

ROMANS
Lesson 40—July 19, 2020

Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES
a Christian Church

Rory Clark
Pastor-Teacher

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark.

As the apostle Peter would say in greeting...welcome to all of you who are scattered throughout the world and listening to this lesson...people chosen by the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of God the Holy Spirit...whether you are in upstate New York...in the state of Washington...in Tennessee...in Michigan...in Idaho...in California...in Florida...in Northern Arizona...in Texas...in Illinois...even to those who maintain a residence in the Phoenix, Arizona community...people who obey Jesus Christ and who are sprinkled with His blood...may grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

At Barah Ministries we know this truth...that Jesus Christ is God. As the Lord He is 100% Deity...He is God the Son, a member of the Triune Godhead. He is also 100% human just like you and me, and His name is Jesus Christ. The Lord...God the Son...became flesh...Jesus Christ...and lived among us. He is the uniquely born One...100% God and 100% man in one Person forever. He is the Sovereign God of the Universe. He is the Jewish Messiah. The Lord was not sent by His Father to judge the world, but that the world would be saved through Him. He died on a Cross to make the ONLY perfect payment for sin. As a result of His victory at the Cross we are fully forgiven and forever forgiven of our sins.

As those who make Barah Ministries our spiritual home, we are Christians. Being a Christian means we believe in the DEITY of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have a deep, intimate, and personal relationship with Him. You heard it right...Christianity is a relationship, not a religion...and the Lord Jesus Christ is a Person. He is not a “thing” ... and He is not a concept. Just

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as we do with anyone whom we love, we spend time getting to know the Lord. Since the Bible is His exact thinking, we come together to learn about Him through the study of His Word.

God has an enemy, Satan, “the ruler of this world.” He is a liar who deceives the whole world, including you. He does not want you to get to know God, and he interferes with your chance to know God.

The Word of God is the truth that keeps us aware of Satan’s insidious deceptions. As believers in Christ, we are in union with Christ, and we have the victory over Satan through our Lord, who has overcome the world.

TODAY’S BIBLE LESSON

What’s Left When Your Idols are Taken Away?

LESSON INTRODUCTION

This was a down week for many people, including me. I got a lot of calls from people telling me they were down and asking me to cheer them up. In the midst of my own “down-ness” I was reflecting on why I chose to be a Pastor. The obvious reason? I love the Lord! Being a Pastor is a way for me to get to know Him, and I really want to know Him when I meet Him for the first time. Another reason I chose to be a Pastor is that I love helping other people get to know the Lord, and Bible lessons accomplish that end.

Every lesson has a three-part structure. In the first part, you are reminded who the Lord is. In the second part, you learn His Word verse-by-verse. In the third part of each lesson, you hear the gospel message...for you believers in Christ, it is to remind you that you are saved...and for you unbelievers, it is to give you the opportunity to be saved. Once a month, we look back at the lessons of the Cross by celebrating The Lord’s Supper. Each lesson has uplifting music. The entire lesson is designed to inspire hope, and I’m convinced the Lord brought me to earth to give people hope.

In today’s lesson...we’ll start with a brief message of hope that will help you recover from this week’s doldrums, and then we’ll return to First Corinthians, Chapter 8 and our study of idols and idolatry.

SONG INTRODUCTION

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Let's hear some of that uplifting music! God is never disappointed with us...He loves us unconditionally...but if we're being honest, we don't believe God is never disappointed with us because we're always disappointed with ourselves. The apostle Paul shares insight for every time when we realize, over and over again, that we don't measure up...Second Corinthians, Chapter 12, Verses 9 and 10...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 12:9

And the Lord has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for divine power is perfected in human weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my human weaknesses, so that the divine power of Christ may be displayed in me.

SECOND CORINTHIANS 12:10

Therefore, I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake...for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Francesca Battistelli reminds us that God knows us personally in her song **HE KNOWS MY NAME**.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ
Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

HE KNOWS MY NAME
Francesca Battistelli

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

We're grateful, Heavenly Father, for the privilege of studying Your absolute truth...the Word of God...

Father, thank you for being our strength, our Rock, our fortress, our deliverer, our refuge, our shield, our stronghold, and our hope...we know that in Your Predetermined plan You built in a set of assurances that provide refreshment for our souls in the midst of trouble...we know that everything

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You planned for us in eternity past is already DONE, and that the plans You have for us are designed to give us a future and a hope...

