

## **Light For Me In Dark Times**

God is well aware that there are dark times in our lives. God understands dark and troubled times. God understands empty places. We experience troubled times or temptation and we don't quite know what to do so we respond with fear, anxiety, and a whole bunch of activities and words that often land us in trouble with ourselves, our friends, or even the law. God encourages us to remember that it is in those places that He is most ready to act. God promises to be light where we experience darkness. God promises to protect us from danger. God promises us peace.

*Because of God's tender mercy, the light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace.*  
(Luke 1)

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light", and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.* (Genesis 1)

So, how are we to respond when we experience life as more than we can handle and situations that just don't seem to change despite our best efforts? What makes us different as Christians is that we choose to believe that there is hope and there is a solution simply because God is with us. We look for a solution, do all the things we know to do, and wait in God's care and protection until God's provision shows up. We refuse to give in to hopelessness and the thought that says nothing works and nothing has changed. Things are not the same. Something is different in our lives now. God is with us to inform us, to strengthen us, to show us alternatives we haven't yet known or tried, and to provide for us in amazing ways. God is not surprised or overwhelmed by what we are experiencing. God has more and offers to us more than we need for what we are facing. Our job is to look for the

light and live in the light with God while all the world around us seems dark and chaotic.

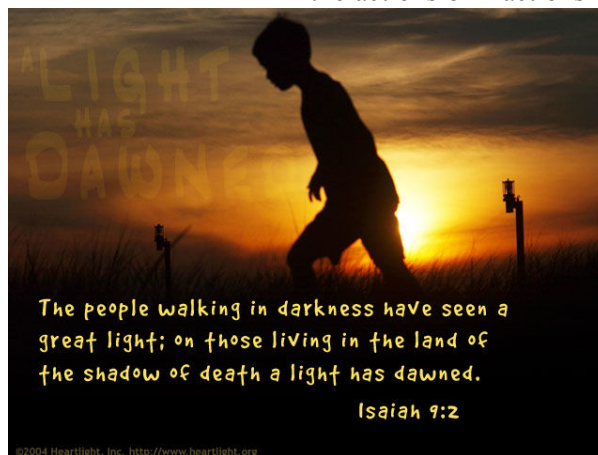
*God says, "I am the one who creates the light and makes the darkness. If you are walking in darkness, without a ray of light, trust in the Lord and rely on your God (Isaiah 45, 58)*



*I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night -- but even in the darkness I cannot hide from God. To God the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are both*

*alike to God. (Adapted from Psalm 139)*

God makes promises to us. They are not dependent upon the actions or inactions of other people. God will provide for us today in a way that allows us to live well in love and joy and peace regardless of what any other person says or does. God's promises to me are not dependent on my being a perfect person. God is ready to speak the light of forgiveness into my broken heart and life. God's promises are available to me when I am simple a "response-ible" person -- when I respond to God in the truth and look for



His goodness. The Bible tells us that the truth sets us free. In every situation we find ourselves, responding to God in obedience and trust will bring light and solutions. I will find my sorrows and pain and crying removed. I will experience life as a path of peace.

### Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. What do I do when life challenges me?
2. What negative thoughts do I tell myself in troubled times that I need to change?
3. How can I respond to God even though I still feel scared or frustrated or in pain?
4. What is different in my life since I began to act as though God really would take care of me in dark times?
5. What one area of challenge in my thoughts, beliefs, actions, or relationships do I need to work on this week?