

# Be ye Stedfast

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[0:00] 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 58, it says, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye 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.

The work of the Lord. Paul writes about the work of the Lord, of the service of our God. And the context here is of the victory that the Christian has, the Christian enjoys the victory that is made available because of Christ's death and resurrection.

It's got that context of his dying for us, of his rising for us, and of the glorification that is to come for us who love him, of his people.

And friends, it writes here of the service of the Lord, something that we all can play a part in. And the context there is of that future hope that motivates us for our present faithfulness.

And Paul says, Therefore, my beloved brethren, we're loved by God, we're his beloved, he cherishes us. Brethren, he says, be ye, number one, steadfast.

[1:30] Be ye steadfast. Stand firm. Stand strong. Be grounded. Hold your ground. This is an urging to us today.

When all around is sinking sand, when there's so much shifting sands, that we can hold our ground. We can stand firm. We can be steadfast.

And this is not a steadfastness that means like a stick in the mud kind of steadfastness. It's the steadfastness that you would see of the ploughman. As he has that plough and he charts that course as he takes that plough with steady hand and takes it forward.

The steadfastness here is of that steady movement forward. The steadfastness that our Lord is exhorting us to in the work of the Lord.

That steadfastness that he wants us all to have in his kingdom's work. It's like a stone cutter hammering away at a rock a hundred times without seeing so much as a crack showing through.

[2:42] Yet with that hundred and the first blow of the hammer and of the chisel, the rock splits in two.

But it was that steadfastness of those hundred blows before that hundred and the first one broke the rock. That's the picture of the steadfastness that we're exhorted to as God's people.

It was not that one blow that did it, but of all that had gone before. Brethren, be ye steadfast. Be ye steadfast. It's got the sense of being unswerving, of being unwavering.

It's the same word we see in Colossians 1 verse 23, where it talks about continuing in the faith, grounded and settled. The word settled is the same as steadfast.

We read here. Be ye settled. Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel. Grounded. Settled. Not moved away. Stedfast.

[3:44] We call to that steadfastness in the faith. When all around is blown about with all kinds of winds of doctrine, with all kinds of new fan, new age ideas invading the church scene.

We call to be steadfast. Stedfast. As Paul urges them in Colossians 1 verse 23, continue in the faith. The faith. That same faith that Jude says we should contend earnestly for, the faith.

Once revealed unto the saints. There's not a new faith, or a new move, or a new agenda with God. There is the faith.

The faith of the word of God that we must stand fast on. Stedfast. Stedfast. Stedfast. It's got the sense of setting that direction of life in the faith.

Of being firmly established. There was an older lady one day who was talking to a young man. And the young man had grown weary in the fight. He'd had some battles to go through as a younger Christian.

[4:49] And he was feeling like giving up. He was feeling like he ought to give up the struggle. He said, I'm feeling beaten every time. I feel like

I must give up. And this older lady said to the young man, she said, did you ever notice?

As she looked into his troubled face. Did you ever notice that when the Lord told the discouraged fishermen to cast their nets again. It was right in the same place.

That same old spot where they had been fishing all night. And had caught nothing. Be ye steadfast. Steadfast.

Don't be deterred. Don't be discouraged. Be obedient to the Lord as he says. So cast your nets again.

Be ye steadfast. In the old war in Great Britain. In the war years, the residents were sent. A circular. That told them what to do.

[5:50] In the case of invasion. And the two principal slogans were, stand firm and carry on. Stand firm and carry on.

The devil's blitzkrieg, as it were, is pushing forward aggressively today. The enemy of our souls. So, likewise, we should stand firm.

Stand firm. Holding fast. The faithful word. And we should carry on. Holding forth. The word of life. It's interesting. Holding fast.

The faithful word. Titus 1 verse 9. And holding forth. The word of life. Philippians 2 verse 16.

Holding it fast. And holding it forth.

We stand with the word of God. It's interesting. Years ago, I know, as a younger boy, I used to collect coins and notes. And some fellow showed me invasion money.

[6:47] Invasion money. The Japanese had actually printed notes that they were going to use when the Japanese had invaded Australia.

So they had notes ready to use for the currency that had all the Japanese emperor on and all the insignia. And it was specifically printed to be used in Australia.

The Japanese were so confident that they could invade us and take over. And friends, there's an invasion going on today. There's an invasion going on today.

And we should be steadfast. Steadfast. Withstand in the evil day. And having done all to stand. To stand. Ephesians 6 verse 13. So, number one.

Beloved. Brethren. Be ye steadfast. Secondly. Be ye unmovable. Unmovable. Do not be moved. Do not be shaken. Many will be moved.

