

Be Stedfast

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[0:00] Our subject this morning is be steadfast. Now we're living in a world in crisis, you could say, aren't we?! People are going nuts, aren't they?

I've heard in the media there's words like mayhem, and the Bible says that things are going to get shaken.

It tells us that. This is not something that should surprise us. And we see, I've got numbers of verses here, I'm really talking through numbers of Bible verses, so you might want to just follow along as we touch on some of these verses that have this kind of theme, things being shaken, and what we should do in such a time as this.

For example, in Joel chapter 3, it's talking about the context of the end of the world, and the Lord shall also roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake, but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

Don't we know that, that that is true? When things are shaken, the earth, the heavens, the Lord is the hope of his people. And we can counterbalance the panic with that assurance, that sure hope that we have, that certain hope.

[1:32] And a lot of people are getting shaken, let's face it. And the media is, I think, exaggerating and piling on this panic mode, this woe unto the planet that we're suffering at this moment with the pandemic scare.

And that's not to say it's not real. There is some danger for people that are more at risk in their health, and we don't want to discount necessary safeguards.

But the point I'm making is that current events are such that it's almost like we're living in an apocalyptic time, isn't it? We see the way the media is feeding this mentality, and it's almost like you're living in an apocalyptic movie at the moment.

But so people are getting shaken. What should we do in such a time? The writer of Hebrews tells of a shaking, of a shaking of planet earth, of a time of shaking, and what we are to do.

We see that in Hebrews 12, verse 28. The writer of Hebrews says this, he says, Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

[2:40] For our God is a consuming fire. It says that our kingdom cannot be shaken. We can have grace. We can keep serving. We can keep trusting. We can keep that reverence, that godly fear, that heart for God.

Certainly in such a time as this, we should be the people that are standing rock solid and on shore ground. When all the world's fearful and in a panic mode, in a state of panic, when it seems like the whole world's going crazy, we as the people of God, we can say for sure we cannot be moved.

We cannot be moved. We're in a kingdom that cannot be shaken. In these trying and testing days, what should our response be? I put to you that our response should be a steadfast faith, a steadfast faith.

When there's a whole lot of shaking going on, we have something solid to stand on, to be stationed upon, to be settled upon. We need something sure and steadfast in shaky times.

And the Bible tells us where to look. It tells us about an anchor for the soul. It's talking about the hope that we have as Christians, that sure and certain hope.

[3:51] This is not a kind of hope in that, a hope that we cannot be sure of, but the sense of this hope, the sense of this term here, of God's hope, of the hope that Christians have, it's a glad, it's an assured, it's a certain, it's a confident hope.

It's that blessed hope, that confident expectation, that confident trust in Him, our Lord. Trying times call for such a sure and steadfast hope.

Which hope we have, it says, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. There's that word, steadfast, which we're going to be touching on, some references to steadfast, steadfastness.

We have this hope as an anchor of the soul, it's sure and steadfast, which entereth into the veil, within the veil. Talking about beyond this human dimension, into this, beyond this material, present dimension too, that which is beyond the veil, that which is of eternity.

And when times have come like this, what will we be? Shaky or steadfast? That's the question.

There's two states. We can either be shaky or steadfast.

[5:02] The opposite of steadfast is shaky. To be steadfast speaks, this term, this word steadfast, it's got the intent of, to be steadfast, is to be loyal, is to be committed, is to be devoted, is being solid, being constant.

We see through the word of God, where the people of God suffered, challenge and shaky times, they were steadfast men and women. Such as the three Hebrew men, who were challenged by the king, as the law of the land said, they were to bow down, everybody bowed, but then, they would rather burn than bow.

And we see in Daniel 3, for example, where they respectfully challenged the king, that when he said, you're going to be thrown into this burning, fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter, they said, if it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us, from the burning, fiery furnace, and he will deliver us, oh, out of thy hand, oh king, but if not, be it known unto thee, oh king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image, which thou hast set up.

