

# The Connection

## Messages of Hope



A Weekly Online Newsletter: Edition 818

January 15, 2025

## “Allowing God to ‘direct your steps’.”

The doctrine of God's sovereignty and providence is foundational, and this extends to how God directs the steps of His people. Reformed theology emphasizes that God is actively involved in every aspect of the believer's life, guiding, shaping, and directing their path in accordance with His will. This is grounded in the belief that God is both transcendent (above and beyond creation) and immanent (actively involved in the created world). According to the Bible, this is how HE does it.

### 1. God's Sovereignty Over All Things

God is sovereign over all creation, including the lives of individual believers. His control is not limited or restricted by human actions, but is comprehensive, as He ordains both the ends and the means by which events come to pass. This includes the steps we take in life.

- **Proverbs 16:9:** “The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.” This verse emphasizes the tension between human planning and divine control. Even when people make plans, it is God who ultimately directs their actions and the outcomes of those plans.
- **Proverbs 19:21:** “Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.” This reinforces the idea that while humans have free will to make decisions, God's will is the ultimate determining factor in the course of events.

### 2. God's Guidance Through His Word

God directs the believer's steps primarily through His Word, the Bible. The Scriptures are considered the ultimate guide for understanding God's will and making decisions.

- **Psalms 119:105:** “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” The Bible provides guidance in a world that is often confusing and dark, helping believers make decisions that align with God's will.
- **Psalms 32:8:** “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.” Here, God promises to provide personal guidance through His Word and His Spirit.

### 3. The Leading of the Holy Spirit

Reformed traditions emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in directing the believer's steps. The Spirit works in the hearts of believers, guiding them into truth, convicting them of sin, and leading them into God's will.

- **Romans 8:14:** “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” The Holy Spirit, dwelling within the believer, leads them according to God's will.
- **John 16:13:** “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.” This verse highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in directing believers in their understanding of God's will and truth.

### 4. God's Providence in Everyday Life

God's providence means that He is actively sustaining and guiding the universe, including every event in the lives of His people. This is often understood in terms of “secondary causes”—God working through natural events, human decisions, and circumstances to accomplish His will.

- **Matthew 10:29-31:** “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” This passage highlights God's intimate knowledge of and involvement in the smallest details of life, assuring believers that He is actively at work in all circumstances.
- **Ephesians 1:11:** “In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will.” This verse underscores that God works all things according to His sovereign plan, guiding His people in all their ways, even when they are unaware of it.

(Continued on page 3)

# HOPE Calendar

**Wednesday, January 15**

Wednesday Night Supper @ 6pm  
Study & Prayer @ 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, January 16**

Worship Team Rehearsal @ 7:00 p.m.

**Sunday, January 19**

Worship Team Run Through  
@ 8:00 a.m.

**Worship @ 9:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday, January 22, 2025**

Wednesday Night Supper @ 6pm  
Study & Prayer @ 7:00 p.m.

**Thursday, January 23, 2025**

Worship Team Rehearsal @ 7:00 p.m.

**Helping Hands for  
JANUARY 19, 2024**

ProPresenter

**Bill Joyner**

Soundboard

**Bill Joyner**

Live Streaming

**Diane Williams**

Communion

**Lynn Joyner**

Greeter

**Scripture Text and Sermon  
This Coming Sunday**

**Spiritual Disciplines for the  
Christian Life #2:**

**“Bible Intake (part 1)”**

**Luke 11:28, 2 Timothy 3:16,  
John 17:17, Acts 17:11**

**Prophecies O.T.**

**Revealed....**

**N.T.**

Jan	12	John 10:16
Jan	13	Ex. 3:13-15
Jan	14	John 4:26,8:58
Jan	15	Ex. 12:5
Jan	16	Heb 9:14
Jan	17	Ex. 12:13

## GROW

**Women of HOPE  
Saturdays at 10a.m. at HOPE**

**1/25/25 - 10AM**

**“Bring pics of your younger self...  
what would you tell her today...”**

**Wednesday Night  
Supper, Study, and Prayer**

Supper @ 6:00 p.m.

**Please let me know you are  
coming**

Bible Study @ 7:00 p.m.

Prayer Time @ 7:45 p.m.

