

Standing strong in the silence.

“Hope without an object cannot live.” – Samuel Taylor Coleridge,  
*Work Without Hope* (1825)

Romans 4:18-25

*In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”<sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.<sup>20</sup> No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,<sup>21</sup> fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.<sup>22</sup> That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”<sup>23</sup> But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone,<sup>24</sup> but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,<sup>25</sup> who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

Staples of Abraham’s saving faith

- Strengthens us not to weaken in the waiting – 4:18-19 *In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”<sup>19</sup> He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.*
- Enables us not to waver in the silence – 4:20a *No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God,*

- Frees us to grow strong in our confidence in Him – 4:20b-21 *but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*

Q: How?

A: *as he gave glory to God*

Q: How did he give glory to God?

A: *Being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*

Q: Where does this lead?

A: *A life of hope entirely dependent on God who cannot fail – 4:22-24 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” <sup>23</sup> But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, <sup>24</sup> but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, <sup>25</sup> who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.*

“In a sense, God doesn't even want our obedience. He wants *us*, for if he has us, our obedience will follow.” – David Baggett<sup>1</sup>

### Action steps

- 1) How should I biblically process my fears, frustrations, and anxieties?
  - Write out or verbalize them.
  - Ask: “What’s the worst thing that could ever happen to me?”
    - A. Losing my job.
    - B. Getting COVID.
    - C. Dying.
    - D. Being forsaken by God.
  - Being forsaken by God is the worst thing that could ever happen to you.

- Since Jesus was forsaken on the Cross for you, you've been secured against the very worst thing. Because of Jesus, you've been empowered overcome every other fear, frustration, and anxiety.
- 2) Step away from unrestricted social media (USM).
  - 3) Step into honesty about your fears, frustrations, and anxieties.
  - 4) Step out of isolation and into Christian community.
  - 5) Step up to God's promises.

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<sup>1</sup> David Baggett and Jerry L. Walls, *Good God: The Theistic Foundations of Morality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 197.