

UNMOVABLE

WE WON'T BE SHAKEN

PRESENTED BY THE  NOYC

**THEREFORE, MY BELOVED
BRETHREN, BE YE
STEDFAST, UNMOVEABLE,
ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE
WORK OF THE LORD,
FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW
THAT YOUR LABOUR IS NOT
IN VAIN IN THE LORD.**

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58



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UNMOVABLE WE WONT BE SHAKEN

Faith is an unwavering trust that God's got this.

Faith tells us that we can't - but He has. Faith reminds us that we are safe, sheltered, protected, and provided for from within the safety of our Savior. Faith denies all odds, refutes all reality, and strong-arms circumstances. Faith is a steadfast conviction and belief that Jesus will ultimately come through.

Yet, as a people of faith...*have we become faithless?* As Christians we trust Jesus to save us from our sins, yet we fail to trust His ability to save us from our situation. We believe the words of the world, yet neglect The Living Word which our belief is built upon. As followers of Christ, we allow every trial to make us tremble and every struggle makes us stumble. We are called to have the mind of Christ, yet our minds are easily made up that- *this is it, this time we're done for!*

We fear. We doubt. We worry. We question- just like every other person on the planet who does *not* have faith in Jesus Christ. Which leaves the uncomfortable question; *what good is a life of faith that is the same as a life without faith.*

What would it look like to have a faith so firm that no storm in life could make you flinch? To have a belief so bountiful that no giant could make you cower? A conviction so constant that reality itself could not convince you to relent?

What if our faith does not have to be flimsy? What if our righteousness did not have to be rickety? What if your salvation could not be shaken not matter what may come or go in life?

A person with genuine trust in Jesus Christ operates every moment of every day with solid steadfastness that says *no matter what I find, no matter what I feel, no matter what I face- I BELIEVE GOD.*

THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE *UNMOVABLE.*

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The Northern Ohio Youth Camp is completely committed to reaching a generation for Christ, not for simply one week out of the year, but for a lifetime. It is for this reason that we offer series such as Unmovable each year intended to spiritually challenge, strengthen, and encourage young people and adults alike in Christ.

While at camp, its easy to feel safe, sheltered, and secure from the cruel world that we live in. A week away from the news, our neighbors, and the nonsense of the culture allows for most of us to feel physically exhausted, yet spiritually invigorated. Yet too often this causes for a great conflict to take place upon returning home.

The book that you are now holding in your hands, *was sent to you, from God*. That's right- signed, sealed, delivered; *it's yours*. God placed you in this precise place in order that you would receive that which you need to spiritually succeed. Inside this book you will find lessons, notes, questions, homework, and more. Each of which are specifically designed for *your* benefit.

We absolutely promise that this book will be of *NO* use sitting on top of your dresser, in your nightstand drawer, or next to that French fry under the passenger seat of your car (*ew!*). We equally promise that if you will truly take to heart the Word and Promises of God which saturate the pages of this book- *your life will never be the same*.

Not because of anything we offer here at the NOYC, not because of a spiritual high, a chill down your spine, or a clump of Christian cliches- but *today* your life can be forever changed because of a solid salvation, a firm faith found only in *Jesus Christ*. Though the billions of people that surround you may be shaken- if you have truly trusted in Jesus you will catch the attention of the onlooking world as they see that no matter what may come or go- you are **UNMOVABLE**.

This book will be used during the week of the NOYC 2021 during devotion class. Each day you will find the full lesson in its original form

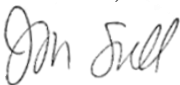
at the beginning of each of the 4 chapters. Following each lesson, you will find the devotion class notes for the day, where you will be able to follow along and take notes LIVE during devotion class.

Next, you'll notice that each lesson is followed by a set of introspection and personal questions regarding to the theme of the day. We **highly** encourage you to take the time, either following devotion class – or upon returning home, to work through these questions. Head knowledge will never help, but real life application will. This is our desire at the NOYC; ***that your life would be different as a result of an encounter with Christ.*** No one will look at your book or peek at your answers- so slow down and take the time to personally apply what you've learned through 'Unmovable' in your own life.

Then, you'll find that each chapter has a series of bonus content which will be helpful in continuing in your Unmovable studies. Lastly, in part two of this book you will find UNMOVABLE: Hands on, which features all 16 of the personal prayer stations which you will get to experience while at camp. It would be greatly beneficial to review and even go back through each of these stations back home.

Know that along with the great cloud of witnesses which surround you, the staff of the NOYC have a sincere love and dedication to your spiritual wellbeing. Throughout the entire year, YOU are being lifted up in our prayers. It is our desire that through this book you will come to know and experience Christ in a more personal and meaningful way. If there is anything we can do to help you along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to our camp coordinator at the number listed below.

In Christ,



Josh Sorrell

NOYC Coordinator

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UNMOVABLE THE MESSAGE

Fact: life at times can be a bumpy ride. We can be tossed about, tripped up, or even trampled by trials and tribulations. And it's for this reason that the norm for Christians is to *cower, fear, fold, fumble* whenever we face difficulty. It's acceptable to be a Christian with a worry wart name tag. Yet, even though this is the case- what if I were to tell you *it didn't have to be?* What if there were a place that we could enter that could make us worry free. What if there were a place to stand that could provide us assurance no matter what may come in life. *Would you be interested?*

Romans 1:16-17 ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth....***

Why does Paul say he is not ashamed? What is the Might of the message? Paul says *I'm in no way ashamed of the gospel because it is*. Not it was, not it will be some day- but Paul says I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because **IT IS!** So what exactly *is it* then, Paul? What is the gospel that you're not ashamed of? He says the gospel is simply: *the power of God unto salvation. **The gospel is God's power to save us.***

Listen, we're going to cover a lot of truly important and solid teachings in this book- but if there is one thing that you absolutely must grasp; *it's the gospel*. The gospel is not complicated, it doesn't require a big theological degree, you don't have to have years of studying and training to understand it. Plainly and simply put; *The Gospel is God's ability to save us.*

The wage of sin is death, and because you have sinned, you must die. Yet, as your cross was being put into place, Jesus stepped in and said

'I am sinless, and I have the power to save you- and I will-nail Me to their cross instead.' Jesus died upon our cross- yet even after being saved, we still are unable to live sinlessly- and so Jesus steps in again. After laying in a grave for three days Jesus says *"I have the power to save them- I will put my perfect, sinless life inside of them, so that they may be saved."* And this is the gospel; God's ability to save us from Sin, sins, and our sentence for sinning. *The Gospel is God's power to Save us!*

And because of the gospel; because of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus- if you are a believer then you have *been saved*. Because of the work of Jesus, you have been *saved* from due damnation, *saved* from the sentence of sin, *saved* from the rightful wrath of God- you've been *saved*- past tense, that is what has been done already by the gospel. As He died, Jesus said *it is finished*- you have been saved. Whenever the Lord returns, and you have to stand before Him – you will be able to say that your debt has been paid in full by the blood of Jesus and therefore you are free from guilt and condemnation because you have been *saved*.

And that is certainly good news! Yet, what I want to challenge us with- is not what the Gospel *did* for us, but what the gospel *does* for us. Here in Romans 1 Paul writes that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation – the word *unto* here has the idea *of a place that is entered into by going, coming, living, or an opening in which one can enter or hide an object*. So the gospel is God's power or His ability to place us somewhere- *but where?*

Well, Paul says God has the power to place us inside of Salvation. The word salvation here is actually a noun- it's a person, place, or thing. And this word has the meaning of deliverance, preservation, safety.

So Paul writes in Romans 1:16 that *the gospel is the power of God for us to enter into, live in and be hidden in safety*. Not just upon

death, but throughout life! The gospel is God's powerful ability to preserve us. The gospel is His power to deliver us. He, and only HE can keep us safe!

One of my wife's favorite kind of movies is apocalyptic, end of the world, dooms day films. I can't tell you how many of these she's made me watch. But I want you to imagine just for a minute that we just received word that truly the world was coming to an end. We're facing all but certain destruction. Asteroids are going to totally obliterate the earth to bits- the skies falling, or whatever the case- destruction is definite and there's absolutely no hope of survival up here on earth. That would be bad news, right? You're going to face a horrendous death and there's nothing you can do about it. Bad news indeed...

Yet, as you are getting ready to enter freak out mode- someone taps you on the shoulder and says "*pssst, do you want to be saved?*" to which you calmly and politely reply "*uhhh yes!!!!*" The person says "*I have a bunker- it's made of concrete that is 10 million miles thick on every side, it's radiation proof, bomb proof, flood proof, earthquake proof, hurricane proof, and yes even asteroid proof- it is a completely impenetrable fortress that can withstand anything- and if you really want to be saved from the impending destruction, all you have to do is get inside; enter into salvation.*"

Would you say that was good news? Absolutely! So what would the obvious action be? *Get inside that bunker!* Get everyone you can to come inside the bunker with you. Because as long as you are inside of the bunker- you're saved- but if you venture outside of the bunker, you're vulnerable and on your own.

And this is what it means to be a Christian. The Bible tells us over 164 times that as a believer we are *in Christ*; we enter into our fortress, our impenetrable refuge- and from within Christ- we will face the judgment of God- and when God looks at us who have

believed upon His Son, He will not see me- but He will see the bunker, the fortress that I have been hidden within; *Christ*. And God will not penalize me, because He already passed the penalty for my sin- He's reigned my judgment down upon the refuge I am inside of; *Jesus*. So we enter into the bunker- safe and secure, because God has the power to save us from damnation if we are in Him. *We are saved!*

And although that is terrific news, many of us trust the Might of the Message for eternal salvation - but we *Mistrust the message* for our everyday salvation.

I want you to imagine you're seated safely and all snug inside of this bunker- you have absolute assurance and unwavering confidence that this bunker has the ability to keep you safe when dooms day arrives. Maybe you're even down there playing hopscotch as the doom's day clock ticks downward, because you have absolutely no worries- you know that this bunker will be sufficient for you to be saved.

Yet, as you sit there inside, you hear this *peck, peck, peck* noise coming from outside of the 10 million mile thick concrete wall. You try to ignore it, you try to act like it's not there, but it just keeps going *peck, peck, peck- peck, peck, peck*. You finally ask someone else inside the bunker, "*what's going on out there?*" To which they reply "*Oh that? That's just a kid throwing pebbles at the side of the bunker*"

Now here you are, inside a fortress, an impenetrable refuge- safe from the biggest destruction and doom imaginable – and yet, you begin to worry that this bunker won't make it through the stone throws. You start to panic, you get anxious, you start eating all the tubs of ice cream you can find, you start pacing back and forth, fretting, fearing- *What if one of the stones get me?! What if the bunker isn't enough? What if one of those pebbles do me in for good!? What am going to do!?!*

You've fully trusted that this fortress- this bunker has *saved* you from destruction, but you lack trust that this bunker can *save* you from the pebbles...*sounding familiar to anyone else?* This is the downfall of our faith- ***we trust Jesus has saved us from damnation but we're unsure He will save us from our dilemmas.*** I have full faith that He has *saved* me, but I worry and doubt and am anxious that in this life, when pebbles are pelted my way- He won't *save* me. We trust God's power for salvation eternally, but we lack a trust in God's power for salvation in the temporary.

And this is where Paul writes that the gospel of Christ is *The power of God*, the ability of God to save- *and keep us safe*. To not only save us eternally but save us immediately. He is not only the God who *saved* me but He is the God that *has saved, is saving, and will save me*. In fact, the name Jesus; *Yeshua*- literally means; *The I Am Saves*. Present tense. If you place your faith and trust in Jesus- you are believing in The I AM Saves. Not that the I Am saved, not that He will save someday- but His name is I AM Saves. Every single day of our life- in every trial, trouble, torment, and tribulation- *Jesus is not only our Savior but He is our Saver*- He saves us. We are safe and secure, hidden within the fortress of His power and ability to keep us safe. He is sufficient to save and keep us safe.

And this is exactly why we find Jesus time and time again being so critical of the disciples- like us, they were fearful followers. These men left behind house and home, family and fortunes in order to follow Jesus because they believed He was the Messiah- He was the Christ- He was the Savior- yet, in Matthew 8:24-26 we find these men trusting Jesus as their Savior but not their Saver;

"...behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little

faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.”

Notice what the disciples call Jesus; *Lord*. They didn't call Him master, they didn't call Him rabbi, or teacher – they called Him *Lord*; *kyrios* meaning- God or Messiah- *save us- we perish!* They trusted Him enough to be God- enough to have their back eternally, but not immediately. They trusted Him to save from the sentence of sin but not from the stormy sea. They rested safely inside the bunker- the fortress of Christ- for dooms day- but they feared the pebbles being pelted in their direction.

