

YOUR ONLY HOPE

Hope is the aspect that makes a man to look into the future with optimism despite the adverse conditions he might be passing through. Hope enables a victim of fate to brave all odds, not despairing of his existence to such precarious circumstances. This hope could be based on some political, social or economic changes that he is expecting to experience. What is your hope based on?

The word of God says surely in vain is salvation and deliverance hoped for in the multitudes of mountains (various political and economic powers, including persons and institutions). But in the Lord our God is the salvation of His people.

Human hope has often been shattered because it has always been founded on a wrong foundation. This has often been a materialistic and temporal hope. But as real people know, the right kind of hope is the hope for lasting and eternal values. Where then can this hope be found?

Many classes of people though seeming to be fresh and doing well on the outward appearance are really in desperate situations and feel doomed in their conditions. But as the Bible makes us to, there is no irreversible situation as long as heaven and earth still exist.

You might be one of those who have sunk into the deception of acquiring false riches. Your conscience tells you the foundation of your wealth is false and you feel condemned already. You might have tried to overcome this guilt by undertaking charitable deeds, but your sins still find you out. The solution is repentance. The biblical Zacchaeus was your friend. The Bible says he was a tax collector, implying he extorted through bribe and force, and was also a cheat. He was despised by all and considered a great sinner by law and conscience. But Jesus still had a great interest in him. In his own home with Jesus, he uttered his statement of repentance. That brought him salvation (Luke 19:1-10). Do like him.

You might be one of those who were initiated into witchcraft or occultism, either knowingly or unknowingly. You know you are wicked and leading a double life. Your powers can only do evil and no good; and you are bound to live by the rule of darkness. In your heart, you have a feeling of fear and condemnation. But there is no condemned sinner before God except he or she rejects God's call to repentance through Jesus Christ. The Bible says when the people of Ephesus who were many of them sorcerers, witches and magicians heard the gospel of salvation, they brought their magical arts and books and openly destroyed them (Acts 19:11-20). That was a costly and radical repentance. God wants you to do the same. It is only the power of Jesus Christ that can set you free from the kingdom of darkness. But you must be radical to receive this salvation. This is your only hope.

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Are you one of those who have lived your life in sexual promiscuity? You are not married but you indulge into illicit sexual activities. Or maybe you are married but unfaithful to your spouse. Some have even taken prostitution as a way of life. The consequences abound: broken homes, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and AIDS.

These are just temporal outcomes. The real penalty for this kind of a lifestyle is the punishment in hell's unquenchable fire. But Christ is still gentle towards those in this situation. To the promiscuous woman at the well of Samaria, He promised living waters, which is salvation (John 4:4-26). To the prostitute who anointed His feet as a sign of repentance, He said, "your sins are forgiven" (Luke 7:48). This shows God's willingness to forgive when we truly repent. Even if you are suffering from the consequences of promiscuity; e.g. AIDS, God can still forgive all your sins. This truly is your only hope. Repent now.

Many people are caught in the trap of religious hypocrisy. Going to church has become a norm, yet moral decadence is on the rise. This shows that the majority of the church goers have not yet repented and received Jesus into their lives as their personal Lord and Saviour. Many go to church to pacify their social misdeeds etc. But God is not at all interested in our pompous religious activities. What He wants from us is genuine repentance and a true dedication to Him alone. This begins with Christ dwelling in you to change your life.

Dear reader, you must have come to realise by now that Jesus Christ is your only hope in this life and in eternity. No matter your situation, He can change your story if only you are willing to turn to Him. This is what it means to be born anew. God says in 1 John 1:9, "*If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" You need a new beginning in Christ. God truly loves you and He alone is willing and able to set you free from any form of captivity of distressing situation in which you find yourself.

If you find yourself wanting, and would want to make peace with God and obtain His forgiveness, then make this prayer or one like it in sincerity from your heart to God.

Most gracious God, I come to You this day in total repentance. I plead that You forgive all my sins and wash them away with the atoning blood of Jesus. I also accept and receive Jesus into my life as my personal Lord and Saviour. Help me to live the rest of my life to please and serve You. This I pray and thank You for saving me. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

If you have done this in sincerity, then know God has forgiven you. Praise God you are saved. Now you need to pray to God daily as well as obtain and study your Bible daily too. Also get acquainted with other committed and spiritual Christians to help you grow in your knowledge and service of Christ. May God richly bless you.

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