christ to save you from the consequences of your sins. Believe that Jesus died for your sins on the cross, and was raised from the dead in order to conquer death, bridging the gap caused by sin between you and God. Accept Jesus' offer to come into your life as your Savior.

If you sincerely desire to have hope in Christ, tell God in words like these:

Dear God, I admit that I am a sinner and need your forgiveness. Thank you for sending Jesus to suffer the punishment that I deserve for my sins. Please help me every day to turn from my sin and live a life that pleases you. Thank you for your gift of eternal life and for the hope I now have in you. Amen.

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