

Unshakable in the Shaking

A couple of years ago my family and I were moving into the parsonage. When you move into a new space it can be challenging trying to make everything fit and work. The parsonage doesn't have a garage or shed so one of the things I had to troubleshoot was where to put all my tools. I decided I would buy a metal cabinet and store it upstairs in the big loft room. I went on Facebook marketplace and searched for something that might work for me. I stumbled on an ad for a metal storage cabinet that was made for cubicles in an office space. It was perfect because it had two large cabinet doors with multiple shelves and two large pull out drawers. I thought it would work out perfect to store hand tools on the shelves and power tools in the drawers. The thing was metal and was pretty heavy. Now, I am no stranger to moving heavy furniture, but I was struggling with this. Even with a dolly and help from my son, we could not get the thing up the stairs. My wife suggested that I take the cabinet apart and then rebuild it upstairs. That way I could carry it up piece by piece instead of all at once. I told her she was a genius. As a married man of 20 years, I know my lady loves it when I say, "You're so right babe." So, I get to taking this thing apart and started by removing the bottom drawers but immediately found something very interesting. Behind the metal drawers were four sheets of steel. I took each one out and each one weighed a ton. I thought, "no wonder this thing was so heavy." I found out that the steel sheets served as a safety weight to prevent the unit from tipping over in the office and injuring someone. Once I took the weights out, I was able to move the unit upstairs easily by myself.

I share that story with you to remind you of something. That cabinet was unmovable because of the weight that was within it. You and I are called to be the same. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says, "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." If the devil is going to go after anything that is inside you, it's the weight of the glory of God. When we neglect to renew our minds and stand on truth it is easier for the enemy to replace the truth, we had been standing on with lies that will deceive us into following after his agenda. The reality is that you are a threat to the enemy and his kingdom. You are a threat because you house the presence of God, have authority over him, and move in the power of the Holy Spirit. So, he will do everything in his influence to hold you back and steal your hope.

I am not going to stand up here and talk about all the reasons why you can be discouraged today. We all know the world is crazy and evil is flourishing. What I do what to stand up here and talk to you about is how to overcome it. How to get past that hidden thing that is holding you back. You and I need to understand that there will always be problems. "Wow Pastor Rudy, you are starting this one out so encouraging." Let me explain. Our loving and beautiful Savior gave us a promise in John 16:33. He said, "In this world, you WILL have trials and tribulations. But take heart I have overcome the world." Jesus promised us that we will have all kinds of trouble. If you go to a new church and the preacher says, "Come to Jesus and all your problems will go away" RUN away from that church as fast as you can. Problems are always going to be there, but Jesus says, "Take heart for I have overcome the world." That means that in this world of chaos, Christ has given you everything you need to walk in peace, power, and overcome anything the devil throws at you.

Every believer in here wants to see our nation shift towards salvation and truth. But I believe before there is a shifting there has to be a shaking. We are in the midst of that shaking now. Don't

be scared or intimidated by the shaking, get exciting for the shift that is about to come. I want to help equip you today to understand that the shaking will produce a shifting and you have all that you need to partner with the coming revival. So, if you have your Bibles, go with me to Acts chapter 28. The Apostle Paul completed three major missionary journeys in the book of Acts. When those were complete, he was arrested and appealed to see Cesar in Rome. It was on this journey that the ship transporting him was destroyed by a severe storm and they were shipwrecked on the island of Malta. Here's what happens beginning in verse 1:

When they had been brought safely through, then we found out that the island was called Malta. 2 The natives showed us extraordinary kindness; for because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold, they kindled a fire and received us all. 3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened itself on his hand. 4 When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live." 5 However he shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm. 6 But they were expecting that he was about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god. 7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us courteously three days. 8 And it happened that the father of Publius was lying in bed afflicted with recurrent fever and dysentery; and Paul went in to see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him. 9 After this had happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases were coming to him and getting cured. 10 They also honored us with many marks of respect; and when we were setting sail, they supplied us with all we needed. – Acts 28:1-10 NASB1995

Despite all the haters, Paul was able to shake the snake off. Everyone say, "shake the snake." Paul was also able to shake off a certain death and go on to perform multiple miracles of healing. The Greek word for "shook off" here is used only two times in the New Testament. The only other place it is used is in Luke 9:5 when they were told to shake off the dust of their feet when a city didn't receive Jesus' disciples. **Listen, everything that has been attached to you, you have the ability to shake off of you.**

My goal here today is to help you understand the goal of going from being shaken to shaking the world for Jesus. It is going to be easy to leave revival to the preachers, the evangelists, and the charismatic leaders. But I am telling you today that you do not need a *platform* you need a reminder of your *position*. Every follower of Jesus carries not only the presence of God, but the power of revival. What Christians need today more than ever is a little thing called *resilience*. One dictionary defines "resilience" as "the capacity to withstand or recover quickly from difficulties." James 1:12 says:

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. – James 1:2-4 NASB1995

As a dad of two 19-year-old kids, I don't want them to go through what I had to go through. I want them to have a far better life and do more than I have ever done. But I live in this tension. I'm tempted to bail them out. I am tempted to do everything for them. I am tempted to make their lives as comfortable as possible. But am I doing them a favor as a father by shielding them from every issue? I want to see the generation that's not scared because you have been through some things, trusted God, and watched Him do what only He can do? Like that meme I saw about grandma's mac and cheese. I don't want that young auntie mac and cheese...there's not enough pain in that mac. The mac and cheese that has survived some things ministers to your soul.