Was Jesus aware that there was a storm? Did He not know there were contrary waves all around them? Did Jesus hit the snooze button one too many times at the risk of sleeping right through their demise?! There's no way. We look at this story and we think; *'c'mon guys, Jesus is in the boat. Jesus- THE I AM SAVES- God Himself is right there with you in the storm- of course nothing's going to happen to you- of course He's going to save you because He's a Saver- He Saves! You're in the bunker for crying out loud- no little pebble pelting peewee is going to hurt you!'*

And yet, what's the first thing we do when we face a trial? *'Lord save us, we perish! I'm trusting you have saved me- but I'm afraid you'll drop the ball on keeping me safe...'* And just like the disciples, Jesus rebukes us; *'Why are you fearful? Why is your faith so itty bitsy?! Why do you trust me so little? Am I Not Jesus- The I Am Saves? Am I, your Fortress, not able to save you from your temporary needs just as much as your eternal needs? Stop fearing the pelting of pebbles on your life- you are hidden safely in Me, and I have the power and ability to save you!'*

This is where we lack the placement of the power of the Gospel in our lives. Some of you can give me any stat on the MLB, NBA, NFL, PGA- some of you can name every contestant of The Voice, every

car Chevy has ever made, every character of a video game, every crooked politician in Washington- and yet when it comes to knowing the Gospel and wielding it in our lives as a defense- we're clueless- and it shows! We're on this sinking ship at sea, crying out '*Lord, do something!*' All the while He's saying '*I have! I placed you inside the fortress- you're saved and safe! Because I have the power to save.*'

Becoming a Christian, getting saved is not a onetime decision at an altar, it's not a nifty name tag you wear on Sundays- Salvation is a literal place you have been hidden inside of. It is a position of promise that we no longer have to fear, because the fortress is enough!

The gospel gives us a framework for our faith, it has a specific point and purpose in our lives here and now. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that *faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen*. Which means that in order for us to have faith that He will save us, we need a place to anchor that faith to- or in other words, *we need evidence*.

So for example- if you meet a total stranger on the street and they tell you that they will do something- you have no evidence that they will actually do what they said they would do. Yet, if I tell you, I will do something, and a hundred times in the past I have kept my word and did what I said I would do- suddenly you have evidence to base my promises on. So it is with the gospel. Because He saved us eternally, we have evidence, that we can rely upon Him to save us now.

He has told us that if you will get inside the bunker- you will not only be saved, but you will be safe. *Do you believe Him?* Do you believe Him when He said that He is greater than anything you will face in this life? When He said we are more than conquerors? Do you believe that He is for us so what can stand against us? Do you believe that nothing-absolutely nothing can separate us from the deep love and concern that He has personally for us? Do you believe Him when He said not to worry about tomorrow because tomorrow will worry about

itself? Do you believe Him when He said He has counted every hair on your head? Or That you're more valuable than all the sparrows He cares for? Do you believe Him when He said that all things work for His good? *Do you believe Him?* Do you believe what He has said *or not?* Do you believe His power and ability to save or don't ya? *Are you a believer?* Because the I AM Saves, is telling you to enter into the refuge, and if you do -you will not only be saved- but you will be safe-*So get inside and trust Him to be enough!*

God's ability to save us- *is a fact of faith-* a tried and true reality that we have entered into and that we now live in, we are hidden within His power to save. Your address as a Christian, the place you call home and dwell daily is; *safe, saved, and saving!* From within the bunker- these are the facts of faith; *we have been saved, and because we have been saved- we know we are safe.*

And Paul desired that we would weaponize this as believers- he wanted us to have a Muniton to the Message. Weaponize and wield the gospel- use God's ability and power to save- as a defense. Because as much as safety from within the fortress as a fact. For the next pandemic, the next problem. For the next difficult or dilemma. When trials and troubles start to rock your world- you are supposed to have a weapon that you pull out as a believer – to defend yourself with so that you do not have to be shaken.

In fact, the word Paul uses here in Romans 1:16 for *power* is the word *dynamis*, which is where we get the word dynamite from. *Dynamis* gives this idea of a power from within that gives big results. It's the power of an entire military force, the whole army, the strength, ability and unrestrained power. The gospel gives *dynamis-* it gives *unrestrained power* for salvation to the believer. This word *power*; or *dynamis* is found 383 times within the New Testament. *383 times!* That's 355 times more than the word *cross* and 166 times more than the word *love!* More than the *cross* more than *love-* we find the word *power*; *dynamis* dripping off of the pages of the Bible 383 times! He

came to enable us, to give us this *dynamis*, to provide a powerful defense to our lives.

So how exactly can I defend myself whenever Covid-2.0 hits, or when you get tragic news from the doctor, or when your friend moves away? Instead of fearing, how should a believer respond? From within the fortress, there are two ways that the Gospel can defend our lives.

We can first have a munition to the message by having a *Gospel growl*. Paul writes that he's not ashamed- in fact, he's bold, boastful, arrogant even- in regard to the gospel. We were never meant to be timid in our trust, we are not meant to be cowardly Christians, or fearful in our faith – because of God's power to save us - we are called to be *ferocious*! Do we get how many times Jesus rebuked worry, fear, doubt, and lack of faith? More than adultery, more than alcohol, more than lying, stealing, cursing- even more than murder! Jesus was a big stickler, He'd give a big slap on the wrist for doubting Him- and yet it's our most acceptable sin! God's power, to save us is meant to *give us a spine*! Give us guts, give us bravado as a believer! We need a gospel growl! A rigid roar that declares the facts of our faith.

Where are the Christians who have a gospel growl, a relentless roar that declares; *'My God will save me! No matter the circumstances and situation, no matter how dark the night, no matter how hard the hurdles- or how impossible the problem- I have entered into salvation- I have a Savior who saves- I will not give in, I will not give up, I doggedly deny what the world says around me- I rigidly reject the attacks I'm facing- because I know the gospel, and the gospel says that God loved me enough to move heaven and hell on my behalf, He gave His life not only that I might be saved but that I may be safe!'*

When we face a red sea, when giants scoff at us, when the stormy seas surge- *we need a gospel growl*- a bold and courageous proclamation of promise. We need an audacity that believes He's

able! We need a ferocious faith that grows out the gospel when pebbles are pelted our way. Faith that says ‘*NO- I will not fear! I will not be afraid. No matter what stones are thrown, no matter what the wind and waves try and convince me of- I will not fear or worry or doubt- because - I know the power of my God to save. I know the gospel, and it says that I am not only saved but I am safe in Christ!*’

Where’s our Gospel Growl? When Covid cages us in, when the federal government fails, when we face problems a plenty- we can’t be timid, we can’t tip toe around- we cannot remain silent or soft spoken- like The King of The Jungle who fears no one and nothing, we need to declare that our God has the power to save us and to keep us safe, and with that we let loose a gospel growl!

Secondly from within the fortress, we are given a Gospel Garrison as our defense. The Gospel is meant to be a place of standing in our lives- a place where we dare to dig in deep. As Paul puts it in Ephesians 6 – the Gospel is an armor that we strap on tightly and use as our defense.

Ephesians 6:11-15- “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace”

We find that four times in five verses Paul says *stand! Stand! Stand! Stand!* And then we get to the armor on our feet and Paul says to *stand* in the gospel of peace.

Roman soldiers were infamous for wearing what's called caligae, which was a leather sandal that had spikes or nails sticking out of the bottom that would dig deep into the ground. Then, they would have iron or leather guards called greaves that would wrap around their foot and ankle and even up the shin of their leg, strapping it to their caligae.

And Paul says to shod, or literally bind from underneath. Paul says bind yourself to what you're standing on- plant those spikes solidly into the ground- and then strap yourself to what's under your feet. So that no matter what may push you, shove you, no matter what is hurled your way- you are bound to the ground on which you stand, and you literally cannot be moved. Literally, if your feet are attached to the ground, it's not possible to be movable, without moving the ground your attached to.

Well Paul, what exactly is it that I am supposed to bind from under me? What should I stand strong upon, what should be my stabilization, my foundation of faith? To which Paul boldly declares; *bind under your feet The gospel of peace. Bind your life to God's ability to save.* Plant your feet here as the place that you stand and live and refuse to budge from. When the enemy tries to push you or pull you- your feet are bound to the gospel of peace.

Paul is trying to tell us that if you will bind your life here, have a solid stance on the gospel as the ground beneath you -then your life will result in; *peace*. You can have peace that passes all understanding. Peace the plays hopscotch from within the doom's day bunker, peace that sleeps through storms on sinking ships, peace that charges toward giants, peace that sings praises from prison cells. Saved and safe from within the fortress of our faith. Resting safely in God's power, His ability to save us.

This is the life of a Christian. *Stand!* Bind your feet to the gospel! Refuse to relent, have a gospel growl- and boldly proclaim that you

are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ because the gospel proves God's power to save me, and keep saving me, and keep saving me. When attacks take aim, when pebbles are pelted your way- refuse to worry, deny the doubt- and remind yourself where you stand. Remind yourself that God has the power, the ability to save.

THE UNMOVABLE MESSAGE PROCLAIMS:
I AM SAVED AND I AM SAFE



WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

ROMANS 1:16 *“FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST: FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION TO EVERY ONE THAT BELEIVETH...”*

1. _____ OF THE MESSAGE

- THE GOSPEL IS GOD’S POWER TO _____ US.
- **UNTO:** *A PLACE THAT IS ENTERED INTO BY GOING, LIVING, AND OPENING AN OBJECT CAN BE HIDDEN IN*
- **SALVATION:** *DELIVERANCE, PRESERVATION, SAFETY*
- THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF GOD FOR US TO ENTER INTO, LIVE IN, AND BE HIDDEN IN SAFETY
- _____ TIMES THE BIBLE TELLS US WE ARE IN CHRIST

2. _____ OF THE MESSAGE

- JESUS (YESHUA)- *THE I AM* _____
- JESUS IS NOT ONLY OUR SAVIOR BUT HE IS OUR SAVER
- A. **FEARFUL** _____ (*MATTHEW 8:24-26*)
 - SALVATION IS A LITERAL PLACE YOU HAVE BEEN HIDDEN INSIDE OF
- B. **FRAMEWORK OF** _____ (*HEBREWS 11:1*)
 - WE HAVE BEEN SAVED AND BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN SAVED, WE KNOW WE ARE SAFE

3. _____ OF THE MESSAGE

- ROMANS 1:16 *“THE POWER (DYNAMIS)”*

- **DYNAMIS- THE POWER OF AN ENTIRE MILITARY FORCE, THE WHOLE ARMY, IT'S STRENGTH, ABILITY AND UNRESTRAINED POWER.**
- **DYNAMIS IS FOUND _____ TIMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**
 - 353 TIMES MORE THAN THE WORD CROSS
 - 166 TIMES MORE THAN THE WORD LOVE

A. GOSPEL _____

- ***I WILL NOT FEAR! I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. NO MATTER WHAT STONES ARE THROWN, NO MATTER WHAT THE WIND AND WAVES TRY AND CONVINC ME OF- I WILL NOT FEAR OR WORRY OR DOUBT- BECAUSE- I KNOW THE POWER OF MY GOD TO SAVE. I KNOW THE GOSPEL, AND IT SAYS THAT I AM NOT ONLY SAVED BUT I AM SAFE IN CHRIST!***

B. GOSPEL _____

- **EPH. 6:11-15 "STAND, STAND, STAND, STAND ... AND YOUR FEET SHOD WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE."**
- **SHOD- BIND FROM UNDERNEATH**
- **BIND UNDER YOUR FEET THE GOSPEL OF PEACE. BIND YOUR LIFE TO GOD'S ABILITY DO _____.**

**THE UNMOVABLE MESSAGE PROCLAIMS
I AM _____ AND I AM _____**

UNMOVABLE MESSAGE

QUESTIONS FOR FINDING FIRM FAITH

1. DO YOU HAVE FAITH IN JESUS TO SAVE YOU ETERNALLY FROM YOUR SIN AND THE SENTENCE OF SIN (*DEATH*)?

2. DO YOU BELIEVE JESUS IS SUFFICIENT TO NOT ONLY SAVE YOU, BUT TO KEEP YOU SAFE?

3. BEING INSIDE THE FORTRESS DOES NOT MEAN '*PEBBLES*' WON'T BE PELTED. STRUGGLES AND BURDENS ARE STILL GUARANTEED. SO WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE '*FORTRESS*' OF CHRIST MAKE?

4. IF JESUS IS IN FACT ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU SAFE, THEN FOR WHAT REASONS DO YOU STILL FEAR?

5. HOW CAN YOU HAVE A *GOSPEL GROWL*, OR A REFUSAL TO BE AFRAID ?

6. HOW CAN YOU BIND YOUR LIFE TO GOD'S ABILITY TO SAVE? GIVE REAL EXAMPLES (*E.G. REPEAT IT TO YOURSELF BEFORE BEGINNING EACH DAY.*)



UNMOVABLE MESSAGE KEEP GOING ...

MESSAGE OF THE MELODY

TOO OFTEN WE TALK OURSELVES OUT OF WHAT WE *DO KNOW* BASED UPON WHAT WE DON'T. THIS IS A FREQUENT TACTIC OF OUR ENEMY AS HE PERSUADES US TO FEAR THE UNKNOWN FUTURE- EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW THE ALL-KNOWING GOD. YET, INSTEAD OF FEARING THE THINGS WE DO NOT KNOW, WE SHOULD CLING ALL THE MORE TO WHAT WE ABSOLUTELY *DO KNOW*.

THIS IS EXACTLY THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL IN OUR LIVES. WE CAN FACE UNCERTAINTY IN LIFE, BECAUSE OF THE MESSAGE OF GOD'S ABILITY TO SAVE. OR IN OTHER WORDS, WE CAN HAVE ASSURANCE AS WE WALK THROUGH LIFE. ASSURANCE IS DEFINED AS; *FIRM PERSUASION, FULL CONFIDENCE OR TRUST, FREEDOM FROM DOUBT, CERTAIN EXPECTATION, UTMOST CERTAINTY, FIRMNESS OF MIND, STEADINESS.*

AND THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT THE AUTHOR OF ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS AND BELOVED HYMNS IN CHRISTIANITY WROTE OF AS SHE PENNED; '*BLESSED ASSURANCE*'. THIS CLASSIC SONG WAS WRITTEN IN 1873 BY FANNY CROSBY, A WOMAN WHO WAS BLIND SINCE THE AGE OF 6 WEEKS OLD. EVERY SINGLE DAY OF HER LIFE WAS SPENT IN UNCERTAINTY, THE UNKNOWN, AND LITERAL DARKNESS. YET INSTEAD OF FEARING WHAT SHE DID NOT KNOW, FANNY CROSBY CLUNG TO WHAT SHE DID KNOW; *JESUS*.

