

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – June 18, 2020

The Lord be with you.

I've a God sighting, I wanna share with you.

My God, sighting is the people I hear saying that through this time of Covid-19 and lock down, that they are actually drawing closer to God, they're saying that in the midst of the upheaval, the difficulties, the uncertainty that they are experiencing more and more of God's love for them, these are people who've lost money, they've lost their jobs, they've been locked out of their churches, some have battled Covid-19, and they are sinking roots down deep into God's love.

All of this leads me to a Bible passage that helps me gain new strength in a difficult time, and it might help you too to draw closer to God and gain your strength.

And as I say this, I have to think of something, Corrie ten Boom said about her time in a Nazi concentration camp, where she said that she learned, I only realized that Christ was all I needed when Christ was all I had.

I'm looking today in the Book of Hebrews that is written to Jewish Christians who are not in concentration camps, but they are people who have lost jobs, lost their homes, they've been persecuted, they've been locked up, I let you check it all out. Is there in Hebrews 10:32-34, where it says that they cheerfully accept the plundering of their possessions, endured a hard struggle with sufferings and spend time in prison. Now their secret to experiencing God in difficult times, our secret, we find an over in Hebrews Chapter 13, verses 5-6, 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 have lost a lot and in losing... They are gaining Christ. Just listen to the text, keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have. Content, the Greek word is *arketa*. That means enough. sufficient, it is the mindset. It is the attitude that says, I have enough. It is sufficient. What I have today is what God wants me to have. And if I need more, I know that my God will provide it for me, it's like David in Psalm 23 where he says, The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not lack or be in want. My Shepherd will always see that I have just what I need. If I don't have it, my Shepherd knows that I don't need it.

So where I am right now with what I have right now, it is sufficient, it is enough when it says, Be content with what you have at it does not mean that we don't work hard and try to get ahead, but what it does mean is... And I don't have to question God about, but I don't have where I am now.

Now, our writer then quotes two Old Testament passages to make his point is a way we can be content. The first passage he quotes is Joshua 1:5, and here the Lord is passing on the mantle of leadership to Joshua, who will take the place of Moses in leading God's people into the promised land. And here is God's promise to Joshua that is quoted, I will never leave you or forsake you.

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That's exactly the promise God is making you today, in the Greek text, the writer, it 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, I will not leave you, I will not... I will not forsake you, I will not. Assuredly not. God could not be clearer. And here, the promise that God once made to Joshua is the promise that God is making to you today, I will never leave you or forsake you.

Now, in verse 6, the people of God respond to God's promise. Here it is, Verse 6, so we can say with confidence. And what they say with confidence is a quote of Psalm 118:6, The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid, what can anyone do to me.

With God in your life, you will have everything you need for the days ahead. Very similar to what Corrie ten Boom learned in a concentration camp, CS Lewis learned in his life. 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, it doesn't even a great apostle Paul admitted that in Philippians 4:11, where he said, For I have learned to be content with whatever I have, notice I have learned it's a learning process, not always enjoyable, but I have learned to be content with whatever I have, I know what it is to have a little... I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances, I have learned the secret of being well-fed, of going hungry, of having plenty of being I need... I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

I can do everything I need to do in the days ahead. Because Christ is my strength. You can do everything you need to do in the days ahead. Because Christ is your strength. CS Lewis was right. 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.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way.

Thanks for listening. Until next time...

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