

Holding On Through The Night

Friends, let's start this Bible study with a few examples. I'll not list the entire Bible chapters here, but I will encourage you to look them up and read them for yourself. I will add a few excerpts that highlight the topic I wish to discuss today.

Let's start with Daniel chapter six - I believe we are all familiar with this chapter but if not please open your Bibles and read the beautiful stories within.

Daniel:-

“Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee... My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me...”

Esther:-

“...and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand...”

Joseph - Genesis

“And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it... and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt... And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled... And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison... And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt...”

Friends, the above examples are perfect representations of God's people 'holding on through the night'. Their time of faith must have been trying indeed but Jesus was with them and through faith in Jesus they conquered the fiery trial and came out victors. But friends, what about others who held on through the night but to all appearances lost the battle? Namely the battle for life itself.

John the Baptist - Found in any of the Gospels

“... Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee... In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea... that he shut up John in prison... What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.”

Peter - one of the twelve disciples - Found in any of the Gospels

“... And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter... And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men... And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him... And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew... Peter therefore was kept in prison... And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands... When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him... This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God...”

Friends, these two examples follow the lives of two of Jesus’ beloved disciples, yes, they lost their lives, but their death was not in vain. Both died fighting the devil, preaching the gospel of Jesus and witnessing for the love of their Saviour. Neither died ‘in vain’ and so it is for us today. People followed in the footsteps of John the Baptist and Peter, Jesus’ disciples, and many of these people walking in their footsteps gained valuable strength and courage from the witness of these people before them. Many a Christian was martyred by the devil but from the witness of people before them they know their sacrifice is not in vain. Today friends, we are being called to look to these people (and others like them) and learn to trust Jesus as they did. We also are being called upon to walk this path for Jesus, to shine our light in the darkness and preach the gospel, to bring others into a knowledge of Christ, and yes, it may cost us our life and it may not, but either way we can look to Jesus’ people of the past and gain a deeper understanding of the love of Jesus and witness to the people around us. We can stand strong in the love and strength of Jesus, we can know for a surety that the Jesus who was with His servants in the past is with us today. But friends in order to do this successfully we have to, as did God’s servants of old, learn to ‘hold on through the night’. So let’s begin.

Dear friends, not everything has a ‘happy ending’, but when we are working for Jesus everything works out to His plan and ultimately to our salvation, whether we live or die ultimately we are saved in His kingdom. Friends, today I would like to discuss these ‘hard times’ when we really have to ‘hold on through the night’. We are living in the devil’s playground and bad things are going to happen just because the devil is a tyrant and delights in hurting, not just people but animals as well, pretty much all of God’s creation is under the devil’s curse.

Romans 8:22 “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.”

Isaiah 24:4 “The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away...”

Friends, let's first and foremost start with a promise from our blessed Saviour.

Psalms 91:4 "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust..."

Deuteronomy 31:6 "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

As you can see friends, there are multiple examples within the Bible assuring us of our Saviour's love. Yes, we are living in the devil's playground, and yes, bad things are going to happen but friends, we are never left to face them alone.

Matthew 28:20 "...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Friends, the time we are living in right now is just prior to Jesus' second coming, the world is preparing for war but ultimately it is not with each other. Though they don't realise it at the moment and believe they are fighting each other, very soon Jesus will make His move to return and collect His beloved, when that happens Satan will marshal together all the soldiers already fighting each other and turn them upon the children of God. Friends, more than ever before we need to learn how to 'hold on through the night'. Jesus will be with us, He has promised us this, but friends, no-one goes into a fight without preparation first and we are no different, we cannot fight for Jesus without first learning to have total trust and faith in our leader and having learnt how to 'hold on through the night'.

You know friends, by now, after reading so many of my letters, I believe you will have painted a very real picture of who I am and what I stand for. I have implicit faith and trust in Jesus, I love my Saviour dearly and would follow Him to the cross, but this path hasn't been easy. I don't know if you have read 'My Story in a Allegory' (if not it is under the heading 'About') but it depicts my story and how I became so close to Jesus, yes friends, I have learnt to 'hold on through the night'. Friends, there are a few 'allegories' on this website and I would like to point your attention to one in particular. Now, I am not just talking about myself here as I believe many people have also walked in Jesus' footsteps and it is by walking this path we learn to have unquestionable, unshakable faith in Jesus and then we in turn can help others. Let's take a look at that allegory and pray it gives us some understanding into the path we walk and why it is imperative to hold on no matter the darkness of the night.