Father, lift our countenance as we study Your Word today...bring Your sunshine to our souls...encourage us to press on against the wind...help us to bring hope to others...restore our confidence that we have a glorious life ahead, one day at a time...show us Your way...

...we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit...in Christ's name...Amen.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

What's Left When Your Idols are Taken Away?

Self is left.

A lot of the idols we worship have been stripped from us...dining out...sports...work...family gatherings...travel...and grooming to name a few. Some of these things give us a human measure of hope. They are privileges, and we use them to fill our time and to provide us with the human version of emotional nourishment.

Now that they are gone, or now that they are “on hold” until the new normal emerges as some claim, all that is left is SELF...especially if we don't have a relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Part of the stripping is that we keep on being invited to “house arrest,” the equivalent of solitary confinement. Prisons use solitary confinement for punishment. According to several experts who have studied it, solitary confinement deteriorates mental health. People in isolation become especially vulnerable to disorders like schizophrenia, delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, claustrophobia, anxiety, and other symptoms because solitude makes individuals LOSE THEIR GRIP ON REALITY. What emerges within solitary confinement is a need to take control of our surroundings, and many in solitary confinement engage in self-destructive behavior.

Solitary confinement has been proven to damage physical health. It takes

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away freedoms, for example, the freedom to take walks or to go outside. Such confinement promotes Vitamin D deficiency and susceptibility to a wide range of illnesses because of the lack of physical activity. Solitary confinement often hinders both the chance and the desire to get immediate medical attention when needed, allowing illnesses to progress into more serious conditions.

Solitary confinement violates basic human rights. Many experts contend that long-term solitary confinement fits the definition of torture because of its mental and physical affects. Various international human rights treaties don't allow it. Imagine in the most barbaric societies, where the person in solitary confinement is exposed multiple times daily to verbal intimidation, telling the person they are worthless and powerless. These tactics destroy the mind and the morale at an alarming rate.

In our current predicament, our “house arrest” is a form of solitary confinement. We have been stripped of our idols...things that feed our intellect and our emotions...and those things have been replaced with a constant media barrage of “news” concerning an out of control disease causing multiple deaths...news we have no way to prove. So we believe it, and slowly but surely we are losing hope.

Believers in Christ...take heart! Second Timothy, Chapter 1, Verse 7 says...

SECOND TIMOTHY 1:7

God the Father has not given us believers in Christ a spirit of cowardice... He has given us a spirit of divine power and a spirit of unconditional love, and a spirit of self-discipline.

I've been wondering who is behind this COVID-19 farce, and so I began to trace the lineup of evil. The obvious choice for who is behind it is the government. Irrationally, Donald Trump is being blamed even though this is not his fault. But when people are delusional because of their solitary confinement, someone is to blame...often the object of their disdain... anyone but self is to blame.

Who's behind the government? The shadow government...the puppeteers... the ones who are orchestrating the “one-world government,” the “new world order,” and the obliteration of our lifestyle of freedom. Who's behind the

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shadow government? According to the Bible, it's Satan's demon army...the group the Bible calls the powers and the principalities. Who's behind Satan's demon army? Why Satan himself, the enemy of God of course. According to the Bible, these truths can't be dismissed with the term "conspiracy theory." The Bible makes it clear this isn't a theory.

Hovering above this line of liars and deceivers is...the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who controls the Universe and who controls history with the Word of His power. Who's being held in the Lord's righteous right hand? Believers in Christ. We are in union with Christ. We have hope.

You are not a victim of the circumstances going on in the world right now. You have no reason to fret. You have no reason to fear. Your life's future was unknown to you before this hoax started...and it is unknown now. But your life is not unknown to the Lord. What is known is what the Bible tells us about the present and the future...Romans, Chapter 8, Verses 31 and 32...

ROMANS 8:31

What shall we believers in Christ say then, face-to-face with all these things? If God the Father is for us believers in Christ, and of course He is, who is ever going to be successful against us?

No one and nothing!

ROMANS 8:32

If God the Father did not spare His own Son (the Lord Jesus Christ), but delivered Him over (as a sin substitute) for us all...how will the Father not also, with our union with Christ, freely give us all things?

Therefore, Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verses 14 to 16...

EPHESIANS 4:14

As a result, we believers in Christ are no longer to be immature infants, easily confused and tossed around like waves and whirled around by every gust of wind...carried about by the trickery of men...carried about by the cunning of men and their deceitful scheming (which has a definite purpose)...