IT WAS BECAUSE OF HER LIFE SPENT IN DARKNESS THAT SHE WAS ALL THE MORE CERTAIN OF HER ASSURANCE IN JESUS. CONSIDER THE CONTENTMENT, PEACE, JOY THAT THIS BLIND WOMAN WROTE OF IN THIS BELOVED HYMN;

BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MINE
OH WHAT A FORETASTE OF GLORY DIVINE
HEIR OF SALVATION, PURCHASE OF LOVE
BORN OF HIS SPIRIT, WASHED IN HIS BLOOD

PERFECT SUBMISSION ALL IS AT REST
I IN MY SAVIOR AM HAPPY AND BLESSED
WATCHING AND WAITING, LOOKING ABOVE
FILLED WITH HIS GOODNESS, LOST IN HIS LOVE

THIS IS MY STORY, THIS IS MY SONG
PRAISING MY SAVIOR ALL THE DAY LONG
THIS IS MY STORY, THIS IS MY SONG
PRAISING MY SAVIOR ALL THE DAY LONG

MAINTAINING THE MESSAGE

TRULY DAVID WAS A MAN THAT UNDERSTOOD THE SAFETY AND SALVATION OFFERED IN SERVING GOD. THOUGH MOST OF HIS LIFE WAS SPENT ON THE RUN FROM HIS ENEMIES, WE FIND THIS YOUNG KING FILLED WITH AN ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY OF HIS DELIVERANCE. THE REASON DAVID HAD SUCH AUDACIOUS ASSURANCE WAS BECAUSE HE TRUSTED THE PROMISE OF GOD TO MAKE HIM KING ONE DAY. KNOWING, THAT GOD COULD NOT LIE, KNOWING THAT IT HAD NOT HAPPENED YET- DAVID LIVED HIS LIFE AT THE CONCLUSION THAT GOD WOULD KEEP HIM SAFE- UNTIL GOD COULD KEEP HIS PROMISE.

IT IS TRULY REMARKABLE THAT AS A MAN LIVING EACH DAY BEING HUNTED, DAVID WROTE COUNTLESS PSALMS ABOUT JUST HOW SAFE GOD WILL MAKE YOU. THOUGH THERE ARE MANY TO CHOOSE FROM- NOTICE THE MATTER-OF-FACTNESS DAVID WRITES WITH IN PSALM 55:22

“CAST THY BURDEN UPON THE LORD, AND HE SHALL SUSTAIN THEE: HE SHALL NEVER SUFFER THE RIGHTEOUS TO BE MOVED.”

THIS WAS THE FORMULA FOR FIRM FAITH THAT DAVID LIVED HIS ENTIRE LIFE. HE SAYS TO CAST, OR HURL OFF YOUR BURDENS ONTO THE LORD. WHATEVER YOU'RE FACING IN LIFE- DON'T TRY MANAGING IT, FIXING IT, OR SOLVING IT- INSTEAD, HURL IT TOWARDS HEAVEN FOR THE LORD TO HANDLE. AND IF YOU DO- THE LORD WILL SUSTAIN YOU- OR CONTAIN YOU. AND IF THE LORD IS BEARING YOUR BURDENS- IF HE'S THE ONE HOLDING YOUR LIFE - THEN HE WILL NEVER, EVER, EVER, ALLOW FOR YOU TO BE MOVED OR SHAKEN. AS LONG AS YOU ARE CONTAINED FROM WITHIN THE FORTRESS OF GOD- YOU ARE UNTOUCHABLE AND UNMOVABLE!

YET, THE VERY MINUTE YOU LEAVE GOD'S PRESENCE - YOU BECOME VULNERABLE TO EVERY ATTACK. THIS PROOF WAS FOUND IN DAVID'S PREDECESSOR. BECAUSE SAUL DESIRED TO HANDLE HURDLES IN HIS OWN MIGHT, GOD'S PROTECTION, PROVISION, AND PROMISES WERE REMOVED. WE FIND SAUL LEADING HIS ARMY TO LOSS AFTER LOSS IN BATTLE. WE FIND HIS ENEMIES CONSTANTLY ENJOYING VICTORY OVER SAUL'S LIFE.

FOR EVERY BIT OF UNTOUCHABILITY DAVID HAD, SAUL WAS EQUALLY *A SITTING DUCK. CHUM. TOAST. EASY PICKINGS.* BECAUSE HE HAD LEFT THE FORTRESS- HE MADE THE DECISION TO LIVE OUTSIDE OF THE SAFETY AND SALVATION OF GOD. HIS WAYS OVER GOD'S WAYS. SAUL'S LIFE WAS NO LONGER CONTAINED BY GOD, AND IT MADE HIM MOVABLE AND SHAKY.

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF LIVING CONTRARY TO GOD AND HIS WAYS, CONSIDER- *THERE IS NOT SURENESS OF YOUR SAFETY.* YOU HAVE EVERY REASON TO FEAR AND BE AFRAID- BECAUSE YOU ARE OUTSIDE OF HIS PROTECTION.



THE UNMOVABLE MASTER

Have you ever had that feeling like you forgot to pack something? Maybe it was on your way to the airport or maybe it was when you actually arrived to your destination. But after much planning and preparing and packing, you come to the dreaded realization that *you've forgotten something*. It's stressful when you have to pack for what you need- especially when you're uncertain of what lies ahead.

Yet as stressful as that is- I want you to imagine for a minute that you've been given your very own ship. I mean a big- big ship, a Pirate's of the Caribbean type ship – it's about 300 feet long (*which is about as long as the Eiffel tower is high*). And upon being given this ship, it is now your responsibility to pack this ship and everything that a ship could possibly ever need. But not only do you have to pack the ship, you're also going to have to man this entire ship on your own. The sails, the oars, the cannons, the mast, the crow's nest- a job which would take a crew of about 300 people- and you're responsible for all of it... And by the way, your voyage out at sea is going to last about 100 days- *so prepare accordingly*.

Packing for a week of camp doesn't seem so bad now. Can we all agree this would be...stressful? Maybe a cause for a bit of anxiety. Truly this is a cause for concern. You have never manned a ship before, maybe you've never even been on a ship before. You've never been away from home for more than 10 days let alone 100. You have absolutely no clue how to steer a ship, cast an anchor, or swab a deck -even if your life depended on it. And what in the world do you even put in a cargo hold anyhow?!

This would be totally nerve wrecking all on its own if you were simply going on a quick peruse across Lake Erie, and yet on the wide-open sea, uncertainty is *the only* certainty! Storms, waves, winds,

creatures, currents, tides, turbulence, land masses, pirates, krakens- and on and on the list could go. There's *a lot*, and I mean a *whole lot* of things that could go wrong out at sea. In fact, the sea is so unpredictable that there are an estimated 3 million shipwrecks on the bottom of the ocean floor, with nearly 100 more ship casualties each year. Meaning that sailing at sea is full of sinkable surprises!

So on top of having to pack this ship, on top of having to man this ship alone, you also have to be prepared for any given catastrophe and any given sinkable situation that could ever arise at sea, before setting sail for 100 days. Who's ready?! Some of you are like feeling your pocket for your brown paper bag to breath into right about now... But hey, it's your ship, you're the captain. It's not someone else's problem, *it's yours*. It's Your boat, and *you've gotta sail it*. So suck it up buttercup, grit and bear it and try your best to get by and figure this thing out. I mean, what could possibly go wrong with trying to do what we have absolutely no clue, no capability, and no chance of doing correctly...

Can we all agree that this is reason to be shaken? This is a real problem. If we have this ginormous ship out on the open sea for 100 days with absolutely no one to rely upon but ourselves- then honestly this is a reason to freak out. We're sunk before we even board! You might as well dig your own grave now because you are literally dead in the water. So, why is *THIS* a reason to worry and fear?

It's because I know how incapable I am of doing what needs done. I know just how ill-suited and ill-equipped I am for what lies ahead. And from this conclusion of incapability- I have reason to worry and fear- *I have a certified reason to be shaken* – because there is a very likely probability that I will not have what I need when I need it. There's a good chance that I will not be able to do what needs done. I will almost certainly fail and it will lead to my demise. My doom. My death. My destruction. Because, *I cannot captain a ship! So now is the time to panic!*

Has anyone caught on to the fact that we're not really talking about a boat here today? This is the thing- this feeling of fear, this anxiety over facing the uncertainty at sea is how most all of us are living our daily lives. These are the facts of life as we know them; *life is uncertain, but we have to live it anyways*. No matter how ill-equipped we are for what lies ahead, no matter how lacking we are in preparation- this is our life, and so we have no choice but to grit our teeth, dig our heels in – and live this doggone life on our own. And quite honestly, if we're trusting in ourselves- then we have a legitimate reason to be movable and shaken – we should be afraid and even terrified- because we are incapable and unqualified for the uncertainty that lies ahead.

We go through life and our boat is beaten, almost constantly with the unexpected. We get a bad report from the doctor, we receive a rejection letter from collage, the bills are due, the car breaks down, the factory closes, our friend moves away- and suddenly, before you know it, we find ourselves; *shaken*. We are fearful, worried, stressed and anxious. And just like the captain of the ship who forgot to stow the anchor- *we are afraid* when the waves crash against our life. *We're afraid* because we may not have what we need. We may lack what it takes to endure. What if it's cancer- and I can't survive it? What if I can't get into any other college? What if we can't put food on the table- You can fill in your blank here- we all have fears and worries and anxieties that we will not have what we will need when we will need it.

If the year 2020 taught us anything it is that we are *not* prepared for the unexpected. Every single one of us were caught off guard and struggled to comprehend a life lived with uncertainty. The pandemic proved that we were counting on a whole lot of things to sail our boat- and in the end- what we packed, what we relied on ultimately let us down. Some of us were convinced that school and our friend would be enough for our lives- others thought their job and the economy

could sustain. Some of us packed our boats full of the fun and enjoyments of life. And yet others thought that church was the one constant that could sustain our sailing. Yet- all of these things were not enough for the shakable moments of 2020.

When the pandemic hit and the waves started crashing against our lives and the storm started getting bad- we were out there in the middle of the ocean, and we came to recognize that *-oopsy*, we're not prepared- we packed the wrong thing in our boat, we were relying on the wrong solution. 2020 proved that many of the things we rely upon to get us through will leave us *shakable and unstable* on the open seas. They can be taken away in a second, and then we are left without. And if you place your faith and your trust in your friends, family, career, education, and even the church- then when each fails, you are left in a sinking ship, a life that is shaken and moved.

This is the root reason that we become afraid as people. Whether it's a worldwide pandemic, whether it's the loss of a job or a loved one – or whatever shakable moments you may face in life- we all fear that there will come a time when we will not have what we need when we need it. We fear a time when we will not be able to do what has to be done. And so we begin to worry, we fear, we cower, we stress. Just like the mom of 4 kids who is furiously packing for a week's vacation – though she tries to pack for every conceivable need that could ever possible arise- ultimately she does not know what lies ahead – and she cannot be certain that every need will be provided for. And it is for this reason, that even Christian lives are often in a shakable state. We have a fearful faith. Our walk is wobbly with the Lord.

I want you to truly grasp this. I want you to truly ask yourself- *what have I trusted to get me through life?* When I face a trial or trouble- what is the first thing I run towards on the boat?

Do we grasp that this was *not* God's plan for Christians? Even though it's the norm, even though it's accepted by everyone- *believers were*

meant to believe! *There is never ever, ever, ever a circumstance or situation that God says it's okay to fear, it's okay to be afraid, to worry, to cower.* Not one time, not one single time is it what God desires for us! And so we conclude that if we are afraid and if we are fearful, then we must not have packed our boat correctly. We must not have brought along what we needed to safely sail in life.

So here you are with a 300-foot-long ship, expected to do the job of 300 crew members all alone, during your 100-day journey out on the wide open sea of uncertainty. And though you are afraid and worried - the reality is you don't have a choice but to set sail. Live life, go on living- is the only option no matter how uncertain the future.

And yet as you're just about ready to cast off, you're untying the very last cleat hitch...*whatever that is* – when up strolls a man wearing a captain's uniform. I mean a full-blown captain crunch outfit. He's got the weird hat, a parrot- the whole get up. And this man is standing at your dock, and He says “*I hear you're going to set sail?*” To which you nervously reply (*gulp*) “*...yep looks that way.*” The man, seeing how stressed you are, assuming just how incapable and ill-equipped you are, and noticing how short you are on manpower- offers a suggestion...

“I have a crew of around 300 men who are experts of the waves- they know every square inch of a ship inside and out and they have spent a lifetime at sea.” Considering the exhaustion you've went through just to untie the knot keeping you to the dock, the Cap' here has certainly peaked your interest.

Seeing your contemplation, the man continues “*Oh there's more...I not only have 300 expert sailors, but I actually have a full freight of cargo, just waiting to be unloaded. I've got ropes, and anchors, and oars, and ammo, and food, and merchandise, sails, and surplus- I've got any and all conceivable things pertaining to sailing on a ship- all right there- waiting to be loaded.*” Your eyes are now bugged out at

the thought. You start to twitch slightly as you pick your jaw off the ground.