[7:42] By the forces against them. Many will be moved. By the circumstances that they find themselves in. Many will be moved. By the opposition to the gospel. We see that it's endemic in the culture of our nation.

The world is shifting. The world view is shifting. Ever more godless. Ever more against the word of God.

Ever more against the truth. And there's much opposition. As we see, we that love the Lord as we are earnest and outright Christians. That there will be opposition to the message that we claim, that we proclaim.

But be ye unmovable. Be ye unmovable. Be ye unmovable. Be ye unmovable. It's been said that postage stamps are getting more expensive these days. But at least they have one attribute that most of us could emulate.

They stick to one thing until they get there. They stick to one thing until they get there. Be ye unmovable. Brethren, don't be shifted around and swayed about with whatever takes your fancy.

[8:51] But be ye unmovable. Stand for something and be unmoved. Be faithful. It cost to be faithful. It cost Abraham as he took the son of his love to the mountaintop.

It cost Esther the risk of her life as he went in to the presence of the king. Against the custom of the time.

It cost Daniel as he was cast into that den of lions for his faithfulness in prayer. It cost Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as they were put in that fiery furnace.

It cost Stephen a death by stoning. It cost Peter a martyr's death. It cost Paul his life. Faithfulness will cost something. Does it cost you anything to be faithful to your lord and king?

Be unmoved. Be unmovable by what is going on around you. In Acts 20 verse 22 to 24. Paul tells of his endeavours in the gospel.

[10:04] Of his labours more abundant. He says in Acts 20 verse 22. And now behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem.

Not knowing the things that shall befall me there. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city. Saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

But none of these things move me. Neither count I myself my life dear unto myself. So that I might finish my course with joy.

And the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus. To testify the gospel of the grace of God. None of these things move me. What of you?

What of you in the circumstances of life? Are things moving you from that steadfastness? Are things moving you from that solid faith? Be not moved.

[11:02] Be ye steadfast. Be unmovable. Be ye always abounding. Thirdly. Be ye always abounding. Abounding in the work of the Lord.

Be always abounding. Always. Give of your best to the Master. Be exceeding. God wants us to be an abounding people. There's many verses that speak of abundance, of abounding.

For example 1 Thessalonians 3 verse 12 it says. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love. One toward another.

And toward all men. Even as we do toward you. Increase and abound in your love. God wants us to be a loving people.

Who will love the saints. Who will love the sinners. Philippians 4 verse 17 it says. Paul writes again. I desire fruits that may abound to your account.

[12:01] The context was of giving. Of fruits that may abound. God wants us to be fruitful. To be abounding in that fruit. We talked of earlier today.

Of the fruit of the Spirit. He wants us to abound. In that fruitfulness of our Christian walk. In Colossians 2 verses 6 to 7. Paul writes again.

He says. As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord. So walk ye in him. Rooted and built up in him. And established in the faith.

As ye have been taught. Abounding therein. With thanksgiving. The sense of abounding in the faith. Abounding in the faith. And abounding in the faith.

With thanksgiving. Abounding in the faith of the word of God. Abounding in your faith in Christ. Abounding in biblical faith. Abounding and with thanksgiving.

[12:56] Be always abounding it says. There's a consistency sought from us here. Always abounding. And 2 Corinthians 9 verse 8. I touched on it again this morning.

And God is able to make all grace abound. Toward you that ye always. Having all sufficiency in all things. May abound unto every good work.

God wants you to abound. In your life as a Christian. That you will abound. Now we're not talking about. In necessarily how. The latest Rolex watch. And Pierre Cardin suits.

And so on. Or a Rolls Royce to drive around in. But that you will abound. In what matters. In what matters. In spiritual things. Abounding in your love. Abounding in that fruit.

Abounding in that faith. Abounding with thanksgiving. Abounding to every good work. Abounding even in. The little things of your life. God wants you to be abounding.

[13:54] In him. A preacher. F.B. Mayer said. Don't waste your time waiting. And looking for large opportunities. Which may never come. But faithfully handle.

The little things. That are always claiming. Your attention. You know. Some of us can. Be looking for. Something spectacular. To do for God. But be faithful.

In the little things. The little things. Don't waste your time. Looking for large opportunities. Which may never come. But faithfully handle. The little things.

Abounding in the little things. Of the Christian life. Abounding in those little steps. Those little childlike steps. Of faith. Of faithfulness. Abounding.

Abounding. Always abounding. Will he be one of those. Always abounding ones. The always abounding ones. They are the faithful few. And you can join their number tonight.

[14:52] You can join their number today. If you haven't already. Here's a little poem. About the faithful few. The faithful few. It's kind of. Very

much tongue in cheek. But you can see truth.

