

Google God – part 5
“What?”

Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church
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Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Sermon Series Title: Google God
“There are Some Questions in Life that Only God can Answer”

Have you ever surfed the internet for an answer to your questions? Most all of us have. What about those questions that we have that only God can answer; those really tough questions in life that if man were to answer them we may or may not get the real truth? During this series, we're going to Google God by looking at those tough questions in life and find out what God has to say about them!

We've looked at Googling God, talking to God through prayer, find answers in the Bible, taken into account the sovereignty of God... So.... What happens when you Google God, asking Him the tough question and He comes back with an answer you don't like? How do you deal with that? When we have an expectation that the answer is going to come in a certain way or come in a way that we want, and it doesn't – our hopes are for a certain answer, and it doesn't happen – and our hope is deferred.... Then what?

TODAY: What? God gives us an answer and our response is “WHAT? That's not what I wanted to hear God!” How do we deal with our hope being deferred...

Take a look at Proverbs 13:12 in the following translations of the Bible...

NIV©	Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.
NAS©	Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.
GWT©	Delayed hope makes one sick at heart, but a fulfilled longing is a tree of life.
KJV	Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
AKJ	Hope deferred makes the heart sick: but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.
ASV	Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
BBE	Hope put off is a weariness to the heart; but when what is desired comes, it is a tree of life.
DRB	Hope that is deferred afflicteth the soul: desire when it cometh is a tree of life.
DBY	Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but the desire that cometh to pass is a tree of life.
ERV	Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
WBS	Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
WEB	Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when longing is fulfilled, it is a tree of life.
YLT	Hope prolonged is making the heart sick, And a tree of life is the coming desire.

Proverbs 13:12

“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.”

Deferred = “mashak”

- to draw out.
- to drag on.
- to prolong.

Heart = the inner man, mind will, heart and understanding.

Sick = “chalah” (chaw-law)

- to become weak or sick.
- to become grieved, or to become sorry.

One translator says this: “When hope is crushed the heart is crushed.”

desire comes = the longing of one’s heart.

Tree of *Life* = “chay” (chah-ee)

- Green with vegetation, and flowing with fresh water. To be revived like the spring time.

One translator says this: “When hope is crushed the heart is crushed.”

“When a man has hope he’s capable of bearing incredible burdens and cruel punishment. But when hope is gone, people fall apart – emotionally, physically and spiritually.”

Dr. Harold Wolfe (*Who is a professor at Cornell University*)

“Since my early years as a physician I learned that taking away hope is for most people like pronouncing a death sentence. Their already hard-pressed will to live can become paralyzed and they may give up and die.”

Expert in the Field

So... what do you do when you don’t get the answer you desired or thought you’d get?

When you’ve Googled God and Didn’t get the Answer you Wanted...

1. Don't Fear

This is the first mistake the Israelites made when they were ready to go into the Promised Land. God says don't be afraid.

Deut 1:26 + 28 (GN)

"...They would not enter the land. They said... `We are afraid ... The people there are stronger and taller than we..."

They had enough faith to move out of Egypt but they didn't have enough faith to move into the Promised Land. They were afraid.

The problem with fear is that it keeps you in the wilderness, in the desert of life, the barren stage. When you act in fear it's as if you don't really trust God in this situation your praying about.

Many of your dreams have never been fulfilled, not because of God, but because of you. Because you wouldn't step out in faith. "One of these days..." The bottom line is fear. God says Don't fear. Fear causes the delays in your life and keeps you from moving ahead.

The antidote to fear: Focus on God's presence.

Realize that God is with you. When you're afraid to go after the dream God has given you, you need to focus on God's presence. He says, "I will always be with you." There will never be a time in your life when God is not with you. He's with you now, He always has been and He always will be. He's with you on your good days and your bad days. He's with you when you feel it and He's with you when you don't feel it. God says "I will always be with you."