Yet this man isn't finished, he states, "*In fact, I have looked ahead at the sea patterns, the weather forecast, the wind and altitude and pressure for the next 100 days. And I myself, just returned from sailing the route you'll be taking - and I have a perfect understanding of everything that you're going to encounter out there on the open blue- I have packed precisely everything you're going to need- with no expense spared and no exceptions made- everything has been extensively provided for.*"

As you start to come to after totally losing all consciousness – Cap's over there fanning you, trying to wake you up. After grasping everything this man has said and all that He has offered and made available at your disposal for your trip- there is literally only one question which remains to be asked; *Do you trust Him?*

I mean, why should you trust this Captain's Capability? For what good reason do you have to place faith in this guy telling you all the right answers to your problems? If we're talking about Captain Crunch, then...there's a good chance you shouldn't trust him (*you should never trust anyone with an onomatopoeia for a last name*).

But how many of you know that this guy we're talking about that's standing at your dock making all of these big promises- isn't captain crunch. We're talking about The Master, *none other than Jesus Christ*. The man who walks on top of the water, who splits seas, and who shushes storms. Right here, on your dock, as your life is getting ready to set sail on this uncertain and impossible mission- Jesus shows up and He says this;

"I have at my command an innumerable number of angelic hosts - mighty seasoned warriors, who have spent a lifetime at my beckon."
The Master continues *"I not only have the manpower, but I actually*

have a full freight of cargo, just waiting to be unloaded. In fact, I have all things that pertain to life at your disposal- all right there- waiting to be loaded.” Jesus continues,

“In fact, I have looked ahead, and I know the exact times and places that you’re going to come upon a storm. I have seen and prepared for every struggle, situation, and circumstance you’re going to encounter out there.”

“Actually,” He continues *“I have endured the route of life you’ll be taking- I have trodden every mile of your journey and I have already faced every form of threat, temptation, and trial that lies ahead. And because I have done this- I have a perfect understanding of everything that you’re going to encounter out there in life. So, knowing exactly what lies ahead; I have packed precisely everything you’re going to need- with no expense spared and no exceptions made- everything has been extensively provided for.”*

It still sounds too good to be true- right? Sure Jesus is more reliable than captain crunch, but for what reason should you trust what He is telling you? Truly ask yourself; *Why should you place your faith in Jesus as your Master?* When the seas rage and the virus surges, when my life crumbles around me- why should I trust that Jesus is enough to be the Master of my ship? Not as a Christian cliché, not as a catch phrase, not as a Sunday hobby- but truly ask yourself- *why does Jesus make me unmovable?*

Col. 2:9-10 *“For in him [Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”*

In Christ, our captain we find *all of the fulness of God*. How full do you think God is? God, who said let there be and *BOOM!* Planets, solar systems, oceans, atmospheres, mountains, space, time, matter, and all of existence came to be. God, who sees all, knows all, controls

all, and is everywhere. God, who has a perfect track record of making the impossible possible.

Why should you trust Christ as your captain? Because that same might of God to do the impossible, dwells in Him. And Paul writes that, those who will let Him board your ship, those who will give Him control as the captain- *will be complete in Him*. You'll have every single thing you will ever need. Wanting and needing nothing ever; *complete*. The reason you are complete in Him is because, Christ; being full of God- is the head, or above all principalities and powers. He is at the very tippy, tippy top of the food chain. Every single scary thing, every predicament, every problem, every storm we will ever face ever- *is under His feet*. We've bet on the right fighter. We've trusted in the right champion. It's a sure thing, a guarantee- because He trumps all.

This is exactly what the disciples came to realize as Jesus sailed beside them. A life threatening storm beats against their boats- they believe this is it, this is the end- they are convinced that they themselves do not have what will be needed to endure this storm- and so they cry out "*Master, we perish!*" And Jesus, being the head over all principalities and powers- stands up on a rocking, moving, bumpy boat and Jesus silences the storm. The Master mutters; "*Hey you, wind, rain, sea, storm- shut up! You have no authority here- because I am The Master, I am greater than you- and at my command I say; peace be still.*" The disciples were totally caught by surprise - *the storm actually listened- it obeyed Him!* Because Jesus is The Master- He is the head, He is above every single situation we will ever face in life. He is sufficient and He is enough. There will never come a storm in your life, whether it's of personal or pandemic proportions- that He is not the head over.

Why should we trust Him for finding fulness? Why should we trust this Jesus to be our Master? I want to introduce you to a word that has changed my life, *literally*. I have this word framed and sitting on the

shelf in my office. The word is *pleroma*, and it's used here in Colossians 2 as the word *fulness* and the word *complete*. **Pleroma** is a noun; a person, place, or thing- and listen to what it means;

“That which fills a ship inasmuch as it is filled with freight, merchandise and is manned with sailors, rowers, oarsman, and soldiers. The power, presence and agency that fills. Completeness, fulness, abundance, keeping, to supply liberally, to fill to the top so that nothing shall be wanted, fill to the brim, to make complete in every particular way.”

Pleroma means that Jesus is every single thing that a ship needs to sail- He's the mast, the sail, the anchor, the oars. He's the crew, the captain, the soldiers, the oarsman. He fills the ship with freight and merchandise and gear. Jesus fills the ship, captains the ship, *and Jesus is the ship!* Jesus literally is everything- the fulness of what it takes to sail, or in our case ***Jesus is everything that we need in life***. He is all it takes to live. Jesus is our fulness.

This is the thing we really have to grasp- Jesus is fully, wholly, and completely capable to do what He has promised. Period. End of statement. If Jesus has said He will provide for you, if He has told you that He has everything and He is everything that you will need- that's even more absolute, definitive, and definite than the oxygen you're breathing and the gravity holding you to your seat. It's a fact- *no exceptions, no exemptions*- why? Because Jesus ***is*** our fullness. ***He*** fills the boat, ***He*** mans the boat, ***He*** sails the boat, ***He*** captains the boat. And in order to let us down- He would have to let go of His perfect track record, He would tarnish His perfect reputation- and He would literally have to cease being who He is. Because Paul writes that Jesus does not only give us fulness, but He Himself ***is*** fulness. *He's enough*- if He has said it, then it is impossible for it not to take place.

Jesus is standing at your dock, telling you He is your *pleroma*. There will still be storms and waves crashing around you- but if He masters your ship- then the waves are *His problem*. The seas are *His to deal with*. The trials and troubles, the cares and worries of this life are not yours to bear any longer- cast, throw off your cares *upon Him* because He cares for you! And This master who cares for you is telling you *that He is enough - will you trust Him?* That's all that faith comes down to; *trust*. Being a Christian is making the decision to throw out everything you thought you needed for this impossible voyage, and saying Here Jesus; *the boats yours*- I trust that you are enough for my life.

Do you trust Him? Really trust Him? Enough to set sail and make Him your master? Look at your life and truly evaluate; *do you trust Him to be enough?*

Imagine we are standing on that dock, holding the rope to our ship in hand- we see this Captain- The Master standing at the pier- and before we set sail into uncertainty, we have some Castoff Considerations. We are ultimately going to set sail in one of two ways. And the way in which you set sail will determine whether you're going to be shaken or stable. It will make the difference between a firm and fumbling faith. It's what will give you a solid ship or a sinking ship.

Some of us know *about Jesus*. We have read His Word, we have learned *about* His miracles. We've been in church and learned many facts *about Jesus* and who He is. We know He was a carpenter, He walked on water. We know He healed the sick and raised the dead. We know the list of commands and rules that He told us to keep- we know all about Jesus. And we set sail, waving goodbye, as we yell to Him; "*I know You're God's Son, I know You can do anything, I know that you offer peace and contentment- see ya!*" Yet, as my ship is sinking quickly and the waves are rising higher- I can mutter as many facts *about* Him as I want to, I can tell you the 10 commandments, I can quote the Lord's prayer, I can name the books of the bible, or tell

you the Easter story- I can give you the explanation- and tell you all about Jesus- and yet- when the storms start to rise and the waves start to overwhelm my life- ultimately, I will still sink! My facts *about* Him are helpless. Because I am still just as incapable as I was before, as I sail off in life without Jesus, yet knowing *about* Him.

Listen, many of you have been in church maybe your whole life, others of you are maybe starting out in serving the Lord- let me save you a lot of heartache- ***knowing about Jesus is not enough to make you unmovable!*** And many of us have reassured ourselves that we're all set as we set sail, leaving Jesus behind on the dock because we think knowing *about* Him will get us through! Knowing about Him means absolutely nothing- you're just as shakable, just as sinkable as everyone else. Even demons and Satan himself know about Jesus. If you're trusting church attendance, if you're relying on your bible knowledge, if you're counting on doing Christian things to make you safe through the storm- you're in for a sinkable surprise- because knowing about Jesus is not enough.

There is only one single way to set sail safely through the seas of life; You have to *experience Jesus*. You have to sail *by* Him. Place your *faith*, in Him. Our life - lived *by* Him. We accept His offer to be the Master of our ship, He boards our boat, takes control of the ship, the crew, the equipment- and we cast off, trusting that He is enough, relying on Him, having faith in Him to be our fullness- to be sufficient for the sea. He is now in charge. He calls the shots, my ship, my life goes where He wants- says what He wants, does what He wants- because He's the Master. He's the one in control of the ship. I know that I will be safe through this storm – because I am experiencing Jesus as my Master- and I know that as long as He is in control- *I have nothing to fear*.

Only *by* Jesus can we sail safely. Faith is knowing that He will come through when you need Him most. It's knowing that He would never, ever let you sink. It's knowing that He is our fulness, we have packed

Him on board, and we have absolutely all that we need to make it through. Instead of having to frantic and fear and worry and wobble with every wave that our boat will endure, I can go below deck and safely sleep through the storms of life because He Masters my ship- Christ is my captain. *The only way to have true faith, the only way to have full assurance, an unmovable and unshakable life is to experience Jesus as the unmovable Master.*

Once you're out in the middle of the stormy sea, it's a lot more difficult to conclude how much you need Him to be your captain. *Decide now.* As you're standing at the dock, rope in hand, ready to cast off- decide now. What are you going to pack as the fulness of your life? In what will you trust as enough to make it through? The Unmovable Master is standing there waiting, offering every single thing you'll need- plenteous supplies, the manpower, the experience, the provision- will you trust Him?

MAKING HIM THE MASTER OF MY SHIP IS THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE ME UNMOVABLE



WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST THING YOU'VE EVER FORGOT TO PACK?

1. CAUSE FOR _____

- I CANNOT CAPTAIN A SHIP! SO NOW IS THE TIME TO _____!
 - LIFE IS UNCERTAIN, BUT WE HAVE TO LIVE IT ANYWAYS
 - WHAT HAVE I TRUSTED TO GET ME THROUGH LIFE?
-

- BELIEVERS WERE MEANT TO _____! THERE IS NEVER A CIRCUMSTANCE OR SITUATION THAT GOD SAYS; *"IT'S OKAY TO FEAR."*

2. CAPTAINS _____

3. CAPTAINS _____

- WHY SHOULD YOU PLACE YOUR FAITH IN JESUS AS YOUR MASTER?
- COLOSSIANS 2:9-10 *"FOR IN HIM [CHRIST] DWELLETH THE _____ OF THE GODHEAD BODILY. AND YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM, WHICH IS THE HEAD OF ALL PRINCIPALITY AND POWER."*

- THOSE WHO GIVE HIM CONTROL AS CAPTAIN, ARE _____ IN HIM!

A. FINDING _____

- **PLEROMA (NOUN):** *THAT WHICH FILLS A SHIP INASMUCH AS IT IS FILLED WITH FREIGHT/ MERCHANDISE, AND IS MANNED WITH SAILORS, ROWERS, OARSMAN, AND SOLDIERS. THE POWER, PRESENCE, AND AGENCY THAT FILLS. COMPLETENESS, FULNESS, ABUNDANCE, KEEPING, TO SUPPLY LIBERALLY, TO FILL TO THE TOP SO THAT*

NOTHING SHALL BE WANTED, FILL TO THE BRIM, TO MAKE COMPLETE IN EVERY PARTICULAR WAY."

- JESUS FILLS THE SHIP, CAPTAINS THE SHIP, AND JESUS _____!

4. CASTOFF CONSIDERATIONS

- BEING A CHRISTIAN IS MAKING THE DECISION TO _____ EVERYTHING YOU THOUGHT YOU NEEDED FOR THIS IMPOSSIBLE VOYAGE, AND SAYING JESUS; THE BOATS YOURS- I TRUST THAT YOU ARE ENOUGH FOR MY LIFE.

A. _____ OF JESUS

- KNOWING _____ JESUS IS NOT ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU UNMOVABLE!

B. _____ JESUS

- THE ONLY WAY TO HAVE TRUE FAITH, FULL ASSURANCE, AND AN UNMOVABLE AND UNSHAKABLE LIFE IS TO EXPERIENCE JESUS AS THE UNMOVABLE MASTER.

**MAKING HIM THE _____ OF MY SHIP
IS THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE ME UNMOVABLE**

UNMOVABLE MASTER

QUESTIONS FOR FINDING FIRM FAITH

1. WHY ARE YOU UNABLE TO FILL, MAN, SAIL, AND SUSTAIN YOUR LIFE?

2. WITH WHAT HAVE YOU FILLED YOUR LIFE WITH, TRUSTING THAT IT WILL SUSTAIN YOU? _____

3. CAN YOU THINK OF AN INSTANCE WHERE, WHAT YOU LISTED FOR QUESTION 2 WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH? (E.G. THE PANDEMIC CLOSED MANY SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, ETC.)