In this little poem. The faithful few. The faithful few. In every church. In every clime. When there's some work.

To do. In every church. In every church. In every church. It very likely will be done. By just. The faithful few. While many folks. Will help to sing. And some of them.

Will talk. When it comes to. Doing things. A lot of them. Will walk. We can't do this. And we can't do that. Excuse us please.

This time. We'd be so glad. To help you out. But it's not. In our line. So when the leader. Casts about. To find someone.

[15:46] Who'll do. Although he's done it off before. He asks the. Faithful few. Of course they're. Very busy too. And always hard. At work.

But well he knows. They'll not refuse. Nor any duty. Shirk. They never stop. To make excuse. But promptly try. To do. The very.

Very best. They can. To smooth. The way. For you. God bless. I pray. The faithful few. And may their try. Increase.

They must be very precious too. The blessed. Prince. Of peace. The faithful few. That can be. You. Brother. That can be. You sister.

Faithful. Faithful in those little things. Of the Christian walk. And life. So we see. Brethren. Beloved. The steadfast. Unmovable.

[16:39] Always. Abounding. In. The work. Of the. Lord. For as much as you know that. Your labour. Is not in vain. In. The Lord. Your labour.

Is not in vain. In the Lord. Just to. Consider this aspect now. And. I suppose. We can all consider. What am I doing. With my Christian life.

With my Christian walk. And. We can get discouraged. We can get weary. We can flag. Sometimes. When.

I know there's many. Been giving out tracts. When they not see much response for that. For example. It's just one thing. That we can do. And we can easily get. Deterred.

When we see no. Immediate response. But the word of God says. Your labour. Is not. In vain. In. The Lord.

[17:34] It's not in vain. So long as. It's in. The Lord. If it's in his service. That you serve. It's worthwhile. Whatever it is.

Whatever it is. Even though it might be. Something. That seems humble. And insignificant. Something you may not get much recognition. Or acknowledgement for.

You may not get. A pat on the back. But yet. Your labour. Is not in vain. In the Lord. You know. We. We can think that sometimes. The. The time that we take.

For people. I know. For myself. A lot of time. Sending letters. And yet. Very little response. And yet. It's worth the effort. For the one or two. Who can.

Respond. And that's an encouragement to me. And yet. I'm not doing it. With. With that motive. But it is something. That is not in vain. Because it's in.

[18:28] The Lord. It's for him. It's something that's worthwhile. Even though it seems. Such a laborious thing. At times. Some of the things that we can do. So long that is in his service.

And friends. That could be for you too. As Christians. Walking the walk. And talking the talk. Down at your workplace. Down at the home place. Wherever you go about.

Your day by day. Do that which is in the Lord. Do it for him. Do it unto him. And this word here. Labor. This word here. Labor. It means an intense effort.

There's a very strong. Aspect to this word. That underlies the word. Labor here. In our text. The word labor. In that original.

Greek word. It's got the sense. Of an intense toil. Of an arduous. Effort. Of a laboring. Even to the point. Of exhaustion. This is the sense of it.

[19:24] And Paul used it. When he said. Labor's more abundant. It speaks of. A laboring. To a point. Of extreme. Fatigue. And it is used.

Of our Lord Jesus. At John 4. When he came to the well. When he came to the well. And the lady was there. Of whom he asked for a drink. John 4. Verses 5 and 6. It says.

Of our Lord Jesus. Being wearied. Being wearied. From his journey. Now imagine going. In that desert place. In that thirsty land.

Going some long trek. And then coming to. The place of the well. This is the picture. Of that laboring. Of that wearying. Toil. And effort.

That's what our Lord himself. Felt at that point in time. It's a labor that involves. Sweat. And fatigue. A weariness. That comes. As we strain. All of our powers.

[20:18] To the utmost. Now sometimes. After I've preached. I go home. And collapse. In a heap. There's that sense of it. That you want to pour your heart.

And soul into it. Not hold back. Not hold back. Not that I'm claiming any praise for that. But just that picture. Of how we want to give our best. To the master. That is what we want to do.

Where we'll exhaust ourselves. Where we will work to that. Extreme. End. Of ourselves. Because our labor. Our labor. Is not in vain.

In the Lord. And we can have that same heart. That same zeal. That same devotion. That it's a straining of all our powers. To the utmost. Most. Now.

Just. This last week. I was in a group of people. And the question was asked. What do you do to relax? What do you do to relax? And there's different people saying different things. And what I said was.

[21:13] Well I like on a Saturday and Sunday. To have a siesta. I like to have a rest. And sometimes I get sermon inspiration when I do that. But. You know.

And then. One of the people. Well a number of the people actually said. To help them relax. They go. For a big long walk. They just exercise like mad. And just burn off all the kilojoules.