Our God is able, the God of whom we serve, is able to deliver us, but if not, if it be not his will, to deliver us from the fire, we still will not bow, we will serve him, we will trust him.

And they were sticklers, weren't they? They were sticklers. And we should be sticklers, people of God. We should be steadfast. The early church was noted for this stickiness, of their faith, I'll put to you.

[6:51] And we'll see that in Acts 2, 42. What did they do? Acts 2, the new believers, the new church, the early church, the apostolic church, they continued steadfastly, in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

They stuck, steadfast, devoted. Paul praised the Colossians, for this character trait, of steadfastness. He said this, Colossians 2, 5, for though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

So there's something about their faith, that it was steadfast. Likewise, Colossians 1, 23, he commands them, if you continue, in the faith, grounded and settled, be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, which was preached to every creature, which is under heaven, whereof I, Paul, am made a minister.

He's saying, continue. He's saying, be not moved away, be steadfast. He's saying, continue in the faith.

Again, consider, what is the opposite of steadfastness? It tells us in James 1, verse 8, a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

[8:14] In the context, he talks about people wavering like a wave. This waveringness, this shakiness, this instability, cannot be counted on, not dependable. Have you got steadfast faith?

Where is our faith founded? Our Lord is himself the author and the finisher of our faith. He goes from A to Z, isn't he? Alpha to Omega, he's the author, he starts it and he finishes it.

He begins a good work and he will complete it. He's the author and finisher of your faith. And where is our faith founded? He's not only the author and finisher, he's the object of our faith, isn't he?

Now, I was talking with a fellow yesterday, a Muslim man, and I was talking about Abraham, and Moses, and common ground.

Yet, I was interested when I was talking, by the by, with him, he said, God has no friend. I said, well, the Bible says different to that. It says Abraham was God's friend.

[9:15] Amen? And of Abraham, it says, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. He didn't stagger. He showed a faith that was resolute, that was strong,

that was steadfast.

He did not waver in the face of adversity. Even when it seemed an impossible promise from God, he still believed. steadfastness.

Are we faltering in the gospel race? You know, we can get those times, can't we? I can remember as a young lad doing cross-country running, and you had to just break through the pain barrier, didn't you?

You had to go beyond, when you get those pains, you know, in your chest, you get that second breath, the second wind, whatever they call it. Are we going to faint when we could sort of quit halfway in that gospel race?

Are we going to press harder, break through? It says in Proverbs 24.10, if thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small. Friends, in such a time as this, when the world's going into panic stations, in the day of adversity, we should not faint.

[10:29] We should be steadfast. We should be steadfast. We must keep on. Let us not be weary in well-doing, says Paul, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

It's interesting, this word faint. And when we're feeling weak and weary, when we're feeling fearful, we should break through the pain barrier, break through the fear barrier.

I know I was about to do some witnessing this last week, in a public setting. And travelling there, I was feeling really fearful.

You get that? We can naturally have a natural fear, can't we? When you might have an occasion to witness to someone and God's put it on your heart to talk to them, yet there's that natural trepidation, isn't there?

That would be easier just not to do it. We've got to just hang on to God's strength, don't we? And don't be dissuaded from sharing of faith.

[11:36] Let us not be weary in well-doing. We can get times when we can get disappointed. You know, we can get disappointed in people, we can get disappointed in circumstances, we can get discouraged in our own hearts and feel despondent and despairing.

Let us not be weary in well-doing. We shall reap if we faint not. Keep on planting good seeds into your life, into your Christian walk with Him.

Keep on watering those seeds and harvest will surely come. God promises that. And we can all feel humanly weak in our faith at times. Our faith can wax and wane to a degree.

We can have times where we're on top of the mountain and at other times in the depths of the valley. But we must not faint. We must re-fire. We must trust our Lord.

The Bible talks about this malady of fainting. Of fainting. It's an interesting study with your concordance perhaps to have a look at faint, fainting. Isaiah 40 is another reference where we're familiar, no doubt, he gives power to the faint.