4. DO YOU TRULY BELIEVE JESUS IS ENOUGH FOR *ANY SITUATION* IN YOUR LIFE?

YES | NO

5. WHY IS JESUS MORE PREPARED TO CAPTAIN YOUR BOAT THAN YOU ARE?

6. ON A SCALE OF 1-10, RATE HOW YOU CURRENTLY LIVING LIFE;

- EXPLANATION: CASTING OFF KNOWING *ABOUT JESUS* _____
- EXPERIENCE: CASTING OFF KNOWING *BY JESUS* _____

7. ONLY GOD CAN SEE WHAT LIES AHEAD, AND PROVIDE ACCORDINGLY. THIS IS IN FACT THE DEFINITION OF PROVISION; *PRO- BEFORE, AND VISION SEEING-* OR IN OTHER WORDS SEEING BEFORE THE NEED ARISES. HOW DOES THE PROVISION OF GOD MAKE YOU UNMOVABLE? _____

JESUS IS OUR *PLEROMA; OUR FULNESS*. HOW FULL OF HIM DO YOU WANT TO BE?



UNMOVABLE MASTER KEEP GOING ...

MASTER OF THE MEAL

IN MARK 6 WE FIND THAT JESUS TAKES A FEW SMALL FISH AND LOAVES AND BEGINS TO FILL THE HUNGRY STOMACHS OF HIS FOLLOWERS. JESUS DOES NOT BREAK THE BREAD INTO ENOUGH PIECES TO GIVE A CRUMB, AN APPETIZER, OR EVEN A PORTION TO EACH PERSON- INSTEAD JESUS KEEPS MULTIPLYING THE FOOD UNTIL EACH OF THE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE BECOMES FILLED-STUFFED EVEN- LIKE THEY HAD JUST LEFT A THANKSGIVING FEAST. YET, STILL, JESUS DOESN'T STOP HERE. JESUS KEEPS ON MULTIPLYING UNTIL EVERYONE IS STUFFED, AND THEN 12 BASKETS OF LEFTOVERS WERE FILLED. AND IN VERSE 43 WE FIND THAT THESE DOGGY BAGS OF FOOD COLLECTED WERE *PLEROMA* – THEY WERE FILLED WITH THE FULNESS TO THE TIPPY, TIPPY TOP.

JESUS MAKES THE POINT- *I SEE YOUR NEED, I CAN MEET YOUR NEED, AND TRULY I CAN EXCEED YOUR NEED.* WHILE WE'RE HUNGRY AND ASKING FOR CRUMBS FROM CHRIST TO ENTER OUR LIVES HE IS HOLDING HANDFULS OF ABUNDANCE, DESIRING TO PROVIDE AND *PLEROMA* OUR NEEDS- EXCEED AND SUPPLY BEYOND WHAT WE NEED.

AND YET, AS GREAT AS THIS BELOVED BIBLE SCENE IS TO MANY, CONSIDER THE LAD. BEFORE THE BASKETS COULD BE FILLED, BEFORE THE LEFTOVERS WERE TAKEN UP, BEFORE THE MEN, THE WOMEN, AND THE CHILDREN ATE- FIRST, THIS LAD HAD TO LET GO OF HIS LUNCH. HE HAD TO GIVE WHAT HE HAD INTO THE HANDS OF JESUS. THIS YOUNG BOY HAD TO TRUST THAT BY TAKING WHAT HIS MOM HAD PACKED FOR HIM THAT DAY, JESUS COULD NOT ONLY PROVIDE FOR HIS NEED- BUT JESUS COULD PLENTEOUSLY PROVIDE FOR ALL THE NEEDS. IN THIS LAD'S HANDS HIS LUNCH WAS PATHETIC. IN THE MASTER'S HANDS, IT WAS PLENTIFUL. BUT FIRST HE HAD TO LET GO.

MASTER OF THE MOUNT

IN GENESIS 22 WE FIND ONE OF THE MOST...UNCOMFORTABLE STORIES IN SCRIPTURE. ABRAHAM HAS BEEN PROMISED A SON BY GOD, AND AFTER A LIFETIME OF WAITING, AND TRYING TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN - GOD FINALLY GIVES ABRAHAM A SON NAMED ISAAC. YET, EVEN THOUGH GOD HAD FINALLY GIVEN HIM A SON- IN VERSE 2 GOD TELLS ABRAHAM; *"GIVE HIM BACK."*

GOD ASKS ABRAHAM TO TAKE HIS ONLY SON UP THE MOUNT, AND THERE SACRIFICE ISAAC TO ME. SO, ABRAHAM AND ISAAC HEAD UP THE HILL, WOOD, KNIFE, AND ROPE IN HAND. ISAAC TURNS TO HIS DAD- THE MAN HE HAD RELIED UPON AND TRUSTED TO PROTECT HIM ALL OF HIS LIFE- AND ISAAC ASKS; *"WHERE'S THE SACRIFICE?"*

NOW IF THIS WERE A DISNEY MOVIE, THIS WOULD BE THE SCENE WHERE THE MELANCHOLY MUSIC PLAYS, THE RAIN POURS DOWN, AND WHERE THE SITUATION SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE.

YET, THOUGH MOST ALL OF US WOULD HAVE WAVERED AND WAFFLED AT THE THOUGHT OF GIVING UP OUR ONLY CHILD TO GOD- ABRAHAM RESPONDS BY SAYING “*GOD WILL PROVIDE.*” IN OUR MOUNT MORIAH MOMENTS WE OFTEN TRY AND FIND OR FIX AN ANSWER FOR OURSELVES – BELIEVING THAT WE MUST DO SOMETHING OR ELSE THE INEVITABLE WILL TAKE PLACE. YET NOT ABRAHAM. ABRAHAM WAS UNMOVABLE BECAUSE HE BELIEVED NO MATTER HOW IMPOSSIBLE THE SITUATION, *GOD WOULD BE THE MASTER OF THE MOUNT.*

WHETHER GOD BROUGHT ISAAC BACK TO LIFE, WHETHER GOD TURNED ABRAHAM’S KNIFE TO JELL-O AT THE LAST SECOND, OR WHETHER HE MADE ISAAC KNIFE-PROOF, ABRAHAM BELIEVED THAT IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER GOD HAD WHAT ABRAHAM NEEDED.

AS THE FATHER SON DUO MAKE IT TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN, ISAAC IS BOUND IN ROPE, PLACED ON TOP OF THE ALTAR- AND ABRAHAM LITERALLY LIFTS UP HIS KNIFE TO SACRIFICE HIS VERY OWN SON- WHEN SUDDENLY ABRAHAM HEARS A ‘*AAHAAH AAHAAH AAHAAHAAHHHH.*’ AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME, IN JUST THE RIGHT PLACE, FOR JUST THE RIGHT NEED- *GOD HAD PROVIDED.* A RAM WAS CAUGHT IN THE BRIERS BY THE MASTER OF THE MOUNT.

KNOWING THE UNMOVABLE MASTER DOES NOT MEAN WE WON’T FACE HARD TIMES- BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT WHEN WE DO, WE WILL HAVE WHAT WE WILL NEED. HE IS OUR *PLEROMA*, OUR FULNESS. IN HIS CARGO HOLD OF SURPLUS SUPPLIES HE HAS RESERVED RAMS A PLENTY. CHRIST, OUR FULNESS, HAS JUST THE DOLLAR AMOUNT YOU’RE SHORT, AND THE FRIEND YOU HAVEN’T MET YET. WHATEVER YOU NEED- AS OUR *PLEROMA* HE HAS IT.

AND THE REASON WE CAN HAVE ASSURANCE OF HIS ABILITY TO SUPPLY FOR OUR NEEDS IS BECAUSE, AS ABRAHAM PUTS IT, HE IS *JEHOVAH-JIRAH -THE LORD WILL PROVIDE* (GEN. 22:14). OUR GOD IS A GOD OF PROVISION, MEANING HE HAS PRO: OR *BEFORE*, VISION; *HE SEES*. OUR GOD SEES THE NEED BEFORE WE EVER HAVE IT, AND HE PLENTEOUSLY PROVIDES FOR IT IN ADVANCE. HE DRAWS A WONDERING RAM UP THE MOUNTAIN- KNOWING THAT ABRAHAM WILL HAVE A NEED. BEFORE THE NEED ARISES, HE PLACES ESTHER IN A PLACE OF POWER TO PROVIDE FOR ISRAEL AT SUCH A TIME AS THIS. BEFORE JONAH JUMPED, HE PUTS THE WHALE RIGHT IN THE EXACT EXTRACTION POINT TO SWALLOW THE SUICIDAL PROPHET. BEFORE THEIR MOUTHS BECAME DRY, GOD FILLED A ROCK WITH WATER FOR A THIRSTING NATION OF ISRAEL. BEFORE THE KINGS OF THE AMORITES EVER DECIDED TO ATTACK JOSHUA AND THE TRIBES- GOD WAS A BEEKEEPER, PREPARING A SWARM TO TAKE OUT ISRAEL’S ENEMIES.

WHATEVER YOU NEED CAN BE FOUND IN HIM WHO IS OUR *PLEROMA*; OUR FULNESS.

MASTER OF THE MAYFLOWER

THE MAYFLOWER WAS THE BIG OLE SHIP THAT BROUGHT THE PURITANS TO THE AMERICAS IN THE YEAR 1620. MOST OF THE TIME WE PICTURE THIS HAPPY LITTLE SHIP, FILLED WITH HAPPY LITTLE PILGRIMS, MAKING A HAPPY LITTLE TRIP ACROSS THE HAPPY LITTLE SEA- LIKE IT CAME FROM A BOB ROSS PAINTING. AND YET, THERE WAS NOTHING AT ALL *HAPPY* OR *LITTLE* ABOUT THIS TRIP. THE PURITANS SAVED, PACKED, AND PREPARED FOR THIS VOYAGE FOR MANY YEARS- ENSURING THAT THEY WOULD HAVE EVERYTHING NEEDED AT THEIR DISPOSAL. AND YET AFTER A DELAY OF SEVERAL MONTHS FROM LEAKS ON THE SHIP, THEN THE SELLING OFF OF THEIR SUPPLIES IN ORDER TO RAISE FUNDING, THEN THE SETTLING IN OF SEA SICKNESS- THIS TRIP CAUSED MANY PASSENGERS TO ABANDON THEIR MISSION. STILL, THOSE WHO PRESSED ON SAILED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS- AND UPON MAKING IT ABOUT HALF WAY TO THEIR DESTINATION- THE SEAS BEGAN TO SWELL AND THE WAVES GREW WILD. FOR DAYS AND WEEKS ON END THE STORM BECAME SO BAD THAT THE SAILS HAD TO BE TAKEN IN AND THE SHIP HAD TO BE ALLOWED TO FREELY DRIFT. THE 130 PASSENGERS WERE CRAMMED BELOW DECK WHERE THE CEILINGS WERE BARELY 5 FEET HIGH. EVERYONE HELD ON TIGHTLY FOR DAYS ON END AS THE MERCILESS WAVES WASHED OVER THE SHIP- SOAKING EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING ON BOARD.

THOUGH IT SEEMED THAT THIS TRIP HAD GOTTEN AS BAD AS IT COULD GET- THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER WENT FROM BAD TO WORSE AS THE UNTHINKABLE HAPPENED. THERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OPEN SEA, AS THE STORM SEIZED THE SHIP- WITH EVERYONE ON BOARD AT THE MERCY OF THE WAVES- THE MAST IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MAYFLOWER SNAPPED- AND WAS MADE INOPERABLE. THE MAST OF THE SHIP IS POSSIBLY THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION ON BOARD ASIDE FROM THE ANCHOR. IT'S WHAT GUIDES, MOVES, AND SAILS THE SHIP. WITHOUT IT, THE SHIP WOULD BE LOST TO SEA INDEFINITELY OR WOULD SINK COMPLETELY. THE 130 PASSENGERS OF THE MAYFLOWER HAD A PROBLEM- A BIG PROBLEM.

WOULD YOU SAY THE PURITANS HAD A REASON TO PANIC? A REASON TO FEAR? A REASON TO BE SHAKEN? A LOT OF US WOULD LOOK AT THEIR SITUATION AND THINK- THAT RIGHT THERE IS A LEGIT REASON TO BE AFRAID! AND YET, THESE PURITANS WERE UNMOVABLE. THEY KNEW THE MASTER OF THE BOAT WAS GREATER THAN THE MEANNESS OF THE WAVES. THEY HAD NO IDEA HOW OR IN WHAT WAY THIS WOULD END OR WORK OUT- BUT THEY KNEW THE MASTER WAS ON THE SCENE. AND SO, RIGHT THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN, WHILE OUT ON THE BUMPY WAVES- THE PURITANS BEGAN TO PRAY. NOT THAT THE STORM WOULD STOP, NOT THAT THE SEA WOULD CEASE- BUT THAT THE MASTER WOULD MAKE A MOVE. THOUGH THEY HAD NO IDEA HOW

OR IN WHAT WAY -WHAT THESE MEN AND WOMEN KNEW WAS THAT THEIR MASTER WAS A WAY MAKER. WHETHER HE PARTED THE ATLANTIC OCEAN AND GAVE THE SHIP FEET, WHETHER HE GREW A NEW MAST RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BOAT, WHETHER HE MIRACULOUSLY REPAIRED THE MAST- IT DIDN'T MATTER HOW- IT ONLY MATTERED THAT THEY BELIEVED, THEY TRUSTED THE MASTER OF THEIR SHIP TO COME THROUGH.

