

HOPE

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

According to a recent poll, two-thirds of adults think other Americans have little or no confidence in the federal government. Majorities believe the public's confidence in the U.S. government and in each other is shrinking, and most believe a shortage of trust in government and in other citizens makes it harder to solve some of the nation's key problems. (PEW Research, November-December, 2018)

Currently 64 percent in a recent Gallup Poll expressed little or no confidence in the church and organized religion. This marks the lowest confidence in the church and organized religion since the survey's highs in the 1970s. "The downward trend in confidence in organized religion is partly attributable to the rising share of Americans who identify as having no religion -- a group that has little confidence in organized religion, and now comprises about one-fifth of the U.S. population," (Gallup Poll)

Is the hope and confidence you place in God misplaced? Are the 64% who are less confident or have no confidence in the church and organized religion justified in their position? For sure, Satan has been active in the church sowing seeds of sin that have taken root. He has used sexual scandals, inappropriate handling of church monies and general negative stories to discredit the church.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." (Romans 15:13) As a true believer in Jesus Christ, your hope and confidence is not based upon political or societal trends or opinion polls. St. Paul's words are very much needed at this time of decline in confidence in the church, clergy, and God's word.

The foundation upon which your hope and confidence is based determines whether you are more or less hopeful and confident. If your hope is based upon the outcome of upcoming elections, most likely you will be disappointed. If your hope is based upon your ability to navigate the twists and turns of life you will

most likely become frustrated. If your hope is based upon the Hope God gives you in Christ Jesus you will not be disappointed. God keeps His promises! Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” (Mark 16:16)

Prayer: O LORD, send Your Spirit into my heart to give me an unshakeable faith in my Savior Jesus who is my hope. Amen

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
Refrain: All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils His lovely face, I rest on His unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale My anchor holds within the veil. Refrain:

His oath His covenant and blood Support me in the raging flood;
When ev'ry earthly prop gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.
Refrain:

When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, may I then in Him be found,
Clothed in His righteousness alone, Redeemed to stand before His throne.
Refrain:
(LSB 576)