

Our Responsibility

Let's look at the relationship between God's sovereignty and our responsibility. Read Psalm 127:1. What does God do in this verse? What do people do?

This verse shows that we have responsibilities as believers; the responsibilities named here are building and watching. However, the psalmist also says that God is actually doing the building and watching. How can this be? The verse is saying that we are to depend on God to enable us to do our responsibilities. Depending on God doesn't mean that we do nothing, it means that we obey God and ask Him for the strength to do so.



What are some things you can build or watch out for as you follow God?

To help see what you may need to watch for, do a word study on the word "watch" and look especially in the apostle Paul's letters in the New Testament.

Strone's

Definition from concordance

Define in your own words

How do you say the word?

Word in original language

What are some other responsibilities that God has given us as His followers?

Read Ephesians 5:15-16. How are we supposed to live? Why are we to make the most of every opportunity?

What opportunities has God given you to shine a light for Him? Brainstorm below areas where you can live in obedience to Him, whether at your school, family, sports, neighborhood, or other places. Ask God to help you make the most of each opportunity.



Read Deuteronomy 8:17-18. When we accomplish things, who must we remember? Why should we remember Him and be grateful?



Dear Lord,

Please give me the strength to obey the things you have for me. You are the One who has enabled me to do those things, and you get all the glory for it!

Amen

The Battlefield

Romans 12 tells us that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Our minds are the battlefield. In battle, one of Satan's tactics in our minds is to make us feel rejected. Rejection makes us feel isolated. It can be a very destructive emotion and a deadly strategy of the enemy.

When Jesus lived on earth, he was rejected too. Read the following verses and write what they say about Jesus.

John 1:10-11 _____

Isaiah 53:3 _____

Do a word study on the word "rejected" in Isaiah 53:3.

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Read John 15:18-21. How should we expect the world to treat us as followers of Christ?

God never promises that other people won't reject us. In fact, they may reject us because we are Christians. But God will never forsake us. When we are rejected or feel lonely, we must cling to the promises of God's Word. On the next page, write out the promises of God from the following verses.

GOD'S PROMISES

Deuteronomy 31:6

Psalm 18:6

Psalm 27:10

Psalm 46:1

Psalm 147:3

Isaiah 41:13

Isaiah 54:10

Matthew 28:20

John 14:16-18



Dear God,

Though the devil attacks by making us feel lonely, thank you that You are always with us. Thank you for your promises that we can cling to in the hard times. You are faithful!

Amen

The War

What happens when temptation seems to come over and over again? What do we do when we can't stop doing something that's wrong? Satan wages war against us, and his strategy is to attack our minds until he wears us down and captures our thoughts. This attack is known as "spiritual warfare."

Jesus experienced spiritual warfare as well. In fact, Satan tempted Jesus just like Satan tempts us! We can learn a lot from how Jesus responded to the devil's attacks.



Read Matthew 4:1-11 and answer the following questions.

What are the things Satan does to wage war on Jesus? _____

What areas are Jesus tempted in? _____

Have you ever been tempted in the same ways that Jesus does?

How does Jesus respond to Satan's temptation? What can we do when we are tempted to follow Jesus' example? _____

Read Ephesians 6:10-20. We have already talked about the importance of the armor of God, but this passage tells us more than just what the armor of God is. Why must we put on the armor of God?

Who do we struggle against?

What are our weapons when we are facing temptation according to this passage?

Do a word study on “sword” in Ephesians 6. Why is it important that God’s Word is called a sword?

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As we have seen when Jesus was tempted, the Word of God is our weapon against the enemy’s attacks. In order to stand strong in the midst of war, we must know God and His Word so that we can live accordingly.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What is the Word of God useful for? Why must we know His Word?



Dear God,

Thank you for Your Word that is our weapon when Satan attacks. Please speak to me through Your Word and help me to know Your Word more and more each day.