AND AS THE PURITANS WERE PRAYING, THE MASTER KNEW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO. IN SO MANY WORDS THE MASTER SAID; *BEFORE YOU LEFT, I KNEW JUST EXACTLY WHAT YOU WOULD NEED FOR THIS PRECISE PROBLEM- AND I PACKED YOUR SHIP ACCORDINGLY- BECAUSE AS YOUR MASTER I AM YOUR FULNESS- AND I AM ENOUGH.*

AND AS THEY PRAYED, A MEMBER OF THE GROUP STUMBLED UPON A JACKSCREW STOWED AWAY. IT'S ORIGINS ARE UNCERTAIN AND STILL DEBATED TO THIS DAY- BUT UPON FINDING THE JACKSCREW THE CREW HOISTED IT INTO PLACE AND IT FIT WITH PERFECTION IN THE PLACE OF THE CRACK IN THE MAST. ALMOST AS IF THIS PRECISE JACKSCREW HAD BEEN FORMED AND PLACED IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME FOR PRECISELY WHEN IT WOULD BE NEEDED MOST. IT WAS ALMOST AS IF SOMEONE KNEW THIS WAS COMING AND HAD PROVIDED IN ADVANCE FOR THE NEED.

DO YOU TRUST THE MASTER OF THE SHIP? WHEN THE WAVES ARE WILD, WHEN THE SAILS ARE SWAMPED, WHEN THE SEA SWELLS AND THE STORM SURGES- DO YOU TRUST HIM? DO YOU TRUST THAT HE KNOWS YOUR NEED WITH PRECISION? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT HE HAS PROVISION- HE SEES THE NEED IN ADVANCE AND HAS PACKED ACCORDINGLY?

HAVING AN UNMOVABLE FAITH MEANS TRUSTING THE MASTER WHEN YOU CAN'T SEE BELOW DECK. IT MEANS TRUSTING THAT HE KNOWS THE NEED AND HE WILL TAKE CARE OF THE NEED. HAVING UNMOVABLE FAITH IS OPERATING, PRESSING FORWARD- MOVING AHEAD AS IF THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN PACKED ON YOUR SHIP ALL ALONG. UNMOVABLE FAITH MEANS TRUSTING THE MASTER TO BE ENOUGH. TRUSTING THE MASTER OF THE SHIP TO BE YOUR FULNESS- ADEQUATE, ABUNDANT EVEN FOR YOUR NEED. OUR JOB IS NOT TO FIX, FIND A SOLUTION, OR FIGURE IT OUT- OUR JOB IS TO HAVE FAITH – TRUST HIM TO BE ENOUGH. SAIL AHEAD, KNOWING THE MASTER HAS WHAT WE WILL NEED STORED BELOW DECK. FULNESS MEANS HAVING A WANT FOR NOTHING, JESUS IS ENOUGH.



UNMOVABLE THE MOTION

Genesis 37-50

What's your favorite place? People have all sorts of differing opinions about this. Some people love the countryside with its rolling hills and meadows full of flowers. For others it's the mountains, with its streams and trees and wildlife. But for many it's a place a bit warmer, *the beach!* If you close your eyes, I bet you can imagine being there: *the warm sun shining down on you, your toes buried in the sand, and then there's that sound.* No not the annoying squawk of a seagull but that gentle peaceful sound. You know, the sound of the water folding gently over itself, and the swishing of the water reaching its end on the beach before it rolls back out away from land. The sound of the ocean! This chapter is all about the ocean and how it relates to being unmovable! I know what your thinking, how can the ocean have anything to do with being unmovable? The ocean is constantly moving. The ocean is unstable, unpredictable, unreliable! You can't stand on the ocean (*save that one miraculous encounter that Peter had*). The ocean is fluid and the last thing you would think of when you think of something that is unmovable! Saying the ocean is unmovable is just absurd! And to be honest, all of that is right, but only if you look at the ocean a certain way!

The reality is that life is a whole lot like the ocean. It can be unstable, unpredictable and unreliable. Life is constantly in *motion* and constantly taking us different places. One moment we feel like we have everything lined up and things are in order in our lives, then BOOM! Just like that a tidal wave of something totally unexpected knocks us off course. Something like, Oh I don't know, let's say a viral infectious disease that seemingly pops out of nowhere and no one really knows its true origins, but we know it's bad and all of a sudden life as we know it is completely changed and we are forced to

face this new reality and still yet be a shining example of Christ...(*just a hypothetical example*). But even if we didn't face a year like we did in 2020, with all its changes and uncertainties, life still would constantly throw us off balance. One moment we are perfectly healthy, and then all of sudden our health begins to fall apart. One moment we have all our ducks in a row, and then the rug is pulled out from under us. One moment our future seems certain and bright, then something earth shaking happens and we don't know what to do, and in the midst of all the *motion* we often lose *faith* in the one who anchors us in this world, but not Joseph....

In Genesis chapter 37 one of the most beloved characters in all the Bible is introduced, *Joseph*. His story is one that doesn't bring us in close for detailed examinations of particular issues or problems, but it's a *big picture* kind of story. His story moves fairly quick, the bulk of it taking place over roughly a 22-year period where we learn that Joseph's life is likely nothing like what he planned it to be. His story starts at the age of 17, a time of life when many hopes, plans and dreams are being forged for the future, and a dream is just where this story begins.

Joseph's dreams are bold, audacious and pretty appalling to the rest of his family. Joseph had two dreams which had the same meaning, and which would have the greatest of impact on his life. One involved him and his brothers binding up sheaves of grain in the field and his brother's sheaves bowing to his own. In his other dream, his father and mother were the sun and moon and himself and his brothers were stars, and all bowed before him. In both of his dreams his family found themselves humbling themselves before Joseph, the youngest in the family...*absolutely absurd!* What Joseph's family didn't realize, that Joseph did, was that this wasn't just a dream Joseph had. It wasn't a dream like we think of dreams. It wasn't a hope for stardom or fame. It wasn't an underdog, rise from the obscurity of poverty to become successful type dream. It wasn't some self-indulged, I have big plans for my life kind of future Joseph was

dreaming up. No, this dream, the thing which would drive Joseph and keep him unmovable throughout his life, was a *promise* from God.

That promise got Joseph through quite the ordeals in his life. His story really starts with his brothers. They were jealous and angry at him because their father loved him the most. Now that Joseph has revealed his dreams to them, they are so furious with him that they threw him into a pit and sold him into slavery. Talk about some *motion* in life! Can you imagine your own family selling you out? Some of us may have experienced that unexpected turn in our lives first hand. But Joseph doesn't lose sight of God or his promise though, and what seems to be a horrible tragedy in Joseph's life turns into an incredible opportunity for him when he finds himself in Potiphar's house. Potiphar saw something in Joseph. The Bible tells us that:

Gen 39:2 ***"The Lord was with Joseph and he was a prosperous man and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand."***

It wasn't long before Potiphar made Joseph the head of his household. Now we don't know how old Joseph is at this point but it's likely this is only a few years after he was sold into slavery, so he is still a very young guy. Things certainly seem to be looking up for Joseph. It just might be that he is getting positioned so his family would bow before him, but then, despite all of Joseph's honesty and best efforts, *motion* hit his life again. Potiphar's wife asks Joseph to do something he is unwilling to do, and it cost Joseph his position in life. She lied about him, threw him under the bus and drug his good name through the mud, an experience some of us may have endured as well, and the result was that everything good that Joseph had going for him in his life was taken away. He was not only stripped of his position but found himself thrown in jail. Twice now something extremely unexpected and horrific happened to Joseph, yet he did not lose sight of his Lord for the Bible tells us:

Gen 39:21 *“But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.”*

Joseph does something, he has this ability that we all should have but that we often don't. Joseph makes the best of whatever situation he is in. Joseph knew the Lord was with him and he remembered the promise God gave him in that dream. Joseph had been here before, cast down by his brothers but lifted up by God. So, when the cycle repeated itself and he was cast down by Potiphar he didn't worry about it, because Joseph didn't sweat the small things. And when you compare the trials of this life to the Power of our God, everything is a small thing! He just kept on trusting the Lord and found himself lifted up by God once again. We would be wise to do the same thing! Joseph didn't have God's Word written down like we do (*although he trusted God's Word in his dreams*) and we can find countless times that God *promises* to be with us! In **Isaiah 41:10, Joshua 1:9, Deuteronomy 31:6, Romans 8:38-39, Mathew 28:20** -all give us this same promise, and this just scratches the surface. Here is one more:

Heb 13:5 *“Let your conversation be without covetousness and be content with such things as ye have, for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*

Even after all he had been though up to this point Joseph still yet trusted that the Lord was with him. The reality is that God doesn't change, and when He promises us that He will be with us too, we should hold onto that. No matter what kind of *motion* hits our life and disrupts our normal we know this to be true: GOD IS WITH US. Joseph believed that and held onto that belief, even as he was thrown in prison for something he didn't do. And wouldn't you know it, in a situation many of us would find to be miserable, even some sort of punishment from God, Joseph found yet another opportunity to be an influence for the Lord- when he was made the head prisoner. In this position he meets two men; the baker and butler to Pharaoh.

Now these two men were men of stature and prestige. They were important men and yet they had offended Pharaoh and found themselves in prison, the same prison where Joseph was the head prisoner. These two men each had a dream and yup, you guessed it, Joseph interpreted their dreams. The baker would find that his offence would cost him his life, while the butler would be restored in three days' time to his position before the Pharaoh. Joseph had a simple request for his help, '*just remember me when you go before the Pharaoh.*' This was a simple request but one that could potentially change everything for Joseph. And I'm sure that after Joseph interpreted those dreams, he thought he would be getting out of prison, but instead- he was forgotten. Can you believe that. After Joseph helped the butler to see the reality of his dream the butler forgot all about him.

Again, being forgotten is something many of us have experienced in our lives. It hurts to feel as though you were more important in someone's life than you really were. To have someone you were relying on forget about you when you were no longer convenient in their life. Joseph got hit with this bit of *motion* as well, but he did not forget about God's promise. It took two full years before God chose to lift him up again, but the Lord is faithful and one who is worthy of our trust, so even if it feels as though you have been forgotten don't lost sight of God's promise. Before you even realize you might have a Pharaoh of an opportunity in your life, kind of like Joseph.

When the Pharaoh had a dream of his own it didn't take long for the Butler to remember Joseph. See that steady, constant faithfulness comes back to people when everything else has failed. Even if you have been betrayed, lied on and forgotten, if your faith in God and His promises have been so big and so unmovable despite your circumstances, people will eventually remember you. It's easy when the *motion* of life seems to be moving you in the wrong direction to let your emotions get the better of you. It would seem that Joseph was

moving backwards in life, that he was actually further from that promise God had given him. But he was really living out **Luke 16:10** which says:

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”

Joseph didn't care where he was, what he had or what his status in life was: he was going to remain faithful to God and trust him. His faith not only remained during these backwards phases of life but it actually increased. Joseph did what was right before the Lord and he just kept getting blessed wherever he was at. In other words, his faith wasn't dependent on his circumstances, and it would turn out that when Pharaoh had his dream his circumstances would change yet again.

When Joseph is brought before the Pharaoh and asked if he could interpret his dream, Joseph didn't fail to recognize it had always been the Lord who had lifted him up before and it would be the Lord who would do it now:

Gen 41:16 *“And Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, it is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.”*

Joseph's faith was big enough to recognize that God is the one who has the answers. God is the one who truly carries us through our storms and earth-shattering moments. It was Joseph's faith, faith in the promise God had given him all those years before that brought Joseph to this moment. Faith that was bigger than his circumstances. Faith that didn't try to resist the *motion* of life, but faith that moved with him in life. Faith that wasn't rigid and stiff like a mountain, but faith that was fluid and vast like the ocean.

Ok here it is, *are you ready?* The reason the ocean is unmovable isn't because it doesn't move, it clearly does. It is full of waves and

currents and *motion*. But the reason it is unmovable is *because of its size*. There is no beginning or end to the ocean. It rises and falls, moves and shifts and is always in *motion*, yet it never goes anywhere. *The ocean is there*. You can find it on the same place on the map as you could fifty years ago. If you go up in a plane and are flying along the coast of Florida, guess what you will see surrounding it? The ocean. Despite the fact that it is in constant *motion* it just doesn't move. It's something that resides, it is persistent, constant, even though it is always in *motion*...like Joseph's life - always being disrupted by *motion*, yet never losing faith in God's *promise*. Joseph never put his faith in his family, Potiphar, the jailer, Pharaoh or even himself, *it was always God*.

1 Corinthians 2:5 *“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”*

Joseph's faith, once again, correctly interpreted a dream. God would bring seven years of plenty to the land followed by seven years of famine, and because Joseph never lost sight of God's promise, millions would be spared during this time. Pharaoh saw the same thing in Joseph that Potiphar saw; a man righteous and with God on his side.

Gen 41:38 *“And Pharaoh said unto his servants, can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?”*

Pharaoh was impressed with Joseph and found him to be wise and trustworthy, so he put him in charge of everything. Not in charge of a household, or a prison- *but a kingdom*. Joseph is now put in a position to oversee the stockpiling of food during the seven years of plenty and the distribution of food during the famine. Joseph is in control of the economy of an entire region and because he never lost faith in God through all the *motion* of his life- God brought him to a place yet again where he could be the instrument for God's work. In the midst of all this he is about to find out that God is someone worthy

of putting his faith in. Wouldn't you know it that Joseph's brothers find themselves before Joseph, like many others during the famine, looking to buy food, and you know what they do? They bow before him.