[12:42] Amen? Isn't that a blessing? Even when you're feeling faint, he gives you power. And to them that have no might, he increases strength, it says. Even the youth shall faint and be weary and the young man shall utterly fail, fall rather.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.

Faint not nor fear. Amen? Rather do what? Wait. Wait upon the Lord. Sometimes, isn't it hard waiting?

Sometimes, you know, have those moments when you've got to go somewhere or you're on the phone 30 minutes later. Wait on the Lord. Wait on him.

Amen? Let's not be rushing ahead of God. Sometimes we just have to wait. Oh, I want to serve him. Well, maybe just wait until that open door. Wait on the Lord.

[13:45] How do we get steadfast? We face some things and we overcome. And we wait upon the Lord. Then we shall renew our strength. He gives power to the faint. So, brother, sister, if you're feeling faint, he promises power to you.

How do we get steadfast? There's a big question. Now, we face some things and we overcome. That's how we get steadfast. How do athletes get strong? They punish themselves to the nth

degree, don't they?

An athlete. And it's the same with Christians that sometimes we have to go through suffering. Think of the reality of Christian persecution.

I know I received a letter this week of people who have been actually tortured. And it's a gripping reality that some of our brothers and sisters around the world face.

They're actually tortured because they believe for their faith. And the reality of Christian persecution, it's real. And it's present day.

[14:52] This is not, you know, Fox's Book of Martyrs hundreds and hundreds of years ago, which is a great read. This is even in the present time. And I've seen videos of real sufferings of people actually being killed for their faith.

These things are out there. It's gripping. It's gruesome. It's graphic. Going even unto death with their faith. Friends, we've seen nothing yet. You think the coronavirus is something to worry about. I mean, honestly, a flu. Faith is being put to the test in other nations and worlds around us. We're not immune to facing such testing. We're living in a secular world just like Daniel and the three Hebrew men.

In Babylon of his time, alike to Babylon, we're living in a godless philosophy, aren't we? This world's full of godless philosophies and culture. Godless thinking dominates what people think.

The media ban this blame. And Christianity is offensive. Oh, you're actually a Bible believer? You know, you're anathema to the world today.

[16:09] And this world has turned its back on God. And Christianity, it's a foreign concept. It's offensive. And so, there's great pressure on we that are believers to conform, to succumb to this pressure.

Someone has defined steadfastness as faithfulness regardless of circumstances. Brothers and sisters, what if Christianity was more tangibly opposed by the government of our land?

What if we that believe the Bible and what it says are told we can't say that anymore? We cannot witness anymore.

Who knows, in some countries they're closing churches because of this current scare. What are we to do in such a time, brothers and sisters, in times like this?

Do we conform? Do we bow? Or do we stand? Like the three Hebrew children. And God honoured their faith.

[17:17] Let us be unshakable. Steadfastness is faithfulness regardless of circumstances. And Paul says we faint not. We faint not. There's a lot of fainting.

A lot of brothers and sisters or so-called brothers and sisters are fainting. We faint not, it says.

Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

It says, Paul writes, for our light affliction. And in the context he's talking about being beaten and almost to the end of his life, stoned to death, almost stoned to death.

He says, he calls that light affliction. He says that is but for a moment. Worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. You might say, preacher, look, okay, you're talking to me this morning, I know I've not been steadfast.

[18:25] Rather, I know I've been the opposite, I've been unfaithful, I've been wavering, maybe there's, maybe it's no hope for me, you know, you're talking to somebody else.

But today that can change. You can say today is that turning point for me, I want to be amongst the steadfast, I want to be steadfast, I want God helping me, I want to faint not, but to find his power, I want to wait on the Lord, I want to renew my strength, I want to be amongst those who are steadfast, in a world where everything is shaken and people are falling to pieces, I can determine, you can determine, I am going to be a steadfast Christian, how can we get steadfast?

