



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- December 7, 2023

The Lord be with you.

How about a little pep talk today? Could you use one? I mean, a little encouragement. Well, I know that I can use it. I mean, I was just looking at news of the world and which isn't so good. So in the midst of all of this, here's the pep talk, the encouragement, a good word for you and for me, straight from God's word.

I'm looking at first Corinthians chapter 15 verse 58 that says, therefore, my beloved, I like that. Therefore, my beloved be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord, your labor is not in vain notice that the Apostle Paul begins here with the word. Therefore, I, I like the old saying that says every time you see the word, therefore, in the Bible, you need to stop and see what it is there for. Well, the word therefore points us back to what Paul has just been saying. Therefore, is the logical conclusion of everything said up to this point. And so, so we look back to the words immediately preceding verse 57 where Paul says but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here, the Apostle Paul is finishing up on this grand chapter on the resurrection of Jesus, where we see that because Jesus lives, we live also. And because Jesus lives, we have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, therefore, my beloved be steadfast. That is in view of Christ's victory over sin and death.

Be steadfast. The Greek word translated steadfast. It comes from the word meaning chair or seat. It's a place where someone sits, where someone remains stationary. And then the word takes on the meaning to be settled, to be steady, to be unmoved, unshakeable. It means that you and I that we're not gonna budge one inch from being a follower of Jesus. We will be steadfast in these days.

How I thank God for an elementary school teacher who would often time say to us Children, she would say others may, you can. And then she would add, she would say, well, if everybody goes running off a cliff, are you gonna join them? No others may? You can't be steadfast.

And then Paul continues, he says, be immovable. OK. That's a similar idea to steadfast, but the Greek word here translated as immovable. It is used in acts chapter 27 verse 41 where the Apostle Paul is on board a ship and there's a shipwreck and this ship strikes a reef. The ship runs aground and it says that the bowl of the ship is stuck, it is stuck, it remains immovable. And that's our word here. Immovable. It means it means the ship. Well, it's not moving, it's not going anywhere. And so that's to be you and me in these days ahead that we're gonna be immovable in following after Jesus and Paul is using the word here in the sense that remaining immovable in the face of false teachers, we remain immovable in the face of everything crazy that's going on in our culture. I mean, we're just not buying it. We are steadfast immovable.



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And then Paul continues, he says, always excelling in the work of the Lord. The Greek has the idea of going beyond what is ordinary, going beyond what is expected. It is going the extra mile for Jesus. And you know, one of the exciting things is that Jesus has assigned to each one of us different roles in serving his kingdom. You have your role, I have mine and each one of us gets to be responsible for our part of God's kingdom in the world. And so we're going to excel in the work of the Lord, we're gonna give it our best because Paul says, because you know that in the Lord, your labor is not in vain.

Now I've lived enough years to know that you know what, there are a lot of things that we might do in this life that are going to amount to nothing. But what we can be sure of is that we can know that what we do for Jesus. It is never in vain. It is never wasted, it is never lost. It counts forever.

In Matthew chapter 19, we see the apostle Peter. Now, how, how should I say it? Peter, well, he's feeling sorry for himself. Peter is thinking about how much he's doing for Jesus. And Peter says to Jesus, he says, he says, look, we, we, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have? You know, one of the things I like about old Peter is that he goes ahead and blurts out and says, what everyone else is thinking and listen to what Jesus promises in Matthew 19 verse 29 he says to Peter and everyone who has left houses or brothers or sister, our father, our mother, our Children, our fields for my name's sake will receive 100 fold and will inherit eternal life.

Yes, following Jesus might be difficult at times and it might get more difficult. I don't know, but the payoff will be enormous for us to one day hear Jesus say, well done, good and trustworthy servant. You have been trustworthy in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.

I'm inspired by the words of Martin Luther who said that there were only two days on his calendar today. And that day today and the day that we stand before our Lord Jesus Christ.

Charles Taylor Stud was born into a wealthy English family. And in his day, he was known as the greatest cricket player in the world. But he felt God calling him to things other than to wealth and to fame. And he wrote his words, he said only one life will soon be passed only what's done for Christ.

But last, well, that's our pep talk for today. I know I probably didn't say anything that you don't already know. But if you're like me, it's, it's good to be reminded. And so we keep on keeping on. I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.