

Nurses Christian Fellowship National Nurses Month Celebration 2022

Hope in the Darkness

Week Three: Hope in the Light

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It's been one of those nights where sleep seems to evade me (even with the sleep app I use). One of those nights where my brain's list of things to do shouts louder than the quieter voice calling me to rest. One of those nights where the difficult conversations for the day ahead have me working through different scenarios in my head. I reluctantly get out of bed because my brain has clicked "on" and if I lay there, I'll just be looking at the ceiling.

Maybe you've experienced similar interruptions with your sleep. You know you'll be tired in the day ahead. We cope with an extra cup of coffee to recharge and to push us through. We rely on our own grit and determination. We rationalize taking a power nap if we have time or that we'll be able to catch up on sleep later. We're nurses. We do what needs to be done.

Working in our own strength is exhausting. Yet we do it all the time. Not operating in my own strength has been one of the most difficult lessons to learn in my faith walk. God repeatedly allows me to make my own poor choices until I find myself in a place where I call out to him. I am that one sheep who wanders and finds herself in a miry pit up to her neck or caught on a rocky ledge, barely holding on, until I cry out in the wind and rain for help. And God is there. He is the light. He is strength. He is hope.



Hearing the Word

We are all sheep prone to wander. As you read the following verses, reflect on what it means to walk in the light versus to walk in darkness. Pause and pray for the Holy Spirit to speak his truth over you. Ask for your heart to be open and for your need for control to be laid aside.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

⁶If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,

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we have fellowship with one another,
and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
⁸ If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.
⁹ If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I John 1:5-9 (ESV)

Responding to the Word

Admitting our own needs is never easy. We are prone to wander. We have deadlines to meet-- expectations that are set sometimes by ourselves and sometimes by others. We react in the moment, looking for the nearest exit to resolve the pain or discomfort we feel. We tell ourselves it's not our fault. Our brains create stories to fill in the gaps for the "whys" we can't answer.

- What does it mean to acknowledge that God is light, and he has no darkness?
- Do you believe God can be trusted? Why or why not?
- Do you act as though God can be trusted? Why or why not? Reflect on challenges you have experienced and the ways you have coped.
- In what ways do you deceive yourself? What are the stories you tell yourself to legitimize your actions?

Application

Here's the truth I come back to again and again: I need to rest in God's light, in his strength--not my own. This is where I receive hope! I need to allow myself time with God to take in his truth, to listen to his voice and call on my life (which sometimes involves just being still), and to acknowledge my own weakness and failings. Let's call trying to do life on my own what it is--sin.

The word "sin" in the Greek of the New Testament means "to miss the mark." And in my own strength, I will always miss the mark. The beauty of the Christian faith is that God does not leave us to wander in isolation, hopelessness, grief, bitterness, weariness, or anger. He has something more for us. He provides a community of believers to walk with us in the day-to-day of life. He offers us light. He provides hope.

- In what areas of your life is confession needed? Pause right now to offer your confession to God. Consider it an offering and acknowledgment of your need for his light.

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- Do you have a community of believers where you can be real, where you can be supported in the challenges you face? If you do not, consider reaching out to NCF and asking about being a part of a student or professional nurse group.
- How do you respond to the self-criticism you may feel? Can you admit that, at times, the loudest critic is the voice inside your head? Can you offer yourself the gift of compassion, believing that Jesus' sacrifice was more than sufficient to cover your flaws, shortcomings, and sin?
- What steps do you need to take to walk more fully in his light? Tell God where you need hope that only he can offer.

God pursues us with an everlasting love. He is not afraid to join us in the chaos of our lives. He steps into the mire, and with his strong hand, he lifts us up. As we hang by our fingernails onto that rocky ledge, God calls to us: "I am here. I have always been here. Turn to me and live."

Trust in his light. Experience the hope of him in every part of your life. Walk with him and in his truth. Experience life in his light. Be encouraged, refreshed, and renewed as we draw closer to God so that we each give from a place of overflowing.



Dr. Christy Secor is the national Professional Ministries Director for Nurses Christian Fellowship USA as well as a Certified Daring Way™ Facilitator. She promotes living with courage, presence, wholeheartedness, and growing in deeper intimacy in our relationships with God. Christy supports more than 40 professional nurse groups, develops webinars and resources, and provides prayer support that encourages deeper connection with God, our colleagues, and the individuals and communities we serve.

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