Suffering produces steadfastness, Paul says this light affliction is just for a moment, it's working for us, an eternal weight of glory, we are called to endure, to endure, and there's a blessing there, James says blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he has tried he shall receive a crown of life which the Lord has promised to them that love him.

Friends, I'm really scattering lots of Bible verses here and they come from different settings and different audiences, different applications, but the theme is constant here this morning, steadfast, be ye steadfast.

And for the three Hebrew children, for the people at James and Peter and Paul were talking to, which means us, surely, we're called to steadfastness.

[20:15] And we're told that we'll have grace, we'll be given grace to overcome. calm. We don't know what's around the corner.

We're seeing, and I'm not meaning to scare monger any more than the media already is doing, but we can think, what if it's going to ratchet up? What if this little flu bug is just the beginning?

Who knows? I'm not prophesying that this is the start of anything such, but we can all anticipate that this is what it will be like, and ever more so, in the times of our Lord's approaching, that we can see the world's getting scared about a flu bug, let's be honest.

what next? Isn't it? Is that a precursor to something more where the powers that govern nations can clamp down, drag people off of trains like they're doing in China, and masked men can take people off the streets and drag them into vehicles to take them to who knows where, and when they die, they don't even have a funeral.

This is happening, and it's hard to understand, isn't it? I've heard it said that, like for example, in North Korea, you get coronavirus, and they just deal with you with a gun.

[21:52] That's how they deal with it there. Honestly, you'd think this is some kind of way out there kind of movie theme, isn't it?

This surely can't be happening, but it is happening. I'm just putting it out there to you that friends, testing times surely will come. We could be just at the beginning of such a time, or surely you could conceive it of being of such a time of storm.

The question is, are you ready? Are you ready? You are the brave ones. You've actually come into a public gathering such as this. You're the brave ones that you've come here this morning in a time when they're shutting down football games and who knows what.

Would it be good if they closed the pubs? That would be a good thing, wouldn't it? They closed the night clubs, wouldn't that be a good thing? And such things as that, you know, yeah, amen, let's do that.

But when they're shutting down churches, honestly, are we ready for the storm? How do we prepare? we will not falter and we will not falter or slacken?

[22:59] We must not. How can we hold steady? What will see us through the time of crisis? Who knows what the next dictates will be from government as to whether we can even assemble?

What are we going to do through such a time of crisis when everything is shaken and when everyone around us is getting shaken? Friends, we have a hope, don't we? I have set the Lord always before me because he is at my right hand.

I shall not be moved. You know like the song goes, we shall not, we shall not be moved. Amen? Why? Because the Lord is with us, isn't he? We shall not be moved.

The world can be shaken but I shall not be moved. Why? Because the Lord is with me. He's always before me, it says. He is at my right hand. How can we get steadfast?

It's about a decision. I will obey God. I will not bow to the false gods.

[24:03] I will stand for Christ. I will do what his word tells me. That can be our decision. Amen? We see in Titus 3, Luke 18, it says men ought always to pray and not to faint.

When everyone around us is fainting, what ought we to do always? Pray. We ought always to pray. There's another verse, here it is, Titus 3, verse 8, we should do what his word tells us.

Paul says this, this I've affirmed constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

Paul's saying be careful to maintain. In other words, keep on keeping on. Keep on keeping on. Keep on keeping on doing good works.

Do good. Do the good. Persevere. Be righteous. Be steadfast. What are those good works? Pray. Men are always to pray, not to faint. And the context there of Luke 18, our Lord is talking of the story of the judge and of the widow, seeking justice.

[25:15] And she kept on persisting. She kept on persisting and beseeching the judge for justice until he relented.

And he said in Luke 18, it talks about the judge called her actions continual. And the Lord says we should continue. We ought to always to pray.

We should continue to pray. That's a good work, isn't it, to pray. Paul had this message as we read in Acts 13 verse 43.

It says Paul and Barnabas persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. That's a good work we should continue in, isn't it, the grace of God? Continue in the grace of God.

In Acts 14, the message was continue in the faith. It says the exhortation was to continue in the faith.