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EPHESIANS 4:15

...but speaking the truth in unconditional love, we believers in Christ are to grow up in all aspects with reference to all things concerning Christ who is the head of the body of Christ...

EPHESIANS 4:16

...from which head the whole body of Christ...being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies...(through the spiritual gifts)...brought together according to the proper working of each individual gift...causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in unconditional love.

When you use your spiritual gift, you make a difference to your fellow believers. What is the apostle Paul talking about? Unity. God is the only One who can unite...and He already has placed His believers into a unity... first and foremost with Himself. Paul sums things up for believers in Christ this way...Romans, Chapter 8, Verses 38 and 39...

ROMANS 8:38

For I (Paul) stand convinced that neither death nor life...nor (elect) angels (who would not)...nor principalities (demons...fallen angels...who could not)...nor things present nor things to come...nor powers (demon officers)...

ROMANS 8:39

...nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to sever us believers in Christ from the unconditional love of God the Father, who is for us through our union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

As believers in Christ, our hope is that we have supernatural weapons for fighting spiritual warfare...Second Corinthians, Chapter 10, Verses 3 to 5...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 10:3

For though we walk in (lifestyle living in) the flesh (a physical body), we do not war according to the flesh (with human credentials)...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 10:4

...for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh...but they are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses (THAT'S WHY WE PRAY!!!!).

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SECOND CORINTHIANS 10:5

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God...and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...

Let's claim our hope. Let's obey our Lord. Let's not be afraid. Other than listening to this lesson, what hope-inspiring thing will you do today? When we return from our five-minute break, we'll take your offering, and then we'll begin our verse-by-verse study of First Corinthians, Chapter 8.

FIVE MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

What's Left When Your Idols are Taken Away?

Our Lord gave and gave and gave. There is a constant call from our Lord to giving and to sacrifice. That's probably why there is such resistance to it. The ruler of this world and the enemy of God encourages us to adopt a mindset of scarcity. The Lord has a mindset of abundance. Be generous, just as the Lord is generous with you. Let's welcome back Deacon Denny Goodall with the offering message.

THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall

OFFERING VERSE

ACTS 18:9

And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent..."

OFFERING SONG

THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU

David Bauer, Instrumental

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

What's Left When Your Idols are Taken Away?

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Welcome back! Let's return to our study of First Corinthians.

You'll remember the next passage we're studying extends from First Corinthians, Chapter 8, Verse 1 to First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 1. The subject matter is a dispute in the first-century Corinthian church over food sacrificed to idols. We spent two lessons before The Lord's Supper celebration outlining the background for the passage. You'll remember the question that I asked in one of those lessons...what idols do you worship? You may think that the poor Corinthians were the only ones worshipping idols. You may think of idols as things carved out of wood or chipped out of stone or molded out of metal. You'll remember I told you that idols are the things designed to take your attention away from your relationship with God. What is the definition of an idol?

IDOLS

Figments of our mental imagination...often things that do not exist...that are thought to bring some benefit...lifeless things to which we give power and to which we extend devotion...always with a demon behind them.

What is idolatry?

IDOLATRY

The result of a mind led astray from the simplicity and purity of exclusive devotion to Christ...the practice of giving homage to...offering devotion to...and worshipping false, lifeless "gods" while simultaneously rejecting the Living God...the Lord Jesus Christ...making a god out of something that is not God.

Now let's get into the verse-by-verse study beginning at First Corinthians, Chapter 8, Verse 1...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:1

NOW CONCERNING things sacrificed to idols (images), we know that we (Christians) all have knowledge (from the Spirit). (Human) Knowledge feeds arrogance (it puffs up the self...we adopt an attitude of legalistic pride)...on the other hand, unconditional love (knowledge) edifies (others).

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The Greek expresses “things sacrificed to idols” as “things offered to images that don’t exist.” What was on your list of idols that you worship? A lot of the idols we worship have been stripped from us...dining out... sports... work...family gatherings...travel...and even grooming. The thing we sacrifice to idols more than anything else is our time...we use it on a lot of things that do not offer a meaningful payoff.

What is Paul talking about when he mentions “things sacrificed” to idols?

SACRIFICE

Something offered to a deity to curry favor and to gain acceptance...works based activities designed to please or to appease a god...usually followed by a celebration.

