

BELIEVE IN GOD

Jkroberts_us@yahoo.com

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Romans 8:28-30

1. Just prior to going to the Cross Jesus told the Disciples, "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me." John 14:1
2. There were momentous challenges ahead for Jesus' followers, and He wanted them to maintain a right focus as God's plan for Him and them unfolded.
3. They were not totally successful in doing so, but by the grace of God they were protected and provided for.
4. I am glad that God's purposes for my life are dependent on His ability and not mine.
5. That said, God expects me to avail myself of the resources that are mine in Jesus Christ.
6. Sadly, many who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ have embraced what I call a theology of defeat.
7. They have accepted the idea that God can save them from the consequences of their sins but not from the power of sin.
8. The Bible teaches that God can do both through Christ who loves us and gave Himself for us. Note a few passages of Scripture:
 - a. Rom 6:12-14
Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 **For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.**
 - b. Rom 8:37-39
But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - c. 2 Cor 2:14-17
But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? 17 For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.
 - d. Col 2:8-13
See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. 9 **For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete,** and He is the head

over all rule and authority; 11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

9. The question is are we going to believe God or those, who in their desire to exalt the saving grace of God, deny the sanctifying, serving, and sustaining grace of God?

10. Paul wrote the following to the church at Philippi.

a. Phil 1:3-6

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 **For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.**

b. Phil 2:12-13

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 **for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

11. My friends, the same God Who spoke the universe into existence and sustains it by the word of His power has begun a good work in every genuine follower of Jesus Christ.

12. The problem is that most so-called believers do not, in a practical sense, believe that God is able to do, in their case, what He has promised He will do.

13. So what is God's will for you and me, and what is He working to accomplish in our lives?

I. He is causing all things to work together for good. Romans 8:28-30

A. Having called and justified us He is now working to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ.

B. Like a potter He uses both internal and external pressure to mold and shape our lives according to His predetermined plan and purpose.

C. Our part is to love God and cooperate with Him through the obedience of faith.

D. The process is not a painless one. 2 Cor 4:7-12

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are **afflicted** in every way, but not crushed; **perplexed**, but not despairing; 9 **persecuted**, but not forsaken; **struck down**, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 **For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.** 12 So death works in us, but life in you.

II. He is disciplining us for our good. Hebrews 12:1-11

A. God's discipline is a manifestation of His love. 6

B. God's discipline is a mark of sonship. 7-8

C. God's discipline is for our good, so that we may share His holiness. 9-10

D. God's discipline yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. 11

III. He has given us His precious and magnificent promises. 2 Peter 1:1-4

- A. He has given to us the same faith that characterized the lives of the Apostles and all true followers of Jesus Christ. 1
- B. He has given us the ability to know all we need to know. 2-3
- C. He has, by faith and true knowledge, given us access to His provision and power through His promises.
 - 1. So that by them we can become partakers of the divine nature.
 - 2. So that by them we escape the corruption that is in the world by lust.

APPLICATION

1. In closing, note Peter's admonition based on what He had just written. 2 Peter 1:5-11
Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.
2. Our lives should be characterized by moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and brotherly love.
3. All of these attributes can and should be increasingly ours.
4. They will insure that our lives are both useful and fruitful.
5. They will also give evidence to the fact that God has both called and chosen us.
6. Let us all be numbered with those who have embraced a theology of victory rather than a theology of defeat.
7. Let us be numbered with those who believe what Paul believed when he declared, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13