[26:17] Though we through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Friends, testing times are surely coming. And we don't resort to panic stations, we resort to prayer stations.

Amen, that's what we should do. I get the feeling, as I say, the coronavirus, maybe it's a precursor, and I'm not meaning to make more of it than what it is either. But surely there's a shaking happening and a shaking about to happen.

And it says in Acts 1 14, they went to prayer. They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. They continued in prayer. Praying is a good thing to continue in.

In Acts 2, we see that they continued daily with one accord in the temple. Breaking bread from house to house, they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. They continued daily in fellowship.

Another thing to continue in is let brotherly love continue. Let's love one another. We don't have to necessarily see eye to eye, but we can let brotherly love continue.

[27:25] I have a lot of trouble with Andrew Craig in this church. He's probably the worst person I have to deal with is myself. Bear with me.

Before, bear with me. Let brotherly love continue. Amen? It's sometimes hard to put that into action, isn't it? Into practice.

Let brotherly love continue. That's a good thing to continue in. Here's another good thing as Paul exhorts Timothy. Take heed unto thyself and unto thy doctrine. Continue in them.

Look after yourself. Look after your doctrine. The teaching. Make sure you're right. In doing this, you shall save yourself and them that hear you. He says be steadfast.

Be steadfast. Continue. Continue in grace. Continue in faith. Continue in brotherly love. Continue in the doctrine. Some things you should continue in.

[28:25] Maintain good works. Praying always. Be steadfast. Steadfast. What does it look like to be steadfast?

Do your duty. You might say look, there's not much I can do. Do what you can do. Like the servants in our Lord's parable.

We're just unprofitable servants. We've just done that which was our duty to do. Just do that. Do your duty. Study the Bible. Be a witness. Fellowship.

Pray. Pray. Diligently follow every good work. Be led by the Spirit. Continue. Paul tells Timothy, continue thou in the things which thou hast learnt and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learnt them.

Continue in the Scriptures. Context, of course, is study the Word of God. Trust His Word. Continue in it.

[29:30] The Bible commands us to have a steadfast heart. They have purpose of heart. Brothers and sisters, in a world that is being shaken, you have purpose of heart.

Paul talks about that as how we are meant to gear with a purpose of heart. How do we get a steadfast heart? It has to be changed, doesn't it?

And made so. The Bible commends a heart steadfast. It says, I believe it was David said, my heart is fixed, O God. My heart is fixed. I will sing and give praise.

Our praise doesn't depend upon our feelings. You know, we might come to church and praising might be hard because of what's happening for us. But when our heart is fixed, we will sing and give praise.

My heart is fixed. It's not about my feelings. My heart is fixed. our feelings will lead us to neglect. You know, I'm being honest with you here.

[30:34] Sometimes it's easier to neglect, isn't it? The Bible talks about purpose of heart. It talks about steadfastness of heart, having a fixed heart.

Barnabas exhorted the believers in Acts 11 that with purpose of heart, they would cleave unto the Lord. He exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they might cleave unto the Lord.

That's this simple message today. You. Steadfastness. What is that? It's a fixed, firm purpose of heart. It's that commitment unto him, to cleave unto him.

You know, this word cleave, of course cleave can mean to cut in two to separate, but in the sense here it's actually to join. It's the sense of a cleaving. It's a cleaving. It's a clinging.

It's a laying hold. It's a cleaving unto God. God. How can we illustrate that?

[31:45] I think of like a little baby that cleaves, clings, doesn't it? Couldn't we be like a little baby that clings unto God, cleaves unto God wholeheartedly, promptly, perseveringly.

Our Lord demonstrates steadfastness. It says of our Lord that he set his face steadfastly unto Jerusalem. Luke 9, 51.

When the time was come he should be received up. He set his face, it says, steadfastly. Where was he going? To the cross.

Amen. Let's not shy away from the cross, from the pathway of the cross. Steadfastness. Our Lord was steadfastly determined, determinedly setting his face like a flint.