"Two sheep are walking side by side when they come to a deep ravine. One sheep pauses too afraid to cross, the other moves cautiously ahead and is soon lost to view. The sheep that paused sits down to wait for a better time to try to cross and is soon fast asleep. The sheep that has pressed on finds itself completely surrounded by fog and blackness. The darkness is so thick it cannot see the way, but through the darkness it hears a voice, gently calling. 'Tis the shepherd's voice it hears, closing its eyes the

sheep allows the shepherd to guide it expecting to soon have its feet on solid ground. But the shepherd has other ideas. This sheep shows promise, promise of a good leader, someone willing to go through the fires of affliction to strengthen others to pass the gulf. So the path out isn't direct, first one trial, then another, steadily the sheep passes through the fire. There are protectors on either side of the sheep protecting it from the gulf beneath and these protectors have become deeply attached to their charge. Tenderly they watch and protect as their charge navigates the rocky path. Questions are being asked, "why? why is this particular sheep being asked to carry such a heavy burden?" Then the answer comes from heaven, look back, look back to the beginning of the ravine. Like a light from heaven the path behind is lighted up and there at the beginning of the ravine is not one but many sheep, waiting, too afraid to cross. The sheep has now passed through the fires of affliction but instead of moving forward to safety she goes back, back through the fog and darkness to the beginning of the ravine where she tenderly collects the rest of the flock and guides them across the gulf to safety. Understanding comes, one sheep allowing herself to be purged in the fires of affliction has opened the door for others to follow in her footsteps, she now guides others through the storm to the safety of the fold."

Jesus took this lamb through the furnace that by her example she can help others who would never have had a chance without her help. Jesus will never leave any of His sheep to struggle alone. He always has someone at hand ready to steady them and guide them through.

Friends, do you understand? Can you see that while this path we are walking is unpleasant Jesus is leading us through, and by us He is helping others navigate the same dark pathway.

Now it is not all doom and gloom friends, let's deviate here and look at what we are fighting for.

John 14:2 "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you..."

Isaiah 11:9 "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain..."

Revelation 21:4 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Yes, that's right we are fighting for our heavenly home. Let's have a quick refresher at how we ended up here.

Revelation 12:7-9 "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old

serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

So Satan rebelled, was cast out of heaven and ended up here on planet earth. He has usurped the throne, declared himself king and basically destroyed this planet. He knows that ultimately he is going to hell and he is desperate to take with him everyone he can. So it's going to be a fight, even blind Freddy can see that, but friends, not everyone is in the position to be able to fight. There were many a person rejected from 'war conscription' because they were unfit for duty. Does this mean they are shut out from heaven because they cannot join the ranks?

1st Timothy 2:3,4 “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

No, of course not, Jesus is a God of love.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Acts 16:31 “And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

And no-one will be left out.

Romans 10:13 “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

2nd Peter 3:9 “...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

But friends, what about the war? This, my friend, is where we come in, yes, we are also fighting for others. See everyone has a right to salvation.

Mark 16:16 “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

But not everyone has the ability to fight for it.

Isaiah 35:3 “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.”

1st Thessalonians 5:14 “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.”

Everyone is saved by the grace of God.

2nd Corinthians 12:9 “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness...”

Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”

But only those who seek it and desire it.

Deuteronomy 4:29 “But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.”

John 1:12 “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:”

Unfortunately friends, some people do not, but still expect to be in heaven.

Matthew 7:21 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

Hebrews 10:26 “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,”

See friends, it is sad to say but many people ‘expect’ to be saved but they have no desire to change their wicked ways or commit their lives to Jesus. These people want the best of both worlds, they want the pleasures of this earth and the promised rewards of heaven. It is very sad indeed to see these deluded people who expect to be saved in their sin by the grace of God. But this letter isn’t about them, it’s about God’s people clinging to Him by faith but unable to enter the battle grounds. Friends, it is for them also that we are learning to ‘hold on through the night’. Jesus is training His soldiers to stand against the devil, and fight for our rightful home. Jesus will be at our lead and He will protect us, but first we are in training to hold on regardless.

