

Steadfast-Immovable (Slide 1)

1 Corinthians 15:56-58

Reading: James 5:7-11

Hebrews 3:1-15 (Slide 2)

1 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, 2 who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house.

(Slide 3) 3 For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. 4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. 5 And Moses (Slide 4) indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, 6 but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

(Slide 5) 7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you will hear His voice,

***8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
In the day of trial in the wilderness,***

***(Slide 6) 9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,
And saw My works forty years.***

***10 Therefore I was angry with that generation,
And said, 'They always go astray in their heart,
And they have not known My ways.***

***(Slide 7) 11 So I swore in My wrath,
'They shall not enter My rest.' "***

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, (Slide 8)

while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said:

***"Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."***

Compare the Christian today with those of the rebellion-those of Egyptian captivity. The Jews cried out to God to be rescued out of slavery. Christians call to God to rescue them from the slavery of sin.

Both at one time recognized God as their Savior and were rescued by Him. Those in captivity by the ones sent to them; that is Moses and Aaron who were God's spokesmen.

Christians were rescued by the *Blood of Christ*-the only *Begotten Son of God* who was sent by Him to rescue the perishing.

It is somewhat hard to understand that the Jews, who cried out to God and He heard them, that they would rebel against Him after all He had done to rescue them.

But the Hebrew writer warns Christians not to do the same thing and that warning means *"that we could,"* even after all He has done for us by offering up His Son.....rebel against Him.

He is encouraging us to be *Steadfast-Immovable!!*

(Slide 9) *Steadfast* comes from a Greek word that is often translated as endurance, perseverance/ persevere, or patience.

I believe being *steadfast* or *immovable* will encourage *resistance*. Resisting temptation because of our steadfast course in serving God. Our singular determination to pursue Heaven!

I am convinced that being *steadfast/ immovable* helps us maintain our *enthusiasm* for Christ! The lack of enthusiasm causes many to drift away. But we need to remain faithful and encourage one another by our presence in worship, in service in times of need ***so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25c)***

In **1st Corinthians 15** at the end of the chapter, Apostle Paul sums up our expected resurrection in this way:

1 Corinthians 15:56-58 (Slide 10)

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Because we can anticipate our resurrection and to be with God for eternity, notice the admonition:

Be steadfast/ immovable

Committed

Resolute-Resolved that no matter what, whether resistance or ridicule we have our eyes fixed toward Heaven!

Colossians 3:1-4 (Slide 11)

1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Slide 12) 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

I've used this passage before because I have personally become so impacted with the phrase; ***"Christ who is our life!"***

Paul is saying that no matter what may come, if we have been buried into His death in baptism and then raised simulating His resurrection, we are not only a new creature (**2 Corinthians 5:17**) we have eyes facing toward a new direction.

I emphasize *"no matter what may come"* because we are to be *immovable-resolute* as was Jesus during His mission on earth.

Luke 9:51-56 (Slide 13)

51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. (Slide 14) 53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"

(Slide 15) ***55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. 56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.***

Several lessons to glean from this passage of scripture:

1st we're in a different *dispensation*, because *"Who"* that was predicted to come has come and we listen to Him.

We conduct ourselves as He did honoring *"mercy over sacrifice"* the new way over the old. That doesn't mean we leave out justice but we leave it to the One who has power to meet out justice.

We talked last week in some detail about having someone enter our midst that holds a doctrine contrary to the doctrine of Christ coming in the flesh

and we were informed by John to reject that doctrine. But that doesn't mean to reject that one from hearing the truth!

That's what Jesus is saying here. The Samaritans rejected Him but He didn't reject them!! The same might be said of us, we can reject God but He won't reject us, always wanting all to be saved!! Again that doesn't mean that there won't be justice!!

The Samaritans and Jews were what we would call "sworn enemies." The *Gospel of John* makes that clear with the woman at the well. She was astonished that Jesus would speak with her let alone ask something from her saying;

John 4:9bc (Slide 16)

***"How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?"
For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.***

The same such analogy with the "Good Samaritan" when Jesus answers the question; "who's my neighbor." (**Luke 10**) Everyone is our neighbor! Everyone is entitled to the message of "mercy."

"You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. 56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."

When we become a Christian we are a different person with a different outlook that is separated from human motivation because we are now motivated by the *Spirit*!!

Another lesson which reflects the message of *steadfastness/ immovable* is:

Luke 9:51 (Slide 17)

Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem

Jesus was resolved to complete His mission. Nothing would retract or distract Him from completing that mission. Not even the rejection of man!

That same admonition is given to us this day in:

Hebrews 10:19-24 (Slide 18)

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, (Slide 19) ***22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,*** (Slide 20) ***for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works***

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering

There aren't too many things in this life that we may seek more than stability. A stable job-stable income-a stable spouse-stable children-Today, stable food supply and stable fuel prices-insurance and so on-wouldn't that be great.

Stable meaning dependable-dependable friends, co-workers and the list goes on and on.

We can search all we want but we will never find the level of stability-dependability equal to that of God and Christ Jesus and He wants us to be like Him.

Stability, in the sense of being steadfast in the hope that we have in us, is a fruit of Christian maturity so *that we "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* (2 Peter 3:18)

Steadfast-immovable isn't something that just happens, it takes a faith that is exercised!!

You let your car sit around a good portion of its life and when you need it the most you turn the key and it won't start. You lay on the couch for a good portion of your life with a bag of chips on your chest as you watch mindless TV and try to get up and walk-you find your legs don't work and frankly, you find your belly bigger and your brain smaller.

Luke 11:24-26 (Slide 21)

24 "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 And when (Slide 22) he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. 26 Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

That unclean spirit comes back and even though the house is clean he finds it still empty. He brings with him seven other spirits that are even worse than he is and makes the situation worse than it was before because the owner of that house was not steadfast in his search to fill it with truth.

I like my house clean but I would rather have it filled with my grandchildren running amuck at times because it is then filled with what I love!!

This one who has the unclean spirit leave his house is just like one who gets rid of a sin or sins. It isn't enough just to get rid of the sin, the empty place must be filled with something and it should be filled with an active faith in Jesus Christ so that there simply isn't any room for anything else.

That's what being *steadfast/ immovable* does for the Christian. That's the level of perseverance and resistance we must achieve through an active faith!!

Steadfast-immovable is the call today!!

Invitation

Is your life empty!! We might not think so but without Christ Jesus it truly is!

Today, we in the Lord's church have always been *steadfast-immovable* in one thing and that is to offer the invitation of Jesus to all who need to obey the Gospel call. If you have not obeyed that call we invite you to come today. Put on Christ through Baptism and become a Child of God!!

If you are in Christ but you feel you need to fill your Spiritual house and need the prayers of your Brethren for whatever reason, let your wish be known.

Please let us know how we may assist you.....

Reading

James 5:7-11

7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! 10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

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