Amen

God's Sovereignty Over People, Nations, Nature

In church, we often talk about God as sovereign. But what does sovereign mean? Look at the following verses to get an idea of what this might mean:

Psalm 103:19

Psalm 135:6

Lamentations 3:37

Do a word study on the word "sovereign" to see what this word means throughout the Bible. As a starting place, look at the word in Deuteronomy 3:24 and go from there!

Strone's

Definition from concordance

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How do you say the word?

Word in original language

After looking at the previous verses doing a word study, what would you say in your own words that it means for God to be sovereign? Write your definition below:

God's Sovereignty means...

What is God sovereign over? This is a question that we might wrestle with as Christians. Explore the following verses and record what God is sovereign over:

Proverbs 21:1

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

2 Chronicles 20:6

Jeremiah 14:22

In the space below, draw a picture of things that God is sovereign over. Does this include animals? Politicians? Weather? Musicians? The universe? Of course it does! Praise God that He is sovereign over all!

Sometimes when bad things happen it is hard to trust God's sovereignty. Look at Habakkuk 3:17-19. What is his situation in verse 17? In verse 18 what does he still choose to do? What does he say God is in verse 19 in the midst of his trial? This is something we can cling onto!



Dear God

Praise You that You are a sovereign God. You are in control of everything, and we can trust You. Even in the bad times, please help me to trust Your sovereignty in my life.

Amen

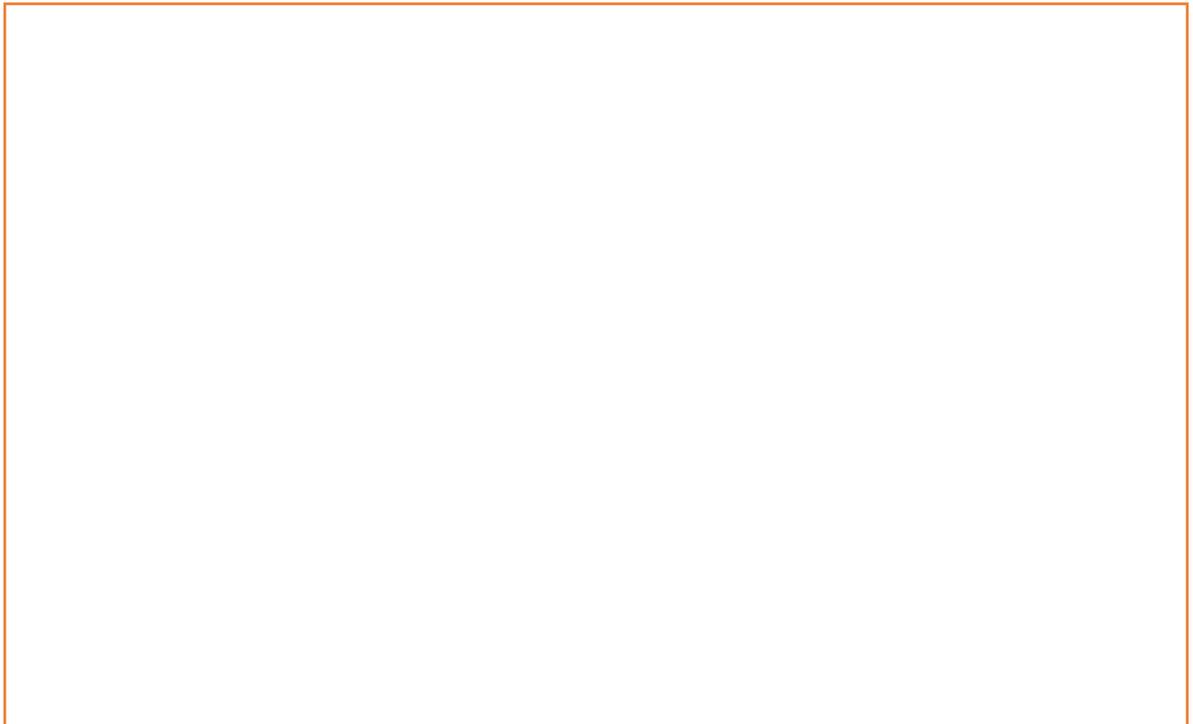
Forgiveness

Forgiveness is an important theme throughout the Bible. One person who modeled forgiveness really well is Joseph. Read Genesis 37:1-36. Why did Joseph's brothers hate him? What did they do to him?