There are 365 "fear nots" in the Bible -- that's one for every day of the year. God is saying, no matter what you're facing don't be afraid. "Fear not, for I am with you." Not because of positive thinking or motivational tapes or pulling yourself up by the psychological bootstraps. You'll never face any situation in life that God isn't facing it with you. We tend to forget that, and when we do we start being afraid. Don't fear but focus on God's presence -- He's with you all the time.

Gen. 26:24

“Fear Not, for I am with you, and will bless you.”

2. Don't Fret

Fret means worry, to fuss about it. The Bible tells us to don't get worried. Don't get uptight. Don't complain. We do that when we don't get the answers we thought we'd get. We worry, get uptight, get stressed out, start griping. This was the second response of the Israelites.

Num 21:4-5 (TLB)

⁴ Then the people of Israel returned to Mount Hor, and from there continued southward along the road to the Red Sea in order to go around the land of Edom. The people were very discouraged;
⁵ they began to murmur against God and to complain against Moses. "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness?" they whined. "There is nothing to eat here, and nothing to drink, and we hate this insipid manna."

Inspid = dull, bland, wishy-washy, characterless, colorless, trite, tame, unexciting

This is typical of people, but this was the sin that kept them out of the Promised Land. They just griped all the time, no matter what God had done for them -- the Ten Plagues, the opening of the Red Sea. They complained about the journey, the delay, the leadership, no water -- then God provided them water. Then they complained about no food -- and God provided them food. Then they complained about the food they got. It's so easy to gripe when we're forced to wait.

We don't mind waiting if we can complain about it. God says don't fret, don't worry, don't get uptight about it. When we really grumble is when we're waiting for God to act. We get in a hurry. We're not willing to wait, so we take matters into our own hands. When we do this, trouble is going to come our way.

Prov. 19:2 (GN)

"Impatience will get you into trouble."

When we try to take matters into our own hands we get in trouble. We try to help God out. It's frustrating to be in a hurry and God isn't. God is never in a hurry. The Bible says with Him, a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like a day. He's larger than time.

One of the most useless things to try to do is to speed up God. When you get impatient you start trying to work it out yourself. You get a dream from God, make the decision to go for it, and then when the delay comes and it's not fast enough for you, and you didn't get the answer you thought, you start trying to figure out ways of doing God's dream on your own. You start trying to force the issue. Impatience will get you into trouble. God doesn't need your help. You need to relax.

The antidote to fretting: Trust God's Timing and RELAX!

Psalm 37:7

⁷ Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him (to act); do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

Resting can be an act of faith. It means you're waiting on God. One time, Jesus and the disciples were in a boat and Jesus fell asleep. A big storm came up and the disciples freak out. Jesus is in the corner of the boat sleeping. They wake Jesus up, Why are you sleeping? "Do you think God is going to let the boat sink with Me in it?" Jesus, by His sleeping, was saying, I can trust God even in the middle of a storm. I don't have to worry about it.

When we get into a storm, we lay awake all night. And we fret about it. The very fact that we're laying awake at night means we're not living by faith. We can't get any sleep because we don't really trust God to work it out. God says, "Don't fear, don't fret. Remember I'm always with you and trust My timing."

The verse says "Wait patiently for Him to act." When you wait impatiently it doesn't make waiting any better. All being impatient does is make you miserable. "Don't fret and worry. It only leads to harm." Worry doesn't work. It just makes you miserable. So stop worrying and start trusting God.

Eccl. 3:11

"God has set the right time for everything." God's timing is perfect.

Americans are activists -- doers. We think it's far easier to work than wait. If I can do something about the problem in my home, do something about the problem in my body, do something about the problem at work -- then I'm Mr. Fixer. God says I'll fix it if you just wait. It's the delay that's building your character. He can fix it better than you can.

3. Don't Faint

Which means, do not give up! You've Google God, asked Him the tough questions, received an answer you didn't want... and some people give up! Now is not the time to give up! This is the third thing the Israelites did and it kept them out of the promised land during that season.

