

# What a Promise!

*“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”*  
Hebrews 10:22

Stephen was the first Christian martyr. As he stood before the High Priest, he was asked to give up his God. Because he would not relent, they led him outside the city and stoned him to death. We are not called to be like Stephen. At times we are called to stand up for what we believe. Sometimes we do, and sometimes, it is easier just to tell a little white lie, or to avoid the situation. I am afraid that far too often, we “run around” the situation rather than face it head on!!! If we have accepted Christ as our personal Savior we will see God. When? We can see God’s handiwork every day when we wake up.

Do we really think about the message kids have on a bracelet WWJW - “What Would Jesus Do?” We are

blessed when our “inside world” is put right. Why? Because we know we are doing right our heart and mind are satisfied. But, that is fine until we get into the “real world”. When other people are looking at us and expecting us to be like them, or expecting us to be different it is not so easy to justify how we are acting or what we are saying. We have these choices to make every day.

We have a conscience. But sometimes we don’t let it do the guiding. My husband’s favorite character was Jiminy Cricket. I had never thought about him in any way except that he was the nice little character that helps Pinocchio get back on the right track when he wandered. If it hadn’t been for Jiminy, Pinocchio would have ended up being a donkey! But Jiminy was always there, sitting on Pinocchio’s shoulder. As I read, I found that Jiminy is sometimes thought of as a polite euphemism for Jesus Christ. That may be stretching it. But, we do tend to think of Christ in a very light hearted way sometimes.

As I continued to study this, I found a sermon by Tim Bertolet that gave a different light. He said “The sad thing is that Jiminy’s ‘When you wish upon a star’ view of life is a lot like how most people view God and Jesus.”

*“Hope is trust in God’s promises, faith that if we act now, the desired blessings will be fulfilled in the future.”*  
James E. Faust



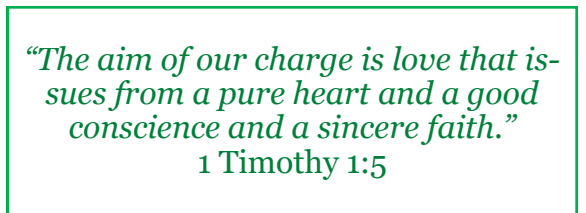
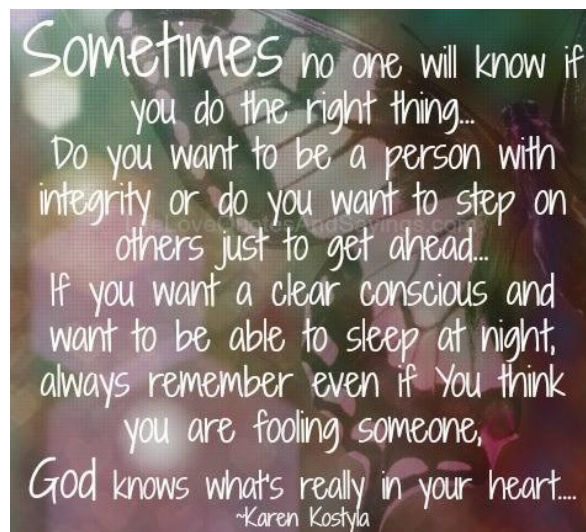
He takes the comparison and contrast a little further with this analogy – “Jesus cares in more than just a sentimentalized Jiminy Cricket kind of way. Jiminy is safe. Jesus is not. Jesus makes demands on our life. Jiminy is the kind of guy we keep in our back pocket to pull out when we need a little ‘pick-me-up’ of encouragement. Jesus is the kind of guy that challenges and reshapes our priorities. Jiminy fits in where we want him to fit. His kingdom message is basically: the world is our oyster. Jesus’ kingdom message is one of Lordship--the reign of God.” Perhaps we sometimes try to make Jesus into a Jiminy.

Whatever we choose, we have a Savior that loves us as we are. He is always there. He knows our frailties, our sins, and through his amazing grace He is willing to forgive us and help us to be stronger the next time. And we know that one day, we will be with Him, and then we won’t have these worldly temptations to worry about. But, we will only achieve that through His love and grace when we ask.

His spirit in us is much stronger than the conscience of Jiminy Cricket. He is the power that can truly help us through any situation. We will never be pure as Christ is pure, but we can constantly strive to be more God-like in everyday life. In fact, that is exactly what we pray in The Lord's Prayer when we ask *"Thy will be done."* But we must remember that we need to help to do God's will when we pray for it. I think that is what Bertolet was saying. God demands that we do our part. When we pray for God's will, we are also pledging our willingness to help see it happen. Jiminy is sort of like the little angel that people wear on their shoulder. It is a nice symbol, and it is sometimes very meaningful, but it requires us to act in a certain way to help that angel stay there!

Every day we are given promises without ever asking. Every day we are loved more than we could ever imagine. Take a minute and think about the promises and blessings you have received. Oh, just a warning, it may take much more than a minute once you really think about it.

As Jiminy said *"Always let your conscience be your guide"* but that is just the beginning of the wonderful gift that comes with the assurance you are seeking to do God's will.



Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, each day You give us many things for which we can be thankful. Each day, You call on us to make some decisions. Do we have time to do them? Do we have the strength to do them? Do we have the resources to do them? Help us to realize that through all these things You will never ask us to do more than what You know we are capable of doing, and then help us to do it to Your glory, today, tomorrow, and always until we see You face to face. Amen.

1. Why do we have a problem standing up for what we believe?
2. What reward do we get for standing up for what we believe is right?
3. What is our "inside world"? Is it right with the Lord?
4. How strong was the faith of Stephen?
5. How do we get "right" with our inside world? Where can we find the strength to do it?
6. Have we put Jiminy or God on our shoulder?

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