In the case of Corinthians believers, Paul was specifically referencing food sacrificed to idols. Christians are not to knowingly participate in the consumption of food offered to idols.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:2

If anyone supposes that he knows anything (the know-it-alls), and of course some do, he has not yet known what is necessary to know...

Paul is making it clear...if you think you know it all, you don’t...and when knowledge puffs you up, it’s legalism. I wonder what it’s going to be like for all the people who spent their whole life studying expertises, but never took the time to study the Bible.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:3

...but if anyone loves God unconditionally, this one is known by God.

When we love God, it follows that we love others unconditionally. It is more important to be known by God so that we know how to love others. Paul addressed the Galatians believers about the exact same issue in Galatians, Chapter 4, Verses 8 and 9...

GALATIANS 4:8

...at that time, when you did not know (the One true) God (because you were unbelievers)...you were slaves to those (gods...Zeus...Hermes... Mars...the pantheon of gods) which by nature are not gods at all (they are idols).

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GALATIANS 4:9

But now that you have come to know (the One true) God...or rather now that you have come to be known by God (as believers in Christ)...how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things (like the pantheon of gods) to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

Human beings LOVE being enslaved to things...and that is idolatry in present-day form.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:4

NOW CONCERNING the eating of things sacrificed to idols (like food), we know that idols don't exist in the world and that there is no God that exists but the One (true God...the Lord Jesus Christ).

When we worship idols, we are being suckered into wasting our time and devotion on idols that are being powered by demons. Demons are assigned to us by Satan, the enemy of God, to distract us from getting to know God. They are very effective.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:5

For even if for the sake of argument there are so-called gods...whether in heaven or on earth...as indeed there are many so-called gods and many so-called lords (for idol-worshippers)...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 8:6

...yet for us believers in Christ, there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things come and we exist for Him (for His good pleasure)...and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things created, and we exist through Him.

When anyone believes in Christ there is a new creation...being a new creation commits us to a new code of conduct...unconditional love. When Christians live in a pagan society, they have an obligation to follow the code of conduct that makes them stand them out from the crowd. So everyone knows we are exclusively God's possession.

The problem Paul is addressing? The Corinthians are misapplying their knowledge. How you use your knowledge can be harmful! New Christians find it hard to let go of old traditions like worshipping in temples and paying

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homage to the pantheon of gods. As we continue in this passage next week, we'll learn what Paul is communicating. As Christians who are knowledgeable and mature, we must beware of our conduct in all matters. For example, if immature Christians see you eating idol food or worshipping idols, what will they think?

You can be legalistic with your knowledge and say, "well there aren't any idols so it's okay for me to do this. Anyone who doesn't like it, that's too bad." Is that smart? For example, is it wise to tell your teen-aged kids you smoked marijuana or had pre-marital sex? What is their likely response? Having unconditional love for others sometimes means forgoing your freedom. As we continue our study next week, we'll see what else Paul has to say about this matter.

What's left when your idols are taken away? Self...unless of course you have a spiritual life and a relationship with the Lord. Then what's left is the Lord, and you residing in the sphere of his power. There's nothing better than counting on the Lord for power.

GOD WANTS YOU!

Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

The closing message of this study is the most important message of this study. We want you to know that GOD WANTS YOU.

First and foremost, this message is for the benefit of believers in Christ. First Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 15 says...

FIRST PETER 3:15

...believers...sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts...always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope (the absolute confidence of your faith in Christ) that is in you...yet give the account with gentleness and respect...

Second, this message is for unbelievers, so you can be saved. Whether you know it or not, you were born a sinner. That's bad news for you. The good news is that this gospel message offers you the chance to make the most important decision of your life. Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

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ACTS 16:31

“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes.”

What does God want for you? Two things. First and foremost, GOD WANTS YOU TO BE SAVED...First Timothy, Chapter 2, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST TIMOTHY 2:3

This is what is good and acceptable in the sight of the God who is our Savior...the Lord Jesus Christ...

FIRST TIMOTHY 2:4

...who desires all men to be saved and for all men to come to the knowledge of the truth.

What the Lord DOES NOT WANT FOR YOU is highlighted in Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9...

SECOND PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation, as some accuse Him of...instead, He is patient toward you unbelievers...NOT WISHING FOR ANY OF YOU TO PERISH (IN THE LAKE OF FIRE) but for all of you to come to repentance (a change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).

This immutable and irrevocable fact may contradict the thoughts placed in your head by God's enemy, Satan, through religions that contend that God is always disappointed in you because you sin, and that you have to work to please Him.

