



A Cloud of Witnesses

Taken from Hebrews 11 and John 17:

"Tie a yellow Ribbon 'round the Old Oak tree. It's been three long years; do you still want me?" How many of us remember singing along to this tune from the 70's?

I have thought many times about that poor man on the bus, getting out of jail, wondering if the woman he loved would still be waiting for him. Hoping beyond hope that she would still want him back, after all his years away.

Our Heavenly Father waits for us. He wants us back. His patience is abundant. He is long-suffering. His passion is to tie 1,000 yellow ribbons around the oak tree of our hearts. We are His children and we are not lost; yes, each of us may have taken a rabbit trail or two off His chosen path for us, but the Father has a plan. In John 10 Jesus declares to the Jews at the temple "...I give them eternal life, and they will never, ever (by any means) perish and no one will ever snatch them out of My hand. I and the Father are One (in essence and nature)." *Jesus also included this in His prayer to the Father, in verse 20 of John 17 "I do not pray for these alone, it is not for their sake that I make this request, but also for all those who will ever believe and trust in Me through their message."* That's us!

God's hands are so big and strong that even if we tried to jump off, we would land right back in the palm of His hand. This spiritual reality is so soothing and comforting to my soul.

In Hebrews we read an amazing story of all the believers who have gone before us.

Their faith is what they all had in common. They believed regardless of what had happened in this life and that the promise of Heaven was more precious, more beautiful, more sure, than any trial that this world could bring. Being in the presence of God, in heaven with Jesus their Savior, was so real, that facing the trials, suffering and pain that many of them endured at the hands of men, was bearable. May we be found worthy of such distinction and honor. May we be fueled by the Holy Spirit's power and be added to the hall of fame for our faith. We agree and stand firm in the same belief that God's promises are true and sure and that we will be on the other side of eternity, with Him!

So great a cloud of witnesses waiting for us...tying the yellow ribbons on the old oak tree in heaven for us...Welcome Home Pilgrim!

"Father, I long to be with You and all my loved ones who have gone before me. I want to be welcomed into Your Kingdom with so great a cloud of witnesses. Make the last laps of my life, here on this earth, count for eternity.

In Your Son's Name...the Name above all names, Jesus, I pray." own flesh and blood.
I want that kind of faith!