

May 26, 2023

Here's Hope
By Rev. Jerry Rea

Forgiveness Brings Hope

Forgiveness brings *hope*... that I do not have to carry this guilt around for the rest of my life. I can move forward without forever looking back. It is quite a burden to carry sin. It is quite a problem to have to continually look back. For some of our friends we are forever branded by the sins we have gotten into. They are never buried, but always resurrected at the most inopportune times and embarrassing moments. Maybe when others are looking at our sins, our past, our failures, it helps to forget their own. The logic is something like this. "Well, at least I'm not like that!" I certainly get it and it does help us to sleep at night by remembering that we're not the worst sinner in the world. On the other hand, there is forgiveness. We are allowed to drop our burden and move forward. We are encouraged to realize that a loving God loves us... anyway! That brings hope for our future, if we've dealt with our past.

Forgiveness brings *peace*... that my missteps have been dealt with. A person who's not sure of his forgiveness is constantly waiting for that "knock at the door." He or she is always "covering his tracks." He changes the subject often. He covers conversations with clever words and wording. Then, at night, it all comes back. Sleep is shallow and the burden pursues us in our dreams. We wake tired (emotionally) and saddened. I believe that our actions follow us into dream land. Do you? If you really, really believe that God has forgiven you, then you can have peace with God, and that's an awesome start. There's peace in forgiveness. Knowing that one person (in this case God Himself) has truly "let it go", then you can begin to let it go.

Forgiveness brings *life*.... for my future. If we adequately deal with the past, the *forever* of our future lightens up. It's like a dawn. The sun gently pushes the darkness back. The light overtakes the darkness with all its fears and worries and pain. A brand new future "breaks" before us. It is different. It is hopeful. It is inviting and exciting. A new life replaces the old one. No one can long hold us down. Nothing is an insurmountable mountain. After all, with full strength, a person can climb mountains.

Forgiveness changes everything. You can have a brand new life. Begin with God. Allow Him to forgive you before people do. He's better at forgiving, and you are probably better at receiving it from Him. He's the one that matters anyway! I've heard it said, "If you have one good friend you can face your problems." You do have one good friend, and His name is Jesus. Once you have received His blood-bought gift of forgiveness, it will not matter nearly as much who else does not. You and I all have friends and even relatives who'll keep holding onto our mistakes. God does not. If God forgives you, then you can come to the place where you can forgive yourself, even if no one else does.

There truly is Hope in Forgiveness,
Jerry Rea