

# Gospel 1, 2, 3

## *Faith, hope and love.*

The Gospel (good news) is that God wants to be friends with us. Paul wrote, “So these three things remain: faith, hope and love. But the best one of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). Faith, hope and love are the things that holds personal relationships together.

### *1. Faith*

**God wants a relationship with us.** Friendships are built on trust. Sin occurs when we withdraw our trust in God. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:13 that God is faithful even when we are unfaithful. God is like the father in Jesus’ Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) who waits expectantly for his wayward child to come home. When we place our faith in Jesus, it is like returning home to the Father who welcomes all those who believe in Jesus. The Father adopts us as members of his family. Ephesians 2:8 says that we are saved through faith and not by the things that we do. Why would God be impressed by our good works, our achievements, or our cleverness? He wants us to believe in him. Even in our failures, Jesus believes in us, and we can trust in God.

### *2. Hope*

**We have hope because of God’s grace.** God is gracious in forgiving our sins. None of us is perfect, so it is good news to know that God has forgiven us. We do not have to do anything to earn this forgiveness. Just as the father welcomed home the prodigal son even before he spoke a word of apology, God is waiting to welcome you. He does not need you to do anything. God the Son came into this sinful world in human form. Jesus submitted to death on the cross so that we might have the opportunity of a reconciled relationship with God. In raising Jesus from the dead, God demonstrated his power and willingness to do the impossible for us, to forgive our sins, to save us and befriend us (Romans 5:6-11). A life of relationship with God is a life characterised by hope. This hope is not just about going to heaven when we die, but in the day-by-day blessings received from a gracious God.

### *3. Love*

**God loves you.** In fact, he cannot possibly love you any more than he already does. Many people think that God only loves us if we are good, and so the better our behaviour is, the more God will love us. God’s love for us does not depend on our performance. The Bible says in John 3:16 that God loved the world so much that he gave his only son. God could not love you any more than that. Jesus gave his life for you because of God’s love for you. Our sins do not lessen God’s love for us, but our sins distance us from God so that we do not enjoy his love. Jesus gave his life for us so that we might be reconciled with God. There is absolutely nothing that can keep us from the love of God (Romans 8:35-39).