**“Food of the Month”**

for the Raleigh Dream Center  
Food Pantry

**Canned Meats and Meals**

We have a collection bin in the foyer

**HOPE Meal Ministry**

Take a meal from the freezer if  
needed for you or someone else.

## **SERVE**

**TLC Devotion**

4th Wednesday each month

**@ 11:00 a.m.**

5124 Departure Dr # 101, Raleigh

**HOPE CHURCH RALEIGH**

**17TH ANNIVERSARY  
CELEBRATION**

**!! THIS SUNDAY !!**

**COVERED DISH FELLOWSHIP**

Prayer Requests:

Nancy Hutchens, Jerry & Alice Kinard,  
Shelley Riggleman (Bruce), Ebo  
(Glioblastoma #4)-family has 4 children,  
Youth Ministry, Joan Rollinson, Ron Clifton,  
Will Floyd’s Fiancé’s Mother: Jennifer,  
Gene & Becky Hale, Dianne Reinoso,  
Janice Worthington, Cindy (Elizabeth),  
Dennis Grady, Barbara(81) Stroke, Joey(18)  
Crohn’s, Hurricane Relief Efforts, Kathy Jo  
and her family, Donna Williams & Family,  
Peggy Karpenske, Claudia in Idaho (Kathy  
H), Patty Moyer’s son Brandon,  
Dave & Dot Geil, Steve Duckett, Corbin  
Broome, The Mallory family, Carol & Colin  
(Kathy H), Loretta (Sandi U), Joan Summers,  
Jordan (Lynn J.), Ellie Tappan,  
Carlyle and Cynthia Franklin, our Military,  
Police, Fire, and EMS, Missionaries, our  
Nation, and the World.

**UPCOMING WOMEN OF  
HOPE GATHERING AT THE  
CHURCH**

**2/8/25 - 10AM**

**“Responding to anger – learning  
to answer gently.”**

Please remember that your  
Stewardship Commitment Cards for  
2025 are due  
**AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Please  
prayerfully consider your financial and  
time in support of  
Hope Church Raleigh.

God’s work is not for a few, but for all  
who would follow Jesus.

**HOPE Church Raleigh**  
**An Evangelical Presbyterian Church**  
4911 Green Rd  
Raleigh, NC 27616  
919-508-6827  
**Worship Time: 9:30 AM**

**www.HopeChurchRaleigh.org**

**www.facebook.com/HOPEChurchRaleigh**

**Twitter: @HopeChRaleigh**

**YouTube.com (type “HOPE Church Raleigh”  
in the search box)**

## 5. God's Providence and Human Responsibility

Reformed theology maintains that God's sovereignty in directing our steps does not eliminate human responsibility. While God is sovereign, He also works through our choices, actions, and prayers.

- **Philippians 2:12-13:** "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." This passage indicates that while believers must actively pursue God's will, it is God who enables them to do so by working within them.
- **James 4:13-15:** In these verses, James speaks to the futility of boasting about one's plans without acknowledging God's control. "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'" Here, James reminds believers that, while they can make plans, it is ultimately God's will that directs their steps.

## 6. God's Will and Prayer

God directs our steps also through prayer. Prayer is a means by which believers seek God's will and submit their plans to Him. God may not always answer prayers in the way we expect, but He always answers according to His perfect will.

- **James 1:5:** "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." God promises to give wisdom to those who ask, and this wisdom guides believers in making decisions that align with His will.
- **Romans 12:2:** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Through prayer, the renewal of the mind, and the study of Scripture, believers can discern God's will for their lives.

## Conclusion:

In summary, God directs our steps through His sovereign providence, His Word, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and the wisdom He provides in prayer. Though humans make choices, it is God who ultimately governs all things, and His plans and purposes are accomplished through both divine and human agency. The believer's confidence is rooted in knowing that God's will is good, pleasing, and perfect (Romans 12:2), and that He is working all things together for their good (Romans 8:28).

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Now, considering what's going on in your life right now, ask yourself how God is at work in your personal life:

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How is God at work in your family's life:

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In your church life:

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In your community life:

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In your work life:

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Which one of these five areas do you see God most at work now? \_\_\_\_\_

What steps do you see that you should be doing in response to God's leading?

OLD THINGS to reduce or cease:

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NEW THINGS to begin or increase:

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**"ARE  
YOU  
WILLING  
TO BE  
CHANGED?"**