Numbers 14

"All the Israelites grumbled against Moses... If only we had died in Egypt! ... We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."

They gave up on their dream. They caved in. They had been in slavery 400 years but now because they are having a little bit of delay and didn't get the answers they wanted they want to go back to Egypt. "If only" and "go back" are phrases that are tell-tale signs you're discouraged -- that you're fainting, losing heart.

If only -- means we start to second guess ourselves. When we get a dream from God, make the decision to go for it and if it doesn't come immediately we start second guessing ourselves -- "Maybe I didn't really hear from God. Maybe I just made this up. Maybe God is not listening and He doesn't care. If only I'd done something different. If only I'd done this or that..." We second guess ourselves.

And then we say "Let's go back to Egypt." When we go through the delay phase of life not getting the answers and direction we thought we'd get we tend to idealize the past. We talk about the good old days -- which really weren't that good. The only thing good about them is they're over. The grass isn't greener on this or that side of the fence -- it's greener where you water it. The good old days always look better in hind sight than they really were. We get into a project, start having a delay, and then want to give up. The Israelites had been in slavery in Egypt.

Some people would rather live in slavery than face the fear of freedom. They are not willing to push through and work on the problem until they get it right. They want to go back, give up. They settle for mediocrity in life. Don't settle for less than God's best for your life. If that means going through a tunnel of conflict, take the tunnel. In the middle of the tunnel it's dark and you want to run back to the light. But you've got to keep going and you'll come out in the light on the other side.

The antidote to fainting: Be Persistent and Keep Praying!

Instead of fainting -- be persistent and pray.

Remember God told Joshua to march around the walls of Jericho and they'll all fall down. It didn't happen the first time they did it. They had to do it seven times. Seven days in a row. And on the seventh day they had to do it seven times. Why the delay? If God was going to make the walls fall why didn't He make them fall the first time? He was teaching them to be persistent and pray.

Galatians 6:9

"Let us never grow tired of doing what's right, for if we do not faint, we'll reap a harvest at the right time."

Illus: An ear of corn.

This is the law of the harvest: In life, you will reap whatever you sow. What you plant you will sprout. If you sow criticism, you will reap a lot of criticism in your life. If you sow love, you will reap love back in your life. If you sow generosity, you will reap back generosity. It's one of the laws of the universe. We'll always reap more than we sow. If I plant one kernel of corn, do I get one kernel back? No, I get a whole stalk with thousands on it. You always reap more than you sow. But in the Law of the Harvest there is always a delay between sowing and reaping. There's always a season. You plant in one season and you reap in another. There is a delay in between. God wants to see if you're going to keep cultivating, planting, sowing -- see if you really mean business. If God sees consistency in your life then the harvest comes. It will not come immediately because it proves nothing if He does it immediately. No delay, no character development, no stretching your faith.

Luke 18:1

"You need to pray continually and not lose heart."

Pray continually and lose heart are the two options you have in life. You will always be doing one or the other. If you pray continually you will not lose heart, you won't be discouraged. If you don't pray continually, you will lose heart. You will faint. You will get discouraged by the problems you're facing in your life -- family, school, wherever. You've got to keep on praying.

4. Don't Forget

When you don't get that answer you were expecting; during this season, time causes us to forget many things. When there is a delay, we tend to forget our dream. We tend to forget what God had done in our life. We tend to forget God's goodness to us in the past. We tend to forget that God is with us. We tend to forget God's power. We tend to forget how important it is that we stay in God's strength and we start focusing on all our problems than on what He has done for us. The Bible says, Don't forget.

This was the fourth mistake that the Israelites made out in the wilderness.

Ps. 106:7-8 (GN), 13 (LB)

"They forgot the many times God showed them his love, and they rebelled ... at the Red Sea. But He saved them as He promised... But they quickly forgot again! They wouldn't wait for God to act..."

