


What's the Use? Remaining Confident in the Character of God

Brian Ratledge, Elder

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Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Observation—*What do I see?*

- Read Romans 8:24-28 (see [Sermon Texts](#)). Circle the five occurrences of the word "hope". How do you define the word "hope"? How would you typically use it in a sentence?
- According to v. 26, what is our "weakness", and how does the Holy Spirit help us with that? Does the Holy Spirit know how to pray intelligently for us (see v. 27)?
- According to v. 28, **who** causes all things to work together for our good?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- Look up the word "hope" at <WebstersDictionary1828.com>. What does the **second** definition say? This is the the way the Bible uses the word, "hope". What do you learn?

Now look at the **first** definition (its secular meaning). How do biblical and secular hope differ?

- According to v. 28, all things work together for "good". How do you define "good"? How do you think God defines it? Give a biblical basis for your answer.

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- How does the fact that the Spirit knows and prays the mind of God increase **our** hopefulness?
- Since "we do not know how to pray as we should"—should we even pray? Why or why not?
- Are you full of confident, expectant "hope" that God is causing everything in **your** life to work for good? Why or why not?

What role do **we** play in God's unconquerable intent to complete the salvation for which we hope?

Sermon Texts

Romans 8:24-28

For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, through perseverance we wait eagerly for it. Now in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Luke 5:1-11

Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around Him and listening to the word of God, He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; and He saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. And He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little distance from the land. And He sat down and continued teaching the crowds from the boat. Now when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon responded, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets." And when they had done this, they caught a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to tear; so they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, to the point that they were sinking. But when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; and likewise also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear; from now on you will be catching people." When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

Mark 9:17-24

And when they came back to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. Immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed and began running up to greet Him. And He asked them, "What are you disputing with them?" And one person from the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, because he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground, and he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and becomes stiff. And I told Your disciples so that they would cast it out, but they could not do it." And He answered them and *said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!" And they brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, the spirit immediately threw him into convulsions, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth. And He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to kill him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" But Jesus said to him, "'If You can?' All things are possible for the one who believes." Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

John 21:15-22

Now when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." He said to him again, a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was hurt because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep. Truly, truly I tell you, when you were younger, you used to put on your belt and walk wherever you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will put your belt on you, and bring you where you do not want to go." Now He said this, indicating by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had said this, He said to him, "Follow Me!" Peter turned around and *saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them—the one who also had leaned back on His chest at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who is betraying You?" So Peter, upon seeing him, *said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" Jesus *said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!"

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Psalm 90 begins with these helpful words: "Lord, before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God. You turn people back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, you mortals!" For you, **a thousand years** are as a passing day, as brief as a few night hours... We are like grass that springs up in the morning. In the morning it blooms and flourishes, but by evening it is dry and withered... Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom."

As we enter 2026, what wisdom might believers from **a thousand years ago give us?
What ancient wisdom should we consider as we embark on our new year?**

Read Psalm 139:23–24. True godliness starts with searching one's heart in God's presence, not with vague optimism, so begin the year with deep self-examination before God.

My response:

Read Ezekiel 18:30. A new year calls not for fresh promises alone, but for renewed hatred of sin and fresh turning to Christ, so renew repentance daily, don't merely make resolutions.

My response:

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. Measure every plan—work, family, worship—by one question: "Does this glorify God?" So make it your chief aim as the glory of God in everything.

My response:

Read Ephesians 4:22-24. Spiritual growth requires active warfare against indwelling sin, not passive regret. Holiness is pursued deliberately, so daily "take off" sin and "put on" righteousness.

My response:

Read Ephesians 5:15-16. Time is sacred trust, to be stewarded carefully, so redeem it diligently.

My response:

Read Psalm 90:12. All will answer to God, so live with the end in view. Each day prepare for eternity.

My response: