

A God of Second Chances

We have a God of Second Chances. This is proved many times in the bible. We have a God who does not give up on us. Jonah was swallowed by a whale or great fish and then spit out and he realized he was fighting a losing battle and could not hide from God even in the belly of a fish. God is stronger than we are. Saul, later Paul, had his sight taken until he could see and hear God's call. He became not the persecutor but the witness, not the one who stood back and watched as Stephen was stoned but the one who would bring others to faith in God and the resurrection. Peter became the disciple Jesus knew him to be after his denial of even knowing Christ and would die upside down on a cross for that belief. I have had a lot of second chances in my life. I was accepted into Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit for Nurses Training in 1953, I showed up and entered in 1954. I earned .50 cents an hour at the movie theater and had saved a considerable amount but was short in 1953. I paid all my expenses from clothing to senior year extras such as yearbooks and senior rings, lunches and most of my dinners. I reapplied in 1954 after working at the telephone company for \$42 dollars for a 40 hour week for a year. I had to meet with those who would decide if I would be allowed a second chance, I was asked why I had not shown up the year before. I told them that I hadn't had enough money. I had to meet with the Director of Nursing. A rather intimidating no nonsense woman. She looked at me and said that I should never let the lack of money stop me that she would help me. I swear at that moment she grew angel wings. I had the money I needed that year but was concerned about 2nd and 3rd years. But now I had someone in my corner who would help me earn the money. By the middle of my second year, I was able to work some of my days off for pay and it was deposited into a bank in the hospital, and I could draw on it when I needed to. I thank God I had the courage only he could give to tell that Director I had money problems. I baby sat for the children of the Residents who lived across the street in the first year, floor duty on my days off from the middle of the second and all the third year and never had money problems again. My work was monitored by the nursing office, and they made me take at least one day off a week and when I tried to work 14 days of a two-week vacation they said no, and they wanted me to take four days off, but I talked them into two. I owe a lot to that rather intimidating but kind woman. She looked at me and didn't see a poor person with no future but saw a future nurse with possibilities. I was given a second chance.

Luke 23:39-43 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults him: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you today you will be with me in paradise."

Rehab, Moses, David, Zacchaeus, Peter, the thief on the cross, you and I are all given second chances.

Lord, we thank you for those times in our lives when we have received second chances and even third and fourth. You are a forgiving God, and we praise your name. We thank you for this day, for the food provided, for the love of friends and family. We ask your guidance and help for the sick and those that grieve. May they feel you near them. Be with us in all we do that we may reflect your love to others. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry. Be with his family. Be with us in all we do. Be with our staff and leaders, guide them in their work. We ask all these things in the name of Jesus. Amen

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