So we are training for Jesus, for a place in His battalion, what a honour this is, to be able to fight by His side and help to end this terrible war against the devil. The night is pitch black and the devil is in our ear, the problem we have is human nature. There is a document already on this website directly discussing this topic and it is called ‘Human Nature’. If you haven’t already read it I encourage you to do so. There are pointers from that document that are very relevant to what we are talking about today so I’ll just do a ‘cut and paste’ for a few of them.

From letter on this website - ‘Human Nature’:-

“...So while our body is degenerating so also are the mental faculties that God designed to be a blessing. But there are things we can do to protect our feeble mind and the first one is to recognise exactly what is going on, recognise the situation for what it really is and then

we can turn to Jesus for help. Well, we really should turn to Jesus first, then He will guide us through...”

So first and foremost turn to Jesus.

“...This is on trauma done to us. (Also found in the letter ‘Human Nature’ which is also on this website.)

See this is how the mind works. When a tragedy, pain or trauma happens the mind automatically looks for something to blame it on. Take for example a broken arm, the physical pain has been caused by the broken arm but it was the accident that caused it, therefore the mind blames the accident. More intense trauma goes deeper. Take for example a cancer survivor, their physical pain for instance was caused by the chemotherapy therefore their mind blames the cancer, this is the mind’s natural defence mechanism, it needs to find something to ‘pin’ the trauma on, something to blame. This is for the protection of our very sanity.

Now in real time this ‘protection’ imbedded in human nature is for our benefit. See the human nature will blame whatever it sees as the cause, this will steady the mind and allow it to grab hold of a foundation. Then with time, the right environment, maybe counselling and sometimes medication the mind will heal and understanding and reason will be enough to stabilise the mind and return it to its natural state. So this human nature trait is a blessing...”

Friends, understanding how and why the mind works as it does is pivotal to learning about ‘holding on’. See while we are groping about in the darkness looking for a footing the mind is also going to be looking for something, anything it can pin the trauma on, it will be searching out ‘reason’, and friends, we cannot allow it to pin our troubles on Jesus. Jesus is not the cause, Satan is, but with the devil in the detail as he is it will be a major battle with him to resist his temptation to blame Jesus. Friends, these storms we go through are to our advantage and while they are not pleasant they are ‘body building’. Each battle we fight we get stronger, each battle won gives us more confidence in the power of God to save and bit by bit our faith becomes sight. We don't have to take Jesus by faith as we know from experience that Jesus has the power and ability to save us, to uphold us throughout the darkest of nights and the most fearsome of battles. Jesus is always beside us and though the night is dark we can say for a surety:-

Job 19:25 “For I know that my redeemer liveth...”

And:-

Deuteronomy 31:8 “And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.”

Friends, Jesus is ever with us and He will in no wise leave our side, He is calling us to come into His army and fight for Him, learn to hold on through the night, to grow in

strength, faith and trust and be able to defeat the devil at his own game. So when the night closes in and the darkness surrounds you, friends, put your hand in Jesus' and hold on through the storm. Jesus is our lighthouse, He is our beacon and He will lead us through. Satan is going to hell friends, let's not go with him. Bit by bit we can win this war with the devil, with Jesus by our side friends, I know we can 'hold on through the night'.
Amen.

