



water from rock

## Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – February 8, 2024

The Lord be with you.

You know how they say that the storms of life make our roots go deeper, the storms make our roots go deeper into God, deeper and deeper into God's love for us. Well, you know, I'm actually getting to see that lived out in the lives of some friends right now who are going through difficult times. I mean, really hard times. So one of them fighting cancer and dealing with the chemotherapy, the radiation, all of that. And then, well, another who's grieving the loss of a son. And I'm watching them as their roots go deeper and deeper into God. I'm watching them gain new strength and all of this leads me to a Bible passage that helps me in difficult times.

It, it helps me draw closer to God and to gain new strength in him. And as I say, all of this, I, I just have to think of something that Corey Tin boom said about her time in a Nazi concentration camp where she said there in that Nazi concentration camp, she, she learned that Christ was all she needed when Christ was all that she had and boy did her roots go deep.

I'm looking today in the book of Hebrews that is written to Jewish Christians who, whether they're not in concentration camps, but they are people who have lost jobs, they've lost their homes, they're facing persecution, they've been locked up. I'll let you check it all out. It's in Hebrews chapter 10 verses 32 and 34 where it says that they cheerfully accepted the plundering of their possessions, endured a hard struggle with sufferings and time in prison.

Now their secret to experiencing God in difficult times, it can be our secret too. We find it over in Hebrews chapter 13 verses five through six. I'll read it. Keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have for God has said, I will never leave you or forsake you. So we can say with confidence, the Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me? These are people who've lost a lot and in losing they are gaining Christ.

Ok. Just, just listen to this text again as it says, keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have the word content. Well, it's a translation of the Greek word *Arkata*. That's a *ARK eta* and it, it means well enough sufficient. It is a mindset. It is the attitude that says I have enough what I have is sufficient, what I have today. Well, it's, it's what God wants me to have and if I need more, II, I know that God will provide it for me.



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I mean, it's just like David in Psalm 23 where David says the Lord is my shepherd. I shall not lack or be in want. Our shepherd will always see that you and I have just what we need. I mean, if we don't have it, it's, it's because our shepherd knows that we don't need it. So where I am right now with what I have right now, it is sufficient. It is enough. So when it says be content with what you have and it doesn't mean that we don't work hard and try to get ahead. But what it does mean is I, I don't have to question God, but II, I don't have to worry about what I don't have right now because what I have is sufficient. It is enough.

Now the writer of the book of Hebrews then quotes two old Testament passages to drive home. This point to, to show that we can be content. The first passage he takes from the Old Testament Book of Joshua chapter one verse five. And here the Lord is passing on the mantle of leadership to Joshua who is gonna take the place of Moses and leading the people into the promised land. And, and boy, that's a, that's a big job ahead of him. And here is God's promise to Joshua that is quoted for you and me where God promises I will never leave you or forsake you. That's exactly the promise that God is making to you today.

Now, in the Greek text, the writer actually uses five negatives in order to emphasize the absolute certainty that God will never leave you or forsake you. So the Greek text translates literally like this. It says I will not leave you. I will not, I will not forsake you. I will not assuredly not. I mean, I don't think God could be any clearer. Here is the promise that God once made to Joshua is the promise that God is making to you and me today. I will never leave you or forsake you on verse six. The people of God respond to God's promise. Here it is verse six. It says, so we can say with confidence and then he quotes Psalm 118 verse six. We can say with confidence, the Lord is my helper. I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?

You see with God in your life, you will have everything that you need for the days ahead. Now, very similar to what Corey Tin Boom said that she learned in a Nazi concentration camp. CS Lewis said that he learned in his life. He said, if a person has everything and has not Christ, he has nothing. If he has nothing and has Christ, he has everything. Now, I would be the last person on earth to say that this kind of contentment comes easily. I mean, it doesn't because even the Greater Apostle Paul says in Philippians four verse 11, he says, for, I have learned to be content with what I have. I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me and you can do everything that you need to do in the days ahead because Christ will be your strength.

CS Lewis was right on. He says if a person has everything and has not Christ, he has nothing. If he has nothing and has Christ, he has everything. Well, a few things to think about today, about the storms of life, driving our roots deep.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.