

Spiritual Reflection for December 2018

Messages of Hope

There was a time when you simply left a written note if you wanted to leave a message. Today messages are sent in multiple ways and the handwritten note is almost lost. We ask people to shoot us a text message, send a message to our email, or leave a message on our voicemail. Did you know the most important messages do not even have words? Let's reflect on messages of hope.

Every day we send and receive hundreds of messages to/from family, friends, and even strangers and the strongest message come from body language. No words at all. Our body language speaks volumes and without saying a word we can lift someone's spirit or destroy it. That being said, we must be keenly aware of our body language when we interact with people. There is no auto correct for body language. Perhaps this is why word messages are so often misunderstood. When we cannot read the person's body language we are not sure how it was intended. We might question whether the message was sincere or sarcastic.

Our body language adds meaning. The old saying, "actions speak louder than words" rings true. So if you "don't know what to say" remember it is your actions that are most important anyway.

With this in mind, there are many ways you can deliver messages of hope to others. Stopping to visit with a friend, family member, neighbor, or even a stranger in the grocery store with a smile and a listening ear can impact their day far beyond your understanding. Bringing a plate of cookies, a meal or even a cup of coffee to someone will create a memory they will talk about for years to come. There are so many little ways our body language sends messages of hope to all of humanity, like, opening a door for someone, offering to carry packages, picking up groceries, and the list goes on and on.

The Christmas season celebrates hope, yet it is also a season when many people struggle to find hope in their life. Struggles with missing loved ones who live out of town or have died, with finances in a time of higher financial demand, or with trying to balance time for the additional gatherings, can leave people feeling hopeless. Some people experience deep loneliness and longing, which can also lead to hopelessness.

There is always hope in the Christmas promise of a Savior and we are empowered to bring hope to others. Through our actions we make hope possible for someone else. A smile invites the other to smile back. Hope spreads. An outstretched hand invites another to communicate their need. Hope spreads. Remember, the person in need of uplifting may be you. If you are feeling hopeless your spirit will be nurtured by accepting help from others.

Actions speak louder than words and symbolize hope in the world. So, when you want to send a message that will have great impact on the receiver refrain from sending idol words in a text, email or voicemail. Make a choice to deliver love filled actions, which are indeed messages of hope!

Questions to ponder:

How can I send a message of hope this Christmas Season?

When has my spirit been lifted by the action of another?

How is God calling me to action?

How will I hold onto hope in my life?

May God's Peace be Yours,

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I will live this day as if it were Christmas. I will be a giver of gifts and deliver to my enemies the gift of forgiveness; my opponents, tolerance; my friends, a smile; my children, a good example, and every gift will be wrapped with unconditional love. Og Mandino,