Read Genesis 39:1-23. What temptation did Joseph face? What happened when he resisted it?

Later in the story, Joseph becomes high in command and he and his brothers reunite. Does he forgive them? Read Genesis 50:15-21 and record what Joseph does:

In the space below, draw pictures representing the story of Joseph. Make sure to include what his brothers did wrong against him, but also show that he chose to forgive them in the end!



How should we respond towards people who sin against us? Why should we do so? Read Ephesians 4:31-32 and see what the apostle Paul has to say:

Do a word study on “forgive” in Matthew 18:21

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Word in original language

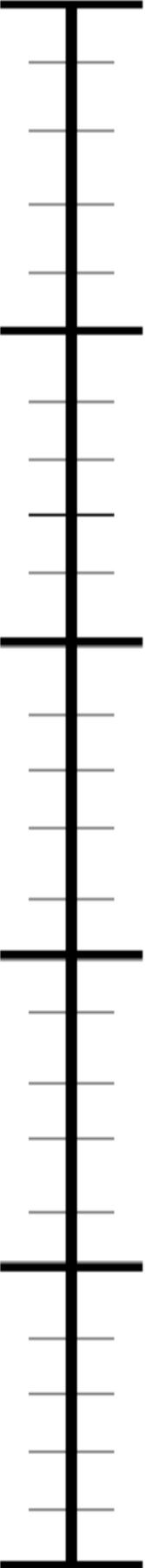
In Matthew 18:22, how many times does Jesus say Peter is to forgive someone who sins against him? What does this mean?



Dear God

Thank you for forgiving me of my sins! When others wrong me, please give me the strength to forgive them as you forgave me in Christ Jesus.

Amen



Victory Over Discouragement

Many times, in life we feel discouraged. People in the Bible felt this often! One example of this is Jeremiah, who writes about his struggles in the book of Lamentations. Read Lamentations 3:1-20. What words would you use to describe how he is feeling?

How Jeremiah is feeling:

In Lamentations 3:21-27, Jeremiah's tone changes. He remembers some things and therefore has hope. What does He remember in these verses?

What Jeremiah remembers:

What caused Jeremiah's change of heart? He turned from the circumstances as his focus to a focus on God. Jeremiah remembered God's great love and faithfulness.

Read the following verses and write what they tell you about God's love: Psalm 32:10, Isaiah 54:10, Lamentations 3:32. You can cling to these things when you feel discouraged!

God's Love:

Do a word study on the word “unfailing/steadfast love” in Psalm 32:10. What is the importance of this word in the Old Testament?

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Another person who felt a lot of discouragement was David. Read Psalm 13. What was he discouraged about? What does he ultimately do at the end of the psalm?



Dear God

I know there will be times where I feel discouraged. When that happens, Lord please remind me of your steadfast love for me. Remind me of your goodness so that I can praise you!
I love you Lord!

Amen

Run the Race

God created you uniquely! Read Psalm 139:13-16 and do a word study on the word for “inmost being.” This is the word used to express the center of desire and longing- the center of emotions and moral sensitivity.

Strone's

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David is saying in these verses that God created his physical body as well as his personality. God has created each of us uniquely! Check out these other verses that show the same theme and write what each verse says:

Job 10:8-11 _____

Psalm 119:73 _____

Jeremiah 1:5 _____

Knowing that God is intimately involved with creating us in our mother's womb helps us to understand that a God so much a part of the creative process must also have a plan for our lives. Each of us is designed uniquely to fulfill the plan that He has for us. Our disabilities and our abilities all fit into that plan. God's plan embraces more than the circumstances of our lives. It also includes what He wants us to be and do. God's sovereignty determines our function with the Body of Christ and the corresponding spiritual gifts that we receive to carry out our function.