Gen 42:9 *“And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them....”*

It took a lot longer than Joseph probably planned and certainly took a much different path than Joseph would have chosen, but here they were, Joseph's brothers bowing before him. So much had happened in Joseph's life, there had been so many ups and downs and so many times Joseph must have thought surely God will fulfill his promise now. But here in this moment I believe Joseph realized something—something he would tell his brothers after their father died. I believe he realized that all of the *motion* of life was used by God to bring about his *goodness* in life. I believe that Joseph realized that all of those years trusting the Lord *weren't wasted years*. All of those times it would have been so easy to abandon his faith, they were worth it, because God is faithful.

Gen 50: 19-21 *“And Joseph said unto them: Fear not, For am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people.”*

In life we are going to be tossed around. Life won't be perfect or easy, but if our faith would be like an ocean, we would be as unmovable as Joseph. It means that we won't sweat the small things and compared to God everything is a small thing. It means we won't expect God to make every situation good, but that we will make the best out of every situation because God is good. It means our faith will be fluid and vast so that even if life tosses us around a bit, we still aren't going anywhere.

So often we view our faith like a mountain, this big strong, solid thing which can't be shaken or moved. The only problem is that our faith isn't supposed to be our rock, *it's supposed to be built upon the rock*. We can take our faith and turn it into an idol. It's the right answer, I have faith in God and His plan, but the reality is *we don't*. When *motion* hits our life, like a mountain exposed to the elements, our faith begins to slowly erode. The winds and rain beat against us and slowly little pieces of our faith wash away. But an ocean doesn't fret when storms come and winds rage and rains smother, it just collects the water and gets bigger. Those experiences just add to the ocean, and our experiences in life should add to our faith. And when we treat our faith like a mountain those earth-shattering moments of life cause us to break and crumble, our faith falling like boulders crashing down a mountain. But when an ocean experiences an earthquake, it creates a tsunami! The ocean doesn't break and crumble because the earth shakes beneath it, it rises up in a massive and powerful wave that is capable of smashing anything in its path! Imagine the force we could have if our faith, like an ocean, would rise higher and higher when the most devastating things happen to us! All of this comes from having fluid faith. A faith that isn't afraid of a little *motion*.

Consider Jesus' words **in Mark 11 22-23**:

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea: and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”

Did you catch it? Notice that the mountain gets swallowed by the sea? Faith like an ocean overpowers even the biggest obstacles in our lives every time. Our tendency is so often to resist situations in our lives, try to wrap our heads around things and understand them. We find ourselves asking God why he has allowed this to happen or why he hasn't answered our prayers yet. We look at things and say this is good for my life, or this is bad for my life...and that's it. We make it

so black and white without realizing our life isn't going to be a straight line to the place God wants us to be. To Joseph, his life probably seemed to constantly be going in the wrong direction, but God knew exactly what he was doing. Joseph may have thought he was going the long way around to see God's promise fulfilled, but God knew exactly where he was taking him. Through all of it, Joseph never lost faith in God and his *promise*.

You know in the entire story of Joseph's life you never hear him complaining. He lived a much harder life than we probably have. Yet his faith was like an ocean, moving with him in life and growing at every turn. If we are serious about being unmovable then we ought to allow every experience of life to cause our faith to grow, because whether we realize it or not, and no matter how bad those experiences may seem, faith like an ocean understands God means it for our good and his *promises* outweigh all the trials and storms of life! Even the most painful and heart-breaking situations are still meant for our good. If our faith would be so vast, so overwhelming, so fluid that you can't find an end or beginning to it, I believe we would truly be unmovable! Not in the way we typically think of, not stuck in one place stubbornly staying put, but unmovable in that no matter what *motion* hits us in life, we just aren't going anywhere. No matter how far away from God's promises we seem to be, we just aren't giving up, because our faith is like an ocean!



1. JOSEPH'S DREAM = GOD'S PROMISE

- _____ – ASSURANCE THAT A PARTICULAR THING WILL GET DONE OR WILL HAPPEN
- 2 COR 1:20 “FOR ALL THE PROMISES OF GOD IN HIM ARE YEA AND IN HIM AMEN, UNTO THE GLORY OF GOD BY US.
- BECAUSE GOD’S PROMISES FIND THEIR YES IN HIM, _____ JOSEPH!

2. FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES _____ OUR CIRCUMSTANCES

- JOSEPH ALWAYS BEHAVED HIMSELF IN A WAY THAT WAS GLORIFYING TO GOD BECAUSE HE OPERATED WITH FULL CONFIDENCE OF GOD’S PROMISES (PHIL 1:27-28)
- INSTEAD OF GRUMBLING AND COMPLAINING JOSEPH MADE THE _____ OF EVERY SITUATION!
- JOSEPH HAD FAITH LIKE AN OCEAN, IT DID NOT TRY TO RESIST THE CIRCUMSTANCE, BUT RATHER ACCEPTED IT AND TRUSTED GOD THROUGH THE TRIAL!

3. GIVE GOD THE _____ FOR HIS PROMISES

- JOSEPH UNDERSTOOD IT HAD NEVER BEEN BY HIS OWN POWER THAT HE HAD ACHIEVED ANYTHING AND DIVERTED ALL THE GLORY BACK TO GOD! (GEN 41:16)
- 1 COR 1:27-29 “BUT GOD HATH CHOSEN THE FOOLISH THINGS OF THE WORLD TO CONFOUND THE WISE, AND GOD HATH CHOSEN THE WEAK THINGS OF THE WORLD TO CONFOUND THING WHICH ARE MIGHTY; AND BASE THINGS OF THE WORLD, AND THINGS WHICH ARE DESPISED

HATH GOD CHOSEN, YEA AND THINGS WHICH ARE NOT TO BRING TO NOUGHT THINGS THAT ARE: THAT NO FLESH SHOULD GLORY IN HIS PRESENCE.”

- **JOSEPH PLACED HIS FAITH SQUARELY IN THE POWER OF HIS GOD AND NOT IN HIS OWN ABILITY!**

4. FAITH LIKE AN _____

- **JOSEPH WAS IN CONSTANT MOTION IN HIS LIFE, ALWAYS MOVING SEEMINGLY FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY FROM WHERE HE WANTED TO BE, YET HIS FAITH MOVED EFFORTLESSLY WITH HIM!**
- **JOSEPH’S FAITH WAS SO BIG, NO MATTER HOW MUCH *MOTION* HIT HIS LIFE HIS FAITH NEVER WAVERED!**
- **2 COR 5:7 “FOR WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY _____.”**
- **SIGHT WALKING IS DEPENDENT UPON FINDING SOMETHING SOLID AND SECURE TO PLACE OUR FOOTING ON. FAITH WALKING IS DEPENDENT ON GOD DIRECTING OUR STEPS AND TRUSTING HIM TO MOVE US. WE WILL NEVER WALK ON THE WATER IF WE DO IT BY OUR OWN POWER, ONLY WHEN FAITH LIKE AN OCEAN IS USED! THE MORE UNCERTAIN WE ARE THE MORE FAITH IN GOD WE SHOULD HAVE!**

UNMOVABLE MOTION

QUESTIONS FOR FINDING FIRM FAITH

1. WHAT TYPE OF *MOTION* HAS HIT YOUR LIFE THIS YEAR?

2. HOW DID YOU REACT TO THAT *MOTION*?

3. THINK ABOUT ONE TIME WHEN SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED IN YOUR LIFE. WRITE HOW GOD USED THAT FOR YOUR GOOD. _____

4. IS YOUR FAITH SOMETHING WHICH YOU ACTIVELY THINK ABOUT AND USE?

5. WHAT PROMISES FROM GOD DO YOU ROUTINELY REMEMBER?

6. HOW CAN YOU INCREASE YOUR FAITH?



UNMOVABLE MOTION KEEP GOING ...

MAKE A MOVE

AN ALL TOO FAMILIAR STORY IN THE BIBLE IS FOUND IN MATHEW 14. YOU KNOW THE ONE WHERE PETER WALKS ON THE WATER. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE HEARD THAT PARTICULAR STORY USED IN SONGS, SERMONS, TESTIMONIES, SKITS, PLAYS AND DEVOTIONS? WELL, HERE'S ONE MORE, BUT IT MIGHT NOT BE WHAT YOU'RE EXPECTING. THE TYPICAL POINT MADE IS HOW PETER TOOK HIS EYES OFF THE LORD AND BEGAN TO SINK, A POINT THAT IS VERY VALID AND VERY TRUE. BUT HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE FAITH THAT PETER HAD TO WALK ON THE WATER IN THE FIRST PLACE? BEFORE HE FIXED HIS EYES ON THE WATER AND STOPPED WALKING BY FAITH!

HIS FAITH HAD TO EQUAL THAT OF THE WATER. AS VIOLENT AND UNSTABLE AND FULL OF *MOTION* AS THE WATER WAS, PETER'S FAITH MATCHED IT. HIS FAITH, HOWEVER BRIEF IT WAS, WAS JUST LIKE THE OCEAN HE WAS ABOUT TO WALK ON. FAITH LIKE AN OCEAN ISN'T EASY TO ACHIEVE, OR EVEN FATHOM. WE UNDERSTAND FAITH LIKE A ROCK, BUT WE CAN EASILY SEE ROCKS AND STAND ON THEM. WE DON'T UNDERSTAND THE STEADINESS OF THE OCEAN BECAUSE WE DON'T SEE IT IN ITS ENTIRETY, BUT ISN'T THAT EXACTLY WHAT FAITH IS? BELIEVING WITHOUT SEEING, TRUSTING WITHOUT KNOWING, HOPING IN HOPELESSNESS, WALKING FORWARD WHEN THE PATH IS UNCERTAIN JUST LIKE PETER DID.

AND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, EVERY TIME WE READ A BIBLE STORY WHERE SOMEONE DOES SOMETHING GREAT OR SEES A MIRACLE HAPPEN IN THEIR LIFE EXTRAORDINARY FAITH IS INVOLVED. I KNOW ELIJAH DIDN'T CALL DOWN FIRE FROM HEAVEN ON HIS OWN, IT WAS HIS FAITH IN GOD. THE THREE HEBREW BOYS DIDN'T SURVIVE THE FIRE BY FIRE-RETARDANT SUITS THEY INVENTED, IT WAS THEIR FAITH. WHAT WERE JESUS' WORDS TO THE CENTURION: I HAVE NOT FOUND SO GREAT A FAITH IN ALL OF ISRAEL! IT'S FAITH LIKE AN OCEAN, BIGGER THAN WE ARE AND COMPELLING US TO MOVE FORWARD WHEN WE ARE UNCERTAIN, THAT WILL REWARD US WITH THE BIGGEST BLESSINGS IN LIFE!

HABAKKUK 2:4 "BEHOLD, HIS SOUL WHICH IS LIFTED UP IS NOT UPRIGHT IN HIM: BUT THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY HIS FAITH."



UNMOVABLE THE MINDSET

Ephesians 6:13 “*Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore...*”

“How few men are strong enough to stand against the prevailing currents of opinion!” – **Winston Churchill**

What does it mean to take a stand? Often, when we say the phrase “*We need to take a stand!*” it comes with the wind of a movement at its back. What I mean to say is that momentum is already propelling that particular thought or idea forward and we jump on the bandwagon! But is this really what taking a stand is? Is it when we fight for what the masses deem a noble cause? Is it when we wait for others to bring to light the injustices of our world and follow their lead? In our society today, there are plenty of causes to take a stand *for* and plenty of causes to take a stand against: *equality, racism, politics, economic policies, public health and how that is to be achieved, women’s rights, bigotry...* plenty of wagons to jump on! But what **should** we be taking a stand for? And what **should** we be taking a stand against? Shouldn’t it be for Christ and him alone? Don’t get me wrong these other causes certainly can be noble and just, but shouldn’t our main focus be on our resurrected Savior? I’ve seen a lot of Christians, if we’re being honest myself included, at times falter and cave during this past year and half. We’ve determined to take a stand *for Trump, or against him*. We’ve determined to take a stand *for masks, or against them*. We’ve determined to take a stand *for opening up our economy, or not*. What’s worse yet is that we seem to have lost all regard for how these stands will affect our stand for Christ, or what’s worse is we have lost all sight of standing for Christ

at all! Taking a stand for Christ is not popular, it will be against the current of the public opinion, but this is what we must be unmovable in, and this takes a certain mindset; *a warrior's mindset!*

Ephesians chapter 6 is all too familiar. I know, I know '*put on the armor of God for we wrestle not against flesh and blood and all that.*' But how seriously do we take this scripture? We know that mankind is not our enemy, yet where do we often fight? After all, it's easier to stand on a picket line outside of a Planned Parenthood than to personally intervene in the life of a single pregnant teenager- and that's just one example. We view God's armor as a way to defend ourselves from the attack of the enemy, which is true enough, yet we lack the *mindset* to put this armor on every day and *prepare* for the battle. We wait until the battle is raging and then, like Peter, cry out when we begin to sink and feel overwhelmed. The word *withstand* in Eph 6:13 doesn't mean endure or just make it through. Which is an approach many of us take in our daily lives, as if we are in Spiritual peace times. Instead, it means; *to set yourself against, to resist and to oppose.* Taking a stand is actually an act of *prepared defiance*; fighting against one thing (*often the popular opinion*) in order to preserve another! If we don't have a soldier's mindset, we won't be *prepared* for the battles we face, and we will be left unable to stand- only to hide and cry out for help. We won't have our armor on and likely at the first sign of trouble we will falter and fail. A soldier's mindset is one of obedience and determination, like that of *Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlin.*

In the summer of 1863, the United States had been involved in the bloodiest conflict it would ever face for two long years. The Confederate states attempted to leave the Union and the Union states fought to preserve it. Torn by states' rights and the issue of slavery, the two halves of our country would find themselves in a horrible war which pitched friends against friends, brothers against brothers and fathers against sons. The war had been decidedly in favor of the Confederate states with few victories or bright spots for the Union

army. The momentum of the war would be changed drastically at the battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, particularly the battle of Little Round Top. The Confederate army was looking to crush the Union army once and for all, hoping to drive them back and open up a clear path towards the Nation's Capital. The Union army set up a defensive line along a series of hillside grounds called Cemetery Ridge. The Southward most position along this ridgeline, a 650-foot-high boulder ridden hill, was called Little Round Top. This position was vitally important because although it wasn't as tall as the other positions on the ridge much of it was cleared and could more easily accommodate soldiers, and it was the end of the Union army. This meant that if the Confederate Army could take *this* position, they could assemble their army on this hill, flank around behind the Union army, and cut them off from their supply chain in the North- effectively leaving Washington open and ending the war.