Are you saved?

Second, GOD WANTS YOU a written account of absolute truth...His exact thinking. John, Chapter 20, Verses 30 and 31...

JOHN 20:30

Therefore, many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book (the Bible) ...

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JOHN 20:31

...but these things written here (in the Bible) have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (The Jewish Messiah) ... the Son of God in human form...and that by believing in Him you may have the resurrection life in His name.

Do you know the truth, especially the truth about who God is as a Person, and the truth about what He has done to save you?

Maybe you don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Maybe you don't think He is God! Maybe you don't think the Bible is His exact thinking. Maybe you don't even think you need to be saved. The Bible says that being saved...salvation...is exactly what ALL humans need from the moment of physical birth. Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 1...

EPHESIANS 2:1

At physical birth, all mankind were born spiritually dead in your trespasses and sins...

First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 22 says...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22a

For all in union with Adam at physical birth (and that is every human who comes to earth) are set to die the second death in the Lake of Fire...

The Bible says all who are spiritually dead need to be saved...they need spiritual life. The Lord Jesus Christ volunteered for the task of saving you. Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 4 and 5 say...

EPHESIANS 2:4

But God the Father...being rich in mercy...because of His great unconditional love with which He loved all of us...

EPHESIANS 2:5

...even when we were spiritually dead in our transgressions...made us believers in Christ spiritually alive in union with Christ...by His grace you have been saved...

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When you were spiritually dead, as ungodly, unrighteous unbelievers, here's what God the Father gifted to you...Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 8...

ROMANS 5:8

But God the Father demonstrates His own unconditional love toward all mankind, in that while we were yet sinners (as spiritually dead, ungodly, unrighteous unbelievers), Christ died as a sacrifice for us.

Who is this God who saves you? The apostle Paul describes the Lord Jesus Christ...in First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:3

For I (Paul) delivered to you as of first importance the gospel message I also received... that it was Jesus Christ who died for our sins according to the Scriptures...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:4

...and that He was buried...and that He was raised from the dead on the third day...according to the Scriptures...

Because of the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrifice, right where you sit right now, you can have eternal life...the resurrection life...by taking the suggestion in Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes."

You would also do well to heed the warning in John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

JOHN 3:36

"He who believes in the Son has the resurrection life right at that moment... but he who does not obey the command to believe in the Son will not see the resurrection life...instead the wrath of God (the Lake of Fire) abides on him."

The Lake of Fire is a literal place, and it will be your eternal home if you reject a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts, Chapter 4, Verse 12...

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ACTS 4:12

“...there is salvation in no one else...for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved (except the name of the Lord Jesus Christ).”

You don't have to work to be saved...it's a free gift from a gracious God...
Titus, Chapter 3, Verse 5...

TITUS 3:5

The Lord Jesus Christ saved us...not on the basis of deeds which we have done in self-righteousness...but according to His mercy...by the washing of regeneration and through the renewing by God the Holy Spirit...

There is no excuse for not knowing how to be saved. It's SO simple. Why? It's simple because God does the saving for you. All you have to do is invest your gift of faith...a gift you received from a loving God...and place that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation. Do it now! There is no time to waste.

SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's close with music! If you don't want to be down, you have to look to the horizon with positive expectation that the Lord always delivers.
Romans, Chapter 8, Verses 24 and 25...

ROMANS 8:24

For in hope for a glorious future we have been saved by God in eternity past...but hope that is seen in the present is not hope...for who hopes for what he already sees?

ROMANS 8:25

But if we hope for what we do not see in the future, and of course we do, with perseverance we wait eagerly for the wonderful things that are to come.

Our hope is in Christ. Here's June Murphy to sing about Him in her song
THERE'S JUST ONE HOPE.

CLOSING SONG

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THERE'S JUST ONE HOPE

June Murphy

CLOSING VERSES

The Doxology
Our Praise of Our God

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

Stop worrying about anything...instead, in everything by prayer and petition with an attitude of thanksgiving...let your requests be made known to God the Father.

PHILIPPIANS 4:7

And the peace of God the Father, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds (flooding your souls with peace)...you in union with Christ Jesus.

JUDE 1:24

Now to Jesus Christ...the One who is able to keep you from stumbling...and the One who is able to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy...

JUDE 1:25

...to the only God...our Savior...through Jesus Christ our Lord...be glory...majesty...dominion...and authority...before all time...and now...and forever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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