It's unbelievable how short their memory was. In Egypt, God does ten plagues and the children of Israel forget it because a couple days later they're at the Red Sea and saying "We're all going to die!" They've forgotten just what God's done. God does a miracle and opens the Red Sea. They walk through to the other side and immediately forget that miracle. "We're going to die of thirst!" God provides water miraculously. They forget that and complain, "We're going to die -- no food!" They were always forgetting.

But we should not be too quick to judge them because we do the exact same thing. When we don't get the answer we wanted we start acting like God's never done anything for us. Has God done things for you in the past? Sure He has. You can count on Him to do it tomorrow, or the next day... When you act like, "God's not going to bail me out of this one!" you're forgetting all the other times He's bailed you out. Some of the times you didn't even know about it but He did.

The antidote to fainting: Remember God's Promises-Yesterday, today and tomorrow!

The consequences of forgetting the Bible says is "...they would not wait." Instead of forgetting you remember God's promises. There are over 7000 of them in the Bible. Whenever I have a problem, I find a promise. When I face a problem, I look for a promise. The promises are always greater than the problems you're facing.

Ps. 103:2

"I will bless the Lord and not forget the great things He does for me."

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

You ask, Why isn't God fulfilling the promise in my life? Why isn't He answering my prayers? He's waiting on you. You think you're waiting on God? He's waiting on you to learn to not fear, not fret, not faint, not forget. He wants you to learn that before He brings the solution. He has some things He wants you to develop first, some growth patterns He wants you to put into your life. God's never in a hurry. He can do things immediately, but He's working on a larger agenda. The delays that come in your life do not destroy God's purpose. They fulfill God's purpose in your life. They make you a better person. The answer may not be the one you wanted; but rest assured that God knows what He's doing. He's setting you up for victory.

[When you've Googled God and Didn't get the Answer you Wanted...](#)

1. **Don't Fear**
2. **Don't Fret**
3. **Don't Faint**
4. **Don't Forget**

And now... I'd like you to listen to a couple, Steve and Dawn Kline. This is a couple that has gone through many trials and suffering; but yet at the same time, they have stood tall in the midst of their adversity. They have asked God the tough questions; they've Googled God many times, and not always been given the answers they've wanted.

For you reading these notes, you'll obviously not be able to hear their testimony; but please go to the AUDIO version of the sermon and listen to them.

Thoughts from Steve

While I was thinking about the last four years of Dawn's battle with cancer and not receiving the answer we wanted – divine healing – the Holy Spirit really made three things stand out: 1) we've had to settle in our minds that God is in control; 2) our attitude is critical; and 3) God wants to change our thinking.

Just Settle It – God Is in Control

Dawn has done everything the Bible says to do to receive healing. She has asked God, thanked God, been anointed by the elders of the church, memorized the Word so that it is in her heart, put her name in the scriptures, had an untold number of people pray for her, forgiven others, and seen all kinds of doctors in different countries. Despite all of this effort and doing the “right” thing Dawn still has not been completely physically healed.

There have been many times when we have asked why, what is He doing, why won't He heal Dawn, when will He heal her and so on. During this battle I've come to the conclusion that the answer to any of these questions is that God is in control. Years ago Dawn and I were really struggling in our marriage. During that time I received my first true revelation of scripture, where the words were more than just words on a page, from the Holy Spirit. The scripture was Romans 8:28 – “And we know all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” I have settled in my mind that no matter what happens in my life it is going to work together for my good. I know only God can do this because He's the only one that has known me throughout all of eternity. It's a choice we have to make. It's as simple (and difficult) as choosing to go with God or choosing to go on our own. How we deal with the circumstances of life hinges entirely on that decision.

