

Press On

I have been reflecting on the season that we are in, "What is the Lord saying to us in such a season?"

When everything seems to be stripped away what would God the Father be saying to us as his children.

I hear the father say, "Press On" Press on towards a higher calling. There is a higher calling upon your life. There is a higher place. He has called you into a higher place

Press On.

God has a way of using suffering to prepare his servants for the work of ministry. When you see a man or woman used mightily of the Lord, you will realize that they have encountered suffering and sorrow along the way.

A close family friend went through a very difficult season. She said, "I drew nearer to God because I had no other place to go."

Suffering has a way of either drawing us away from God or drawing us closer to him into a place of intimacy. Seeds of greatness are often birthed through times of difficulty.

Dreams and Visions are often birthed through pain and suffering. It is into a life of pain and suffering that Paul is called by God.

Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. Calvin Coolidge

Acts 9:10-16;

The journey of Paul is filled with challenges and difficulties. When God appears to Ananias the prophet. He declares to him, "This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Another version, "this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name"

The call of God upon Paul's life is not an invitation to greatness but to a life of suffering. God calls Paul and then makes a disclaimer, "You must suffer for my name"

Paul does suffer.

Acts 9:10 From the very beginning he battles with rejection.

Acts 13:49-51: He has to endure insults.

Acts 14:19, He is beaten and stoned.

Acts 16:22; He is flogged and thrown into prison.

He is shipwrecked. He is bitten by a snake

All for the name of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 11:24-27

I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again.

Five times I have received from the Jews forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move.

I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews and in danger from the Gentiles; in danger in the country, in danger at sea; in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled, I have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food.

What is Paul's response to hardship and difficulty?

He presses on from one city to another, from one mission to another. Jerusalem to Antioch to Cyprus, Iconium to Macedonia to Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens to Corinth.

Pressing one, from one conversation to another, from one breakthrough to another, from one testimony to another, from one victory to the next.

Always remember that the fulfillment of every dream or vision that God gives you lives side by side with the opposition to that dream.

“I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail.”

God is not just building his church, he is building you.

Have you endured suffering? Yes.

For some of us we have endured suffering but not for the name of the Lord. We suffer for our lack of wisdom. We suffer for our own pursuit of greed, wealth and fame.

So we suffer our own consequences

“He must suffer for my name.” I think about Paul and the words that come to mind is, “**How did he stay in the game?**”,

“How did he keep the faith? To eventually declare the words, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race.”

How did He stay in the game?

Philippians 3:13-14;

I press towards the name of the high calling
His mind was not set on what was behind him but focused on what was ahead of him.
The season before you, matters more, than the season behind you.

What is before you, matters more than what is behind you?
What is the calling of God upon your life? What vision has he given you?

Press on despite the storms that are in your life. Always remember the storm is a distraction to the plans and purposes of God in your life.

When the storm is overwhelming, look around you, because the storm is a distraction from God’s plan and purpose around you.

When you are stuck in a moment of despair:

Let go of the baggage of the past

When a runner starts out on the course, he doesn’t carry any unnecessary clothing or baggage. Because the excess weight will slow him down.

He doesn’t run constantly looking behind him, because in doing so, he cannot see what dangers may lay in front of him.

Don’t Look back

No matter how long the race, the runner doesn’t give up, he doesn’t look back, but he keeps on running, keeps on pressing, keeps on striving, because his goal is to cross the finish line.

Don’t Despair

Ecclesiastes 9:11

lets us know that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, but to the one who holds out. God wants us to keep on striving, keep on trying, and to keep moving on; trying to reach our goal.

Don't wait for better circumstances

Many of us are fighting the demons of doubt, inadequacy, fear and anxiety. Don't begin to doubt in the journey the dream that God has placed in your heart.

Don't doubt in the dark what God has spoken to you in the light.

Don't be Distracted:

God has so ordered that in pressing on in duty we shall find the truest, richest comfort for ourselves. When we sit down to brood over our sorrows, the darkness deepens around us and creeps into our heart, and our strength changes to weakness.

But, if we turn away from the sorrow, gloom and despair, and take up the tasks and duties to which God calls us, the light will come again, and we shall grow stronger.

Lettie Cowman

Stay Focused – Don't pursue the vision more than you pursue God.

Cultivate a dependence on God. Frustration comes from the gap between our expectations and our reality.

Our limitations are a cause of frustration. God knew my limitations before I knew His expectations. God will not lower His expectations because of my limitations.

God's expectation becomes my inspiration.

Press on

Practice Stickability- Stay over time, don't keep shifting.

Take the Lord with you. No matter what we try to do in life, we need the Lord.

I hear Jesus say, "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you".

Stay with the Lord. Stay in His word. Hide his word in your heart that you may not sin against God.

The cure for your exhaustion, despair and frustration is intimacy with Jesus.

Don't take a sabbatical from your relationship with God.

I'm pressing on the upward way, New heights I'm gaining every day;

Still praying as I onward bound, "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Lord, lift me up, and let me stand By faith on Canaan's tableland;

A higher plane than I have found, Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

My heart has no desire to stay, Where doubts arise and fears dismay;

Though some may dwell where these abound, My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

*I want to live above the world,
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;*

*For faith has caught the joyful sound,
The song of saints on higher ground*

*I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;*

*But still I'll pray till rest I've found, Lord,
lead me on to higher ground."*

If you keep pressing on, you will see the glory of God in your life.

This Covid season has broken us, tested us, tried us, tested our relationships. You are going to make it to the other side.

Don't get stuck in the moment that you lose the opportunity of the next season.

Don't be caught up in the mourning and grieving of what you have lost that you are unable to celebrate the gift of what is around you. God has a reason why he has spared you. God has a reason why he has sustained you. Ask him to reveal his purpose to you.

Philippians 4:12-13;

I know what it is to be in need and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation.

Whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through him who gives me strength.

Not only was he content but he also demonstrated bold faith in God.

Paul raised the dead, healed the sick, walked in the anointing of the power of God.

In the midst of the suffering the power of God was at work and God demonstrated his power through him.

If you will press on, then you will experience a rebirth.
A new anointing, presence of God, a new strength.