

The Art of Hopelessness

“If you are defeated once and tell yourself you will overcome, but carry on as before, know in the end you’ll be so ill and weakened that eventually you won’t even notice your mistake and will begin to rationalize your behavior.”

Epictetus, Discourses, 2.18.31

Strangers waitin'
Up and down the boulevard
Their shadows searchin' in the night
Streetlights, people
Livin' just to find emotion
Hidin', somewhere in the night

Don't stop believin'
Hold on to that feelin'
Streetlights, people

Humanity loses hope

When hope becomes a feeling

**True Hope is born from the
optimism of knowing the future is
in God's hands**

**False hope is born from putting
the future in our own hands.**

Jeremiah 29: 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Our problem is not that we are
hopeless...

Our problem is that we are not
hopeless enough.

Mark 9: 14 When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. 15 As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

Mark 9: 16 “What are you arguing with them about?” he asked.

Mark 9: 17 A man in the crowd answered, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is **possessed** by a spirit that has **robbed him of speech**. 18 Whenever it **seizes** him, it **throws him to the ground**. He **foams at the mouth**, **gnashes his teeth** and **becomes rigid**. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they **could not**.”

Mark 9: 19 “You **unbelieving generation,**” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.”

Mark 9: 20 So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately **threw the boy into a convulsion**. He **fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming** at the mouth.

21 Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"

"From childhood," he answered. 22 "It has often **thrown him into fire or water to kill him**."

Mark 9: But **if** you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.”

Mark 9: 23 “If you can’?” said Jesus. **“Everything is possible for one who believes.”**

24 Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

25 When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”

Mark 9: 26 The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, **“He’s dead.”** 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. 28 After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, **“Why couldn’t we drive it out?”** 29 He replied, **“This kind can come out only by prayer.”**

Two Groups:

1. Christians/Churches

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- Arguing (9:14, 33)

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- Arguing (9:14, 33)
- Self-Promotion ("we", "greatest")

**Arguing and Self-Promotion
are always the result**

**of Christians and
congregations not
committed to prayer**

Two Groups:

1. Christians
2. Anyone hopeless enough to turn to Christ

THOUGH WE STRUGGLE WITH PRAYER
JESUS DOES NOT
(and he's praying for you!)

**If only there were someone to mediate between us,
someone to bring us together.**

Job

Hebrews 7: 24 but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. 25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because **he always lives to intercede** for them.

Luke 22: 32 But I have **prayed for you**, Simon, that your faith may not fail.”

Prayer connects Godly Hope

To the Resurrection of Christ

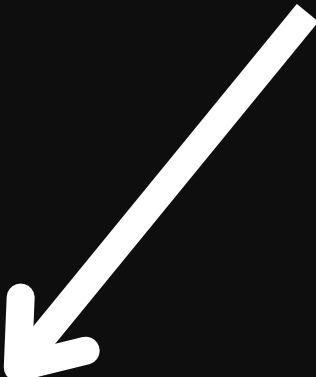
Mark 9: 30 They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, **31** because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. **They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.**”

Worldly Hope



Godly Hope

Adversity in Stride



Low but still higher than previous high



Proverbs 24: 16 though the righteous fall seven times,
they rise again...

Don't just expect adversity

Accept it.

Where is your hope today?

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