Attitude

The Bible says that God has given us a joy that the world can't take away and that we have the strength of Christ. As I have watched my wife go through her battle I've seen the truths of those two scriptures play out in her life. Not only has the right attitude

helped her build her faith but it has impacted the faith of others too. For a while Dawn was receiving treatment at a hospital in Mexico. I went with her for a week (her mom and best friend had been with her previously). At this hospital everyone had to eat in the cafeteria unless they were completely bed ridden. During our first lunch a woman walked across the room to Dawn and said that Dawn had a beautiful smile and that Dawn's smile was a blessing to her. The woman said that Dawn's smile was a blessing because she could see that Dawn still had joy. This memory will always stay with me and brings tears to my eyes this day because it reminds how my wife's smile is the Holy Spirit working through her. And, it shows that our testimony doesn't come from what we say but how we live out the Word in our lives. Christians and non-Christians have to deal with the same issues of life but it's how we handle those issues that separates the two groups.

Dawn's been receiving chemo treatments for almost two years now, but she doesn't let these treatments hinder any aspect of her life. This summer we were riding our bikes 10 miles at a time and she has started watching two small children. While so many that have gone through the same circumstances see their physical health deteriorate you can't see any effect of the treatments on Dawn. She truly has the strength of Christ. She's gone through the fire but there is no smell of smoke on her.

Change Our Thinking

In John 12 Jesus tells us that He has come to draw all things to Him. I believe every situation or circumstance in our lives comes about so that Christ can draw us closer to Him. But, to be drawn closer to Him we have to change some of the ways that we think. The Bible tells us that we must renew our minds and not be conformed to this world. It tells us to meditate on the Word day and night. It tells us to think about things that are holy and righteous and the things that are above.

Since Dawn was diagnosed I've been praying (even begging) God to give Dawn supernatural healing. I wanted Him to miraculously heal her so that she could walk into the doctor's office and have some tests done that showed her cancer free. Then, the doctors, my parents, and other family members would have to recognize God's healing power and that He is real.

But, while we were at the hospital in Mexico (which was a Christian hospital) the doctor that owned it was giving a talk about various new treatments they were studying. After the talk he asked if there were any questions. One person asked the doctor if he had ever witnessed a supernatural healing. The doctor asked the patient what she meant by supernatural healing and the patient described something similar to what I wanted to see happen with Dawn. The doctor said he believed that can happen but that he hadn't personally witnessed it. But, he had witnessed a man whose bones and body were so riddled with cancer that he should have been dead or at best bedridden. But, despite what doctors thought this man should be the man was able to walk in and out of the hospital and enjoy a quality of life others thought impossible. The doctor said he considered that a supernatural healing.

In that moment God began to change my thinking. And, over the next couple of years of seeing my wife LIVE despite the circumstances of her life God has completely changed my thinking. Supernatural healing is and can be a miraculous taking away of disease and sickness. But, in a way, that's the simple thing for God to do and sometimes defeats the purpose of why Jesus came – to draw all things to Him. God has changed my thinking to understand that it is more miraculous, more supernatural (if there is such a thing) to have cancer cells in your body but to live as if they are not there. That requires true faith and application of the Word in your life. God has shown me that is more miraculous than divine healing. And, Dawn's living with joy and strength despite the circumstances has touched more people than a divine healing would have. Some would have dismissed the divine healing as the cancer just going away or the treatments healing her. But, there is no denying the source of her joy and strength despite the struggles when so many others have become discouraged and lost hope.

Conclusion:

What is it you've been waiting on God to do? For Him to turn a problem around? To answer a prayer? To fulfill your vision? To make a way in a place where it seems impossible for there to be a way, financially or physically or any other way? Maybe you've been waiting on God to bring that right person along? Maybe you've been waiting on God to turn a crisis into a solution? God hasn't forgotten. And a delay is not a denial. Not yet is not the same thing as No.

Hab. 2:3 (The Living Bible)

"These things won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!"

Galatians 6:9

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

You Watch... You Wait... You'll SEE!