What are some of the gifts that God has given to you? The first step to knowing what God might be calling you to do is knowing the way He has made you. That includes your personality, interests, passions, and even spiritual gifts! Ask your parents and people who know you well that could tell you some of your personal gifts. Draw gift boxes and inside write the different unique ways God has made you



My Gifts:

Given your gifts, what types of things do you think God might be calling you specifically to do? Ask God to show you what He is calling you to do specifically, and write some ideas of what you think those things might be!

God might be calling me to...



Dear God

Thank you for making me uniquely and wonderfully! Please show me the ways you have made me and how I can use my life for Your glory.

Amen

The Joy of the Lord

“Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” -Nehemiah 8:10

Do a word study on the word “joy” in this passage.

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When we are running the race of life, it's easy to lose our joy. We quickly move into cycles of bitterness. Bitterness can cause us to have God's blessings; it can also cause us to be angry and hostile toward others. Bitterness often comes when we receive discipline.

Read Hebrews 12:5-15. Answer the following questions:

How are we to respond to God when he disciplines us? (v. 5)

Who does the Lord discipline? (v. 6-7)

When we are disciplined, what should we do? (v. 7)

What is the purpose of God's discipline? (v. 10)

What fruit does discipline yield? (v. 11)

What are we to strive for? (v. 14)

What are we to not let spring up? (v. 15)

When tough times happen in life, we must ask for God's joy to be our strength. We must endure and trust God in the midst of whatever is happening.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6. What are we to do? When we do this, what does God promise He will do?



Dear God

May your joy be my strength when things aren't going well in life. I want to continue to trust You! Please keep me from bitterness and help me endure at all times.

Amen

The Wisdom of God

When things are not going like you thought they should, have you ever wondered if God really knows what He is doing? Does God make mistakes?

Read Romans 11:33. Do a word study on the word “wisdom” in this verse:

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Read Psalm 147:5. What is God's understanding compared to ours?

Now read Isaiah 55:8-9. How are God's ways compared to ours? How are God's thoughts compared to ours?

This verse does not tell us that God will not explain to us, but says that, even if God gave full explanation we would not be able to understand.

Go back to Romans 11 and this time go to verses 34-35. Has anyone known God's mind? Has anyone been his counselor? What are the answers to these questions?

WHO has known the mind of the Lord: _____

WHO has been his counselor: _____

WHO has given a gift to him that he might be repaid: _____

Read Psalm 131:1 What does David think God's wisdom is?

God's wisdom is infinite and His ways are beyond our understanding. We need to trust His wisdom! Read Proverbs 3:7. Instead of being wise in our own eyes, what are we to do? What will happen when we do so?

After all the passages we've read today, write what you've learned about God's wisdom!

God's wisdom is...



Dear God

Thank you that your wisdom is above my own! Please help me to not be wise in my own eyes, but to trust you at all times.

Amen

Victory over Despair and Anger

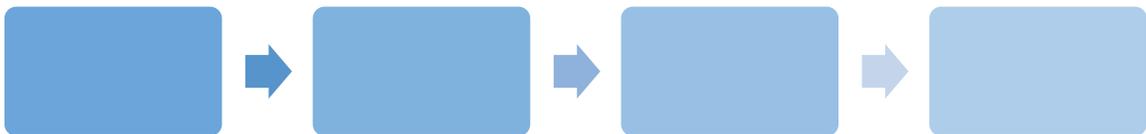
Despair is when there is no hope. Despair causes your mind to become numb. It can also lead to frantic activity. When we despair, we do things that we normally would never do.