He's setting his face towards the cross to Jerusalem to take the cross, to bear the cross, to be nailed upon the cross for you. And we should have a steadfastness that is a dedicated resolve, an unshakable purpose of heart.

[33:04] I put to you that faith is this cleaving as they put it there. Acts 11 as Barnabas says, cleave unto the Lord.

It's a stickiness. I put to you this faith that we have is not like a post-it note kind of stickiness. Amen. this faith that he enlivens within us, this faith that we have is a super glue faith, isn't it?

Now, we should cleave unto the Lord. Super glue on a faith. it's been said that the word faith has this sense of adhere to, adhere to, you know.

Stuck. Adhere to, cleave to, trust in, rely on, depend on. I'd like to, I could have brought like a magnet to kind of demonstrate, this, that, oh, just can't get it off.

Barnabas says, cleave unto the Lord. Be joined unto him. And as I say, it's not a kind of post-it note, you just stick it on, peel it off. But this, it's not some glue that can become unattached, it's super glue.

[34:29] You know, how they used to warn us years ago with super glue, you had it on your hands, you know, oops. There's this bond, doesn't it? You just, oh, fingers get stuck together and, yeah, that kind of bond.

I wonder if it's not like a kind of, I'm being a bit descriptive here, but I wonder if it's not like an epoxy glue. And we used to get the old Aral diet and you had the two compounds, do you mix them together?

And then there's this reaction, this combination that takes place. And, you know, the Bible talks about how the word is mixed with faith.

Actually, I just sort of make that, it makes that kind of connection with me, that the word was preached and for some it was not mixed with faith. For others, the word was mixed with faith.

You know, that sense of the word, God's word, gets mixed with faith. Now, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. We believe it, we receive it, we stick with him.

[35:33] Amen? That's faith. That's kind of how I kind of like to illustrate it. Steadfastness. It's like we're stuck on Jesus and the Lord Jesus is stuck to us.

steadfastness. Think of these things, brothers and sisters. I know it's a very straightforward, basic challenge and basic exhortation here today.

In shaky times, what should we be? Steadfast. Steadfast. Be courageous. Be bold. Be decided. Be willing that you will suffer for Christ.

Be single-minded. Stand for the old paths. Let's not linger with the lukewarm or look back at Sodom and Gomorrah.

Let's not look back. That's not steadfastness, is it? The Lord says, a man having put his hands to the plough and looking back is not fit for the kingdom of God.

[36:41] So let's not look back. Let's look unto Jesus. Let's have our eyes fixed. It's got that sense of, when we look unto Jesus, it's got that our eyes are fixed upon him, that our gaze is not distracted from him, that our eyes are stuck upon him, looking unto Jesus.

And so, as Bible believers, and you might get mocked for this, that we should be sticklers. Be a stickler. Is it Bible? We want to be a stickler for the book, don't we?

Is it Bible? Let's be a stickler. Let's be a sticker, as it were, that we will cleave unto God. Cleave unto God. Enoch walked with God, Genesis 5, 24.

He was steadfast. He was walking lockstep with God. Left, right, left, right. He walked with God. He was steadfast. Then he just got lifted off.

Wouldn't that be good? Just walk with God such that if God goes up, we go up. Enoch was steadfast. And friends, I just love this scripture really.

[37:55] It's one of my favourite scriptures. Therefore, my beloved brethren, 1 Corinthians 15, 58, be ye therefore, it says, steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as you know that, your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Brother, sister, who knows what's next? What is the media going to tell us next week? What's the government going to tell us next week? You know, we're all going to be locked down and confined to quarantine.

Be steadfast. Be firm. Be steadfast, brother. Be steadfast, sister. In what? The work of the Lord. The call is to us.

Our call is to steadfast faith. Continue in the faith. And this steadfast is no matter what. It says in 1 Peter 5, again of steadfastness, Peter challenges here about the devil, the roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour.

Who resists steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren. That are in the world. Brother, sister, don't become lunch for this lion.