Friends, there is a PS here. I believe strongly that Jesus is coming soon to take us home. Friends, more than ever before we need to be standing ready for the battle, for the end time events mentioned in Daniel and Revelation, and I believe strongly that more than ever before we need to learn to 'hold on'. The darkness of this fight is going to take the breath out of everyone and without a firm foundation on Jesus Christ we will fall. Now Jesus is a God of love and no-one will be walking the path of the 'end of time' if they are in danger of failing, but friends we need to prepare now. More than ever friends, please learn to hold on as - well, this snippet was written previously to be included in one of my other documents but I believe it is very relevant here:-

Holding ability

At the moment our 'holding ability' is being tested, during the time of trouble we are going to have to hold steady and wait for the deliverance of God. This has to be practised and experienced before the actual experience. This 'holding' experience is for all of God's people going through the time of trouble. It has to be proven and experienced before going through the actual event. People cannot be caught off guard or surprised, they must know what to expect otherwise they will fail and Jesus will not send in anyone if they are not going to make the distance. There is a set time we need to be able to 'hold' for and this is what we are practising for right now. Everyone involved in the last day events is now in the practice run of their lives, can we make the distance? We must know what to expect. So this 'holding' experience is going to press us all to our limit, Satan will be fighting and tempting us to our limit, we must be able to have total faith in Jesus, no matter what. This is what every person in the one hundred and forty four thousand is experiencing right now, Jesus is making up His number, once we have been 'proven' and when He is satisfied that we are all going to make the distance He will ring the bell and we will be on our way.

There is also a allegory I wrote that I believe 'sums it all up', total faith in Jesus and He will guide us through. Please friends, put your faith in Him and rest in His arms, He will carry us through.

Jesus is Pilot & Lighthouse

"Picture if you will, a boat lost at sea, the night is dark and the waves are stormy. The little boat is being tossed about at the mercy of the wind. There are four passengers on board, a family, mum, dad and two young children. It all started out as a family holiday, the weather was fine and the day was filled with laughter. It had all changed so suddenly, one

minute the boat rang with laughter, then suddenly the clouds had closed around them and the storm set in. It was night now and everybody was frightened, mum was trying to calm the children's cries, dad was desperately trying to steer the boat, but dad knew deep down he was fighting a losing battle. There was a rock bed up ahead, dad had seen it on the map and now hopelessly lost he could only hope he was going to avoid it. Gathering his family about him on deck, dad explained as gently as he could the dire situation the family was in. Drawing everyone to their knees this father poured his heart out to his God in heaven, beseeching heaven for help and guidance. One by one the family added their prayers to heaven, each child saying a simple prayer with mum closing with prayer herself. Not sure how to proceed or what to do the family stayed on their knees. A loud banging noise at the front of the boat startled everyone, it sounded like they had hit something. Rushing to the front of the boat they were surprised to see a man at the wheel of the boat, questioning the man he said he was the pilot of this area, he had seen their boat through the flashes of lightning and come aboard to guide them around the rocks. The father was skeptical but grateful and wondered if this man had come in answer to their prayers, see the father knew there were no pilots in this area. Hour after hour the pilot guided the little boat through the treacherous waters, hour after hour the father stood by his side. Finally curiosity got the better of the father and he asked the pilot what he was guiding the boat by, the father could see nothing. Pointing to the left of the boat, a little way ahead the pilot directed the father's gaze to a beam of light, it was, the pilot said, the lighthouse and he was guiding the boat by that light. Once again the father was skeptical but grateful, once again the father knew there were no lighthouses in the area. Thanking the pilot the father went to the back of the boat to check on his family. They were fine, sleeping soundly with their faith in Jesus and grateful to the pilot guiding their craft. The father sat down with them, he only meant to sit for a moment but weariness overtook him and he was soon fast asleep. Waking with a start the entire family arose to their feet, looking around them they could see the sun shining, the waters calm and their little boat bobbing up and down gently on the waters. With one accord the family rushed to the front of the boat, no-one there. Glancing out to sea the children noticed a large boat approaching, it was the coast guard. Coming alongside the little boat the coast guard questioned the father, their boat had been reported missing, were they ok? and how had they managed to survive the storm? The father assured the coast guard they were ok and thanked them for providing them with the pilot to guide them through the storm. The coast guard was surprised and puzzled, he was also a man of God, gently the coast guard pointed out to the father he hadn't provided a pilot, there was no pilot or lighthouse in this area and the only answer was Jesus had intervened and provided a pilot and guiding beacon. The family and coast guard bowed to give thanks to Jesus for saving their lives."

Jesus is the pilot, and Jesus is the lighthouse. Step away from the wheel my friend, give control to Jesus and He will always guide you away from the rocks.