Listen to me clearly, you are called to revival, but you are not called to be perfect. If you didn't know it already, God is ok with you falling as long as you *get up* each time you fall. Proverbs 24:16 says:

For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity. – Proverbs 24:16 NASB1995

Today I want to encourage you and prayerfully impart to you a few ways you can build resilience in your life. Because as believers we gotta get to a place where we are not falling apart when problems come. Rather, we get excited because we know God will work through us and we will see His power on display. If you are taking notes, please fill out point number one:

What's Important in the Shaking:

POINT #1 – Where am I Standing?

I grew up in Southern California, so I am not afraid of earthquakes. I've been through a couple earthquakes that hit 6.7 magnitude. As a little kid in school, we had earthquake drills. They would play a rumbling noise over the intercom, and we had to get under our desks and cover the back of our neck with our hands. I don't know what those school desks were made out of but apparently, they can withstand the weight of several tons of concrete. If an earthquake happened in your home while you were there you needed to get in a doorframe. It is one of the strongest places in the house. Why am I telling you this information, especially here in Texas where there are no earthquakes? Because in times of shaking one of the most important questions you need to ask yourself is, "*where am I standing?*" Matthew 7:24-25 says this:

“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. – Matthew 7:24-25 NASB1995

In times of shaking the devil is going to work hard at convincing you of lies. The number one thing you can do to build resilience in your life is to build truth in your heart. We need to boldly declare: “I am a child of God, I am dearly loved by my Father, I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, I have authority in Jesus' name, I am filled with the Holy Spirit, and I overflow in supernatural power. No weapon formed against me will prosper.

One powerful truth you need burned into your heart is that not only are you a co-heir with Christ, but you are also a co-worker of Jesus. You, yes you, are designed to bring redemptive solutions into this world. If you are not convinced that you are worthy to partner with God in this earth, you will fall when the shaking comes. However, if you are confident in who and *Whose* you are, you will be resilient. Don't question your worth and value when you were purchased by the precious blood of Jesus. The Apostle Paul so many times in his letters said, "For I am *convinced*." If you were here last week, I mentioned something about Paul I had never realized before. Before Jesus was crucified, He was flogged. Think of *The Passion of Christ* in the scene where Jesus took the thirty-nine lashes. In 2 Corinthians 11:24, it says Paul received this kind of flogging *five times*. Talk about resilience! Not only did Paul go through all of this, but he did so with joy. That's what the book of Philippians is all about. Listen, you don't go through this kind of torture for a lie. You don't go through this kind of torture without being convinced of truth. That's how powerful keeping your mind renewed is. If you stand on truth, you will be resilient against the enemy's attacks.

POINT #2 – What am I Stewarding.

Notice I said what you "steward" not what you "have." 1 Corinthians 4:1 says, "let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." The word for "steward" in the Greek means "manager, administrator or director." My kids *have* bedrooms. But sometimes they don't *steward* those bedrooms well and it looks like a hurricane hit it. Listen you have so much because of the finished work of Jesus. You are a child of God, you are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm, you have the same power that raised Jesus from the grave, you have authority in Jesus' name, and you have the Holy Spirit who will empower you, comfort you, and teach you. Why would we fear any part of hell when we have all of heaven backing us up?

God didn't stop the snake from biting Paul and didn't stop the storm that caused Paul's ship to sink. But Paul had faith and stewarded what God gave him to make it to the shore and have a mini healing revival. If you fall apart and blame God every time your boat sinks, you may never see your healing revival. That's why it is so important to know what you have. God is so good, and He will do things you can't do. But it doesn't mean you are supposed to sit back idle.

Let me conclude with this testimony. I have some friends I grew up with and they are now living in the McKinney area with their 23 kids. Last week they were picking up their fifth grader, Nevaeh (which is heaven spelled backwards), from school and she asks her mom if they could get a new Bible. The mom asked what this interesting request was all about. Neveah said that she had been taking her Bible to school just to read. Mind you, her parents had no idea she was doing this. When she was reading her Bible, another girl comes up with her Bible and asks if she wanted to do a Bible study...and they did. Afterward another girl walks up and wanted to join them, but she said she didn't have a Bible and asked if Nevaeh could bring her one. So, Neveah asks her mom if she could get a Bible for her new friend and the mom just starts crying...as we all would. Neveah said, "Mom, why are you crying?" The mom told her it was because of how proud she was of her-for stepping out in faith and sharing the good news of God's Word with others. She said they were tears of joy.

Let me ask you, is the foundation you are standing on solid enough to use what the Lord has given you for revival? I see a day when this next generation shatters the stereotypes and shifts the tides of our current culture. But you need to know where you are standing and what you are stewarding.