

DO YOU STILL BELIEVE?



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Life can be so overwhelming with the challenges that get thrown to us at different points in life. There are times in one's life when the situations and circumstances forces one to bend the knee to anxiety, fear and depression. It can be the loss of someone close to us, the heartbreak of losing a relationship, the passing of a pet or the despair that comes with being laid off from a job.

These gruesome and burdensome situations can leave scars on our emotional, mental and physical health and can even affect the relationships we have with the people we love.

We often times hear rumors of wars, the speedy downward spiral of the world economy and incurable diseases and sicknesses that plague the world we now live in.

In this world filled with so many reasons to lose all hope and optimism for the future, it is easy to go down in defeat and throw in the towel. The big question now is how can we live in such a world and still have hope for a beautiful future? I've come to tell you today that the answer is Jesus Christ.

We are not like those who have no hope because God's word has promised us glorious things that He will do for us. His word is full of so many glorious promises and plans that he has for us.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

Christ is our living hope (Col 1:27). He died so that we can always have a reason to have a smile no matter the storm. He says in Exodus 33:14 that he will always be with us even when we feel like the He has abandoned us.

All that we need to do is to believe his words and hold on to his promises.

Whenever we see that all the odds are stacked against us, we must look to him who promised us his presence every step of the way (Matt 28:20). We must look to the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ. You might be asking, how can I have hope and still believe the words and promises of God in the storms of life?

There are three primary ways of sustaining our faith and hope during the tough times of life:

Through the study of the word of God



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The word of God is more than enough for you and me to dig out hope from. It was written for our sake so that as we study it, the comforting role of the Holy Spirit would come into play.

The faith and hope that we need to push through difficult situations have already been deposited in the scriptures for us. There's enough assurance for us in the word of God. As you study, God's promises unfold and faith and hope are released in our lives.

By seeking encouragement through the Church



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Jesus Christ created the church as a place where his children can come together as one to find comfort and encouragement. The church of God is a place where love, encouragement and comfort can be found. By communing together, strength and faith can be stirred up in weary hearts and hope rekindled.

In the days of the foundational apostles, they gathered together, ate together and as the bible said "*All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer*" (Acts 1:14). No one enjoys the blessings of divine strength when he pulls away from the divine family on earth- the Church.

By harnessing the power of Prayer



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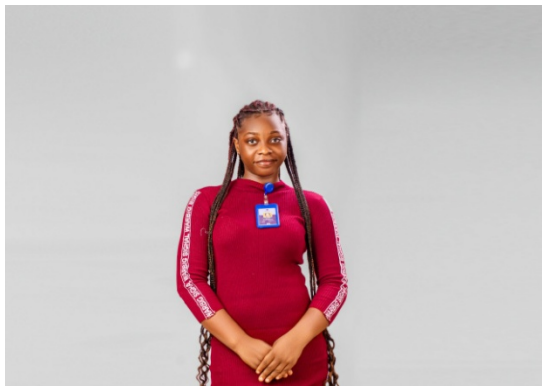
The power of prayer during these difficult times cannot be overemphasized. We can always run to our Heavenly Father anytime we need His grace to carry us through difficult times. Apostle Paul made mention that we are to find strength to overcome difficult situations and circumstances through prevailing prayers.

Prayer is a way of laying down our fears, challenging to accept the comfort of His promises, knowing that God is able to do exceeding abundantly, above anything we can ask or think. We often go through a lot of challenges in life because we don't take everything to God in prayer.

In the dark times, when devil attacks with grievous challenges and trials, we surmount his efforts with the confidence we have in taking the issues to the Lord in prayer, this has never failed.

We must learn to cast all our cares upon him for He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). When next a situation tries to put you down, respond by holding on to and believing the word of God. I leave you with the comforting words of documented in the scripture in Isaiah 41:10:

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.



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