

## God's Encouraging Word ... *when I feel hopeless*

I was staring up through the water at my dad, my uncle, and their friend. I could hear them talking and laughing. I can remember flailing my arms and legs. I tried to scream but water rushed into my lungs. I sank further and further down. I was drowning and I felt utterly hopeless.

Then a large hand grabbed me by the back of my swimsuit and pulled me from the water. As my head broke the surface of the water, I gasped for air. My dad wrapped his arms around me and told me everything would be alright.

To this day I remember the name of my dad's friend who pulled me from the water. Although I haven't seen him in over 30 years, I am forever grateful that he saved my life.

Undoubtedly, at times you have felt like you are drowning in life's problems and it can feel utterly hopeless. Hopeless that your marriage will not survive its present struggles. Hopeless over your debt, your grandkids' struggles, your sinful habits. Hopeless that you will ever find happiness. Hopeless that there is no way God could forgive you for your past sins or hopeless because you know death is coming. When you feel hopeless, you feel like you are drowning and that no one, not even God, hears your cries for help, for mercy and relief.

So where is lasting hope found in a hopeless world? In God's Word! There Jesus grabs you by the hand and pulls you from the depths of despair. There he breathes into you what your sin-sick soul is gasping for—the forgiveness of sins. There Jesus wraps his nail-marked hands around you and reminds you that he has claimed you as his own and that nothing, not even death itself, can separate him from you. Why? Because he lives! And because he lives you have the sure and certain hope that you will live forever in heaven. True hope, happiness, peace, and life are found in Jesus!

By God's grace to this day I remember the name of the one who saved me—Jesus. Although I have never seen him, I am forever grateful that he has saved my life and given me the sure and certain hope of an eternity in heaven, just like he has for you!

**Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths;  
guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are  
God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. —  
Psalm 25:4-5**