That's what they do. To relax. And. And the person that was in this kind of training session. Was saying that's actually a very good thing to do. To relax. Is to go for a walk. So. Next time I feel like having a siesta.

Julie will get me to go walk the dog with her I think. But. You know. It's something that does you good. To get out and burn off those. That energy. To get the endorphins working. Or whatever. Whatever the technical term is.

That something happens when you exercise. It does you good. And it helps you relax. And. It prompts me to think of this quote here. From an old time preacher J.C. Ryle. Ryle said this.

[22:10] He said. Activity in doing good. Is one recipe for being cheerful Christians. Activity in doing good. Is one recipe for being cheerful Christians.

It's like exercise to the body. And it keeps the soul in health. It keeps the soul in health. Activity. For the cheerful Christian. Friends.

If you want to be a cheerful Christian. Be active. Be active. Go and burn off some of that energy. For the kingdom of God. Our labour.

Is not in vain. In the Lord. Each of us has a part to play. Every one of us. Has a part to play. It's not just for the preacher. Or those that might be evident.

Evident. It's for every Christian. Every one of you. Beloved. Brethren. Be ye. All of you. Steadfast. We've all got a part to play.

[23:04] In the work of the Lord. No servant of God. Is too young. Too poor. Too ungifted. Too obscure. To be a fellow labourer.

With him. There was a famous orchestra. And this conductor. Was rehearsing. With this orchestra one day. And there were hundreds of voices there.

There was the thunder of the organ. There was the roll of the drums. And all of the various instruments. In this huge orchestra. And it meant this very noisy sound.

Of all of these instruments at work. The piccolo player. Said to himself. In all of this deep. My little instrument doesn't matter. So he ceased to play.

Suddenly the great conductor. Threw up his arms. And all was still. Where is the piccolo? Piccolo? He cried. Where is the piccolo?

[24:03] It's like that for you brother. It's like that for you sister. If you're in that great orchestra. That is the church. That is that symphony. That we make. That we play together. Let your voice be heard.

Make your gift. Used of God. Don't hold back. God looks for all of us. To play our various parts. It's like when he saw Abel.

Abel. He could have said. What is in thine hand Abel? And Abel might have said. Nothing God. But just a little lamb. But the smoke of that sacrifice.

Has been a sweet savor. For a thousands of years. Or when he saw Moses. God might have asked him. What have you got there Moses? And Moses could have said.

Nothing but a rod. Oh God. But that rod. Swallowed up. The surface. Of the evil ones. Oh what if. God had looked down at Dorcas there.

[25:00] And she was making those garments. And asked her. What have you got Dorcas there? And she said. It's just a needle. Lord. But those garments. That Dorcas made.

Have been a heavenly pattern. For holy women. Ever since. Use what you have. For the glory of God. Use who you are. Let God use you.

For his glory. Whose work is it? It is the Lord's work. And so when people might. Acknowledge you. Or praise something.

Or give. Or intend to give us. Some kind of glory. For doing the work of the Lord. We need to be quick. To remember that it is. His work. His honour.

His glory. It's not of us. Not of our vain glory. But it is of his glory. It is not in vain. If it is in him. In the Lord.

[25:55] And so we work. By his enabling. By his empowering. By his equipping. The enabling of his spirit. And the work of the Lord. Is to be distinguished from.

The work for the Lord. You know we can. Work for the Lord. And not work. Of the Lord. The Lord's work.

Is that which he gives us to do. That which he puts in our hand. That which he puts in our path. Much can be done. For him. But. For which we imagine.

To be. Service rendered. To him. But if it is not conformed. To his will. It is not really. His work. I'm quoting a man. Vine. Here. A famous.

Expositor. I'll say it again. Much may be done. For him. Which we imagine. To be rendered. Service to him. But which is not conformed. To his will.

[26:51] And so. It is not really. His work. Amen. Now we can. Labor in our own. Vain effort. In our own. Vain effort. And attempts. And miss the boat.

But if it is a work. In the Lord. In the Lord. That it will last. And so friends. Nothing. Nothing. That you ever do. In the Lord's service. Is worthless.

Or fruitless. It's never wasted. It's never. To no purpose. Your labour. Is not in vain. If. If. It is in. The Lord.

If it's done. In that sphere. Of his authority. Of his control. So make sure. Friends today. Make sure. As you consider. How can I serve him.

Consider. How can you be used. Of God. That you'll see. That service. That. Is truly. Of him. Is truly. Of him. It's done.

[27:46] Unto him. It's for him. It's unto him. It's by him. Therefore. My beloved. Brethren. Be ye. 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. Let us pray. Let us pray.