[39:11] Keep your eyes peeled, be vigilant, be sober, hold your ground, do not be moved, hold fast. And we need to cleave unto this book. There's a story about a man in a battle, Eliezer, who it says his hand was weary and his hand clave unto the sword.

It's such that he held the sword so hard in this battle that his hand was frozen onto the sword. And of course we know the Bible is the sword, isn't it? The sword of the spirit. Friends, we should cleave unto this book.

It says Eliezer, his hand clave unto the sword such that he could not let go. And let's face it, let's be honest this morning, this is a no commitment world.

Nobody cleaves anymore. Hardly. I see some people it seems they've got a new partner every few months. The Bible says cleave.

That's what it says, cleave. Cleave unto your wife. This word, there's a word people use for those who come to church, adherence. In other words, we should be sticking, shouldn't we, to adhere.

[40:23] We should be adherence. Some people are not sticking to fellowship. They're just post-it notes. Aren't they? They're not adhering. No adherence.

No commitment. We need steadfastness, don't we? In a world where everyone's not cleaving, we should cleave unto God. Cleave unto him. Cleave unto his word.

Friends, there's so many things we could say, hold fast that which is good. It says, hold fast the form of sound words. Paul tells Timothy, hold fast this, hold it fast.

This word, this word of God. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. When everyone's wavering, we should be holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering.

And, friends, we call to a holy bond of charity. Charity, the bond of perfectness. Stick together. Amen? Cleave unto the Lord and stick together as well.

[41:25] Like-minded, godly people, godly churches, let's stick together in this fight. Stay in the battle. Fight on. Press on. May the word be mixed with faith.

You want that super glue faith? Get the word mixed with it. Get the faith mixed with the word. Amen? And let that super glue of your faith lay hold on eternal life.

Don't give up. And as we referred before, be steadfast. Be unmovable. Be always abounding. Your faithful service will be rewarded.

You might say, preacher, I don't see much for all this faithfulness that I'm giving to God. It's not reward time yet. Amen? Just hang in there.

Just a few more weary days in there. Amen? We shall be with the Lord. And our labour is not in vain in the Lord. In the Lord it's not in vain. Do it unto him.

[42:24] You may not see much to claim results here and now, but surely then, if your labour is in the Lord, it is not in vain. Amen?

Let's pray. Lord, we bless you for your word. We want to lay hold on eternal life. We want to lay our hands on your word, lay hold of these words of God.

Lay them up in our hearts, Lord. Let us be a people standing steady, rock solid, not moved, not wavering. Lord, help us to be a people that will continue in the grace of God, that will continue in your faith, that will continue in your word.

Lord, that we can lean on your strength, knowing that you give power to the faint. Lord, help us to realise our faintness, our lack, our weakness, and your strength.

Lord, help us to be people that show a resolute hope and a sure and glad joy in Christ, in a world where many are despairing.

[43:26] It's all and more reason that we should be standing for you. Lord, help us to be such a people. We pray, Lord, if there's any here present that they've yet to trust you as saviour and Lord for the first time, Lord, that they might know what it is, to know your grace, to know that in Christ you gave your life's blood, shed on that rugged cross, such as sinners, such as we can know your saving.

Lord, help us to put our trust entirely and squarely in you. Help us, Lord, to know in a world that is shaken that we have an assurance that cannot be moved.

Lord, help us to have a faith that is assuredly stuck in that faith that cannot be moved, that faith that is grounded and settled and cannot be moved.

Lord, we praise you. We pray for anyone here present hearing this, Lord, that you might just stir our hearts, Lord, to a greater steadfastness that you would be glorified.

And we know, Lord, that though we be weary at times, Lord, we'll continue in well-doing, that we know your promise that we shall reap if we faint not.

[44:49] And, Lord, help us to have that renewing of strength. Pray if there's any here present, that going through times of trouble uncertainty. Lord, that you'd settle their hearts and give them your comfort and strength.

In Jesus' precious name, Amen. Amen. Thank you.