Even in times of despair, Christianity offers something that no other religion claims: assurance of salvation. This assurance is the birthright of every child of God. The greatest victory of the enemy is to cause the believer to lose hope. We lost hope when we act according to our own emotions or human reasoning rather than trusting God's Word. We lose hope when we focus on circumstances. We lose hope when we leave God out of the picture.



Romans 5 tells us where our hope comes from and what it does. Read Romans 5:1-5. Ultimately what produces hope? Why does hope not put us to shame

Write below the chain of things that ultimately produces hope.



Read Psalm 42:1-5. David seems to be in a time of despair. Why can David find hope in God?

Do a word study on the word “hope” in Psalm 42:5:

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To see another person in despair, go to Lamentations 3:55-57 and see what Jeremiah does. What does he do in his despair? What does God do?

From what you’ve learned today, why can we have hope in God during times of despair? Write everything you’ve learned below, and these are promises you can cling to!

Why I can have hope:



Dear God

Even in times of despair, thank you that I can have hope. I can have hope because You have saved me. You hear me when I call. Thank you God, please help me to live a life filled with hope in You.

Amen

Always Trust God

Because God is sovereign and wise, we can always trust. If we are going to honor Him in times of adversity, we must trust Him. There is more at stake than experiencing peace in our difficulties (or deliverance from our difficulties). The honor of God should be our primary concern!

There are responses that show that we are trusting God. Today we will look at some of them. Match the following verses to the way it says we can trust God!

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Forgiveness

Job 1:20-21

Prayer

1 Peter 5:6

Worship

Ephesians 4:32

Glorifying God

Matthew 6:7-13

Humility

1 Corinthians 6:20

Thanksgiving

Which of these things do you do well? Which are harder? Put a smiley-face next to the things you do well and a star next to the things you want to do better to trust God!

Do a word study on the word “trust” in Proverbs 3:5

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Do you trust God? Write below the areas where you do trust God and where you need help trusting God. Pray that God will give you faith and help you trust Him more! While you’re doing it, listen to the song “Trust in You” by Lauren Daigle- it’s a great example of what it looks like to trust God!

Where I trust God:

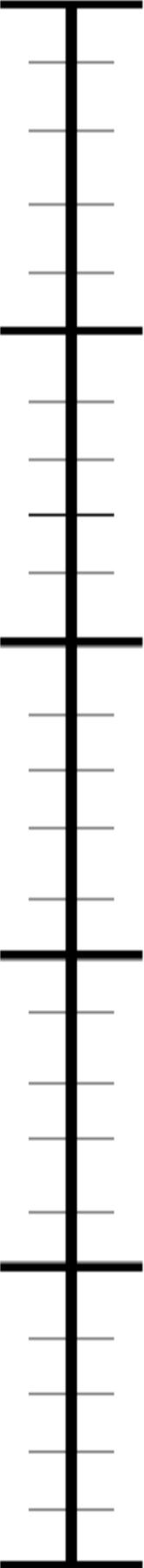
Where I need help trusting
God:



Dear God

Please help me to trust You in the areas that are hard for me to rely on you in. I know You are good and You are sovereign! I trust you Lord!

Amen



Give Thanks Always

In our times of trial, we can always give thanks because God is sovereign and His fire refines us. The heat of the flames is intended to burn away impurities, making us more and more Christlike. We can give thanks that our dullness is being burnished into a sheen that reflects His glory! Look in the following passages of Scripture and write down all the reasons we can be thankful:

1 Chronicles 16:34

Psalm 7:17

Psalm 118:28-29

Isaiah 12:1

1 Corinthians 15:57

Colossians 1:12

2 Thessalonians 2:13

Revelation 11:17

Do a word study on the word “thanks” in 1 Chronicles 16:34

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Below, spend some time thanking God! Write all the things you are thankful for and praise God for all He has done!

I’m thankful for:



Dear God

Thank you for the salvation we have through Jesus Christ.
Thank you for all you’ve done in my life! Going forward, help
me to give thanks always!

Amen