On the morning of July 2nd Little Round Top had only a handful of Union soldiers on it. A division of soldiers just North of the Little Round Top were ordered to take up a position there. However, a miscommunication in the command orders took place and the soldiers posted on Little Round Top left their position before those meant to replace them arrived. For a brief span of time this crucial position was left *completely undefended*. When a scout for the Union army who had been sent to assess the situation at Cemetery Ridge found absolutely no troops holding this position, he sent a hurried message to the Division Commander who was supposed to be at Little Round Top. By this time however, the commander, who disobeyed orders and actually moved his men to another location, was in a fierce fight with elements of the Confederate army and had no men to spare to safeguard Little Round Top. Another Division commander who received the message about the threat to Little Round Top- realizing its strategic importance- marched his men on the double to take up their position there. In that division was Col. Joshua Chamberlin of the 20th Maine regiment.

The 20th Maine was considered the weak link in this particular division and it was a badly battered regiment. When originally formed it boasted 1,621 men, but now through the difficulties of war, it only contained 266 soldiers. Reinforcements were added to the 20th Maine just before the battle of Little Round Top when 120 men from the 2nd Maine had nowhere else to go after their regiment was disbanded. Being the only other Maine regiment in the division, they were given to Col. Chamberlin and as it turned out he would need them. When they arrived at Little Round Top, Col. Chamberlin was ordered to put his regiment at the far left of the division. This meant that Col. Chamberlin and his men were posted at the furthest left point of their division, and their division was holding the end point of the Union army. The 20th Maine was literally the end of the union army. The last thing that Col. Chamberlin was told before dispersing his men was this: *'This is the extreme left of the Union army. You are to hold this ground at all costs!'* These orders would be taken to heart by Col. Chamberlin, he was *prepared* to defend the ground.

When the battle began it was intense and chaotic. Two Alabama regiments containing nearly 700 men, almost double that of the 20th Maine, began charging up the hill. Although they were struck with a horrific volley of fire, they continued to push up the hill, at one point nearly breaking the center of the 20th Maine before they rallied to plug the hole in the line. The battle raged for nearly three hours. The 20th Maine had fired some 15,000 rounds and the 60-round allotment per man was nearly gone. Soldiers were using the rounds off their dead comrades to even keep fighting. Although they were still holding the ground, they had been pushed back until their dead were strewn among the enemy lines. The men were weak, tired, nearly out of ammunition and barely hanging on. Col. Chamberlin had lost a little more than one half of his men. The situation was dire, and with no sign of the enemy giving up- knowing that they could not defend the position without ammunition, Col. Chamberlin found himself with little choice. He knew they couldn't stay, or they would be overrun,

but he also knew his orders. So, with a *prepared* determination and courage he commanded his men to *fix bayonets!*

The bayonet was a long, square shaped blade that attached to the end of the musket and locked in place. Its' square shape was intended to create a nearly untreatable wound on the battlefield, as a square gaping hole in a man could not be sutured resulting in a slow and painful death. They were only used in the most desperate of situations and only 1% of the 620,000 soldiers who died in the Civil War did so by bayonet. It was a weapon intended for close combat, for last choices, for a gritty and determined soldier to fight with - when all else had failed. That situation was exactly what found Col. Chamberlin and the 20th Maine on that day.

As he gave the order to fix bayonets, one account claims that only a small number of men near him would have likely heard the command. The site of their brothers in arms unsheathing their bayonets and fixing them to their muskets would have left no doubt in the minds of the others what their Col. had commanded though. Every man knew in that moment that this order was likely their last chance at winning the battle. Col. Chamberlin had been given a task, *hold this ground at all costs*, and he intended to do just that!

With one final command, "*Right wheel forward!*" the men of the 20th Maine charged down the hill swinging like a door cutting the enemy off in a complete surprise. The men in the front ranks of the confederate lines were so taken by surprise they almost immediately dropped their muskets and surrendered. The remaining Confederates broke rank and retreated back down the hill, abandoning the coveted Little Round Top. With no ammunition left, half his forces of exhausted men and a *prepared mindset* to follow orders at all costs Col. Chamberlin captured nearly 400 Confederate soldiers and held a vital position for the Union cause. Although the cost was great, he held the high ground, he resisted the enemy's attack, *he took a stand!*

Life can be eerily similar to this battle, and whether we stand or not depends an awful lot on our mindset; whether we have *prepared* for the battles. Col. Chamberlin made a choice before that battle began to carry out the orders given to him. He didn't know what it would cost, how many men he would lose, how tiring and trying the day would be, but he knew it was imperative the he held Little Round Top.

Ephesians chapter six is designed to put us in the mindset of a soldier in battle. Our enemy is Satan, and he has a similar battle plan as that of the Confederate army: *push us off the high ground, outflank us and cut us off from our supply line.*

In this context we read:

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all the stand. Stand therefore...”

Before we ever dive into the aspects of God's armor for us and before we ever begin to train with what God has provided us to use in battle, we have to take on the mindset of a determined soldier for our Lord. We must *take unto* ourselves, or pick it up and carry with us, the armor of God! God's armor does us no good while sitting in a corner rusting or sitting on a shelf collecting dust. We must have it with us and be *prepared* to use it! We are holding the high ground of the cross of Jesus Christ and we must not be outflanked! Like some commanders, we ignore orders and abandon our post. We seek some other forms of glory or think that these small seemingly pointless areas of our life aren't battles worth fighting. *But they are!* Little Round Top wasn't the biggest and most majestic hilltop on that ridge, *but it was the most important.* If we ignore God's Word and its instruction in our lives, we will find that vitally important areas of our faith are left abandoned and defenseless!

If we allow the enemy to take our position in Christ then he will circle in around us and crush us! What is worse still is that he will be able to then overtake the countless lives that we could influence with the gospel message. The whole of the Union Army was poised to be outflanked and overrun, had Col. Chamberlin and the 20th Maine not made up their minds that they would not give up that position. We have that same choice before us as well. We are the only thing standing in the way of our friends at school, teachers, co-workers, neighbors, family members - and the crushing defeat Satan desires in their lives. We are called to put on the armor of God not to just defend ourselves from the devastation of Satan and his army, but also to protect our fellow mankind; ***'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood.'***

Psalms 18:39 ***"For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me."***

Notice how that in **Psalms 18:39** the battle that we are fighting is from an elevated position. *In Christ we hold the high ground!* Our enemies, our doubts, our fears, our regrets they are UNDER us when we are positioned at the high ground of Christ! In order for these things to overtake us in our life they must charge up that rugged terrain, just like the Confederate Soldiers, and overtake our position in Christ! *Preparing* ourselves daily, or *taking unto* ourselves, this mindset that in Christ we have victory, will give us a different outlook on our battles. We will fight them differently, with an obedient and determined vigor. We will fight them with the mindset that we have the upper hand and the enemy must come up to me. Too many times we fight as though Satan has the upper hand. The fact is that in Christ all our sins are forgiven, and we are no longer bound by our enemy!

And yes, even though we have the high ground there are times in life that will still be trying and difficult and it will seem that wave after wave of the enemy will come crashing into us. No matter how much

we fire down upon him and no matter how much we push back against his attacks he will just keep coming! We will see brothers and sisters in the Lord give up on their faith and walk away from the battle for their soul. We will get low and depressed, tired and weak. Often times we will feel like a failure and feel that we can do nothing good for the Lord. The enemy may even drive us back in areas of our life, we may allow sin to push us off the front lines and get ever closer to being over-run by the enemy.

What will cause us to press forward again? What will make us fight on when it seems hopeless? A soldier's *prepared* determination and obedience...**HAVING DONE ALL THE STAND, STAND THEREFORE! BAYONETS!** Let this be our battle cry when we don't know if we can go on, **BAYONETS!** When we lose loved ones and are hurting and mourning, **BAYONETS!** When the doctor gives us bad news and death seems to be just around the corner, **BAYONETS!** When we feel too discouraged to teach our Sunday School class, sing our songs of praise, give our testimonies, Preach from the pulpit, **BAYONETS!**

Hebrews 4:12 *“For the word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

God's Word *prepared* and ready for use in the heart of a believer strikes fear into our enemy like nothing else. It will pierce the enemy with an untreatable wound. Encouragement to one whom the enemy is trying to discourage. Faith which rises above doubts and fears. Peace which passes all understanding. Hope in the most hopeless of situations. Grace when failures seem too great to overcome. Forgiveness when it is not deserved. Joy which drowns out sorrows. Courage to endure and carry on at all costs. God's Word, *a mighty bayonet*, is what we *prepare* with. This is how we change our mindset!

To be unmovable starts with the right mindset. Making a choice, long before times get difficult is how we train our hearts to be fixed on the defense of Jesus Christ ***AT ALL COSTS!*** When things change as rapidly as they have the past year and a half it sheds some light on our *preparedness*. Have we been pursuing a ***prepared mindset?*** Or have we been reacting, allowing emotions and the social norms to dictate our behavior? Could we exemplify Christ better? Perhaps its time we move on the double-quick and realize the strategic importance of the ground we are holding. ***Perhaps its time we make up our minds.***

Romans 12:2 ***“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed be the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.”***

Maybe its time we *prepare* with God’s Word by letting it change us....

1 Peter 1:13 ***“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”***

Maybe its time we make the choice before the battle begins, we will not give up this ground!

1 Peter 5:8-9 ***“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”***

There may be times when it seems like the enemy keeps roaring and charging at us up that hill. But remain sober and vigilant with the right mindset, *a soldier’s mindset*, and you will be able to resist all of the

enemy's attacks. And like those soldiers in the 20th Maine who only recognized the command to fix bayonets by the actions of the soldiers who were closest to the commander, we can strengthen and encourage our brothers and sisters resolve *by taking a stand*. In the end, the undying resolve of Col. Chamberlin and the 20th Maine likely saved the Union army that day, and ultimately the war. Who can we save by determining the same type of resolve in our spiritual lives? So, I say again, one last time:

BAYONETS!
HAVING DONE ALL TO STAND, STAND!



***“WHEREFORE TAKE UNTO YOU THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND IN THE EVIL DAY, AND HAVING DONE ALL, TO STAND. STAND THEREFORE...*” EPHESIANS 6:13**

1. _____ IN YOUR MINDSET

- _____ MEANS TO FIGHT BACK AND OPPOSE
- ***STAND: MAINTAINING AN UPRIGHT POSITION, NOT CROUCHED OR HIDDEN***
- WE ARE NOT IN SPIRITUAL PEACE TIMES, IT IS CRUCIAL THAT OUR MINDSET BE ON FIGHTING AND NOT RELAXING!

2. _____ IN YOUR MINDSET

- GOD'S ARMOR IS USELESS IF WE DON'T _____ OURSELVES.
- PREPARE: TO MAKE SOMETHING READY FOR USE
- PREPARATION MUST BE A DAILY ACTIVITY, SOMETHING THAT IS NORMAL (LUKE 9:23)
- ***GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND: A METAPHOR DERIVED FROM ORIENTALS WHO WOULD BIND THEIR LONG FLOWING GARMENTS UP BEFORE THEY WOULD BEGIN A LONG JOURNEY OR WORK.***

3. _____ IN YOUR MINDSET

- **WHAT IS OUR POSITION ON THE BATTLEFIELD?**
- **FROM THE HIGH GROUND WE HAVE EVERY STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE AND NOTHING TO FEAR! (2 TIM 1:7)**
- **THE ATTACKS OF THE ENEMY, ALTHOUGH RELENTLESS, ARE ULTIMATELY POWERLESS AGAINST THE POSITION WE HOLD (ISA 54:17), AND YET OUR BAYONET IS POWERFUL AND EQUIPS US TO FIGHT!**

UNMOVABLE MINDSET

QUESTIONS FOR FINDING FIRM FAITH

1. **ON A DAILY BASIS WHAT IS YOUR MINDSET LIKE? WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF MORE LIKE A FIGHTER OR A VICTIM AND WHY?**

2. **DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THROUGH CHRIST WE CAN ACHIEVE VICTORY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES AND HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEHAVED ACCORDINGLY?**

3. **WHEN SHOULD YOU PREPARE WITH GOD'S WORD FOR BATTLES? DO YOU?**

4. **WHAT ARE THE REGULAR BATTLES YOU FIGHT? WHAT HAS HINDERED VICTORY IN THOSE AREAS OF YOUR LIFE?**

5. **HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE COST IF YOU GAVE UP THE HIGH GROUND IN YOUR LIFE? WHO COULD BE AFFECTED BY YOU NOT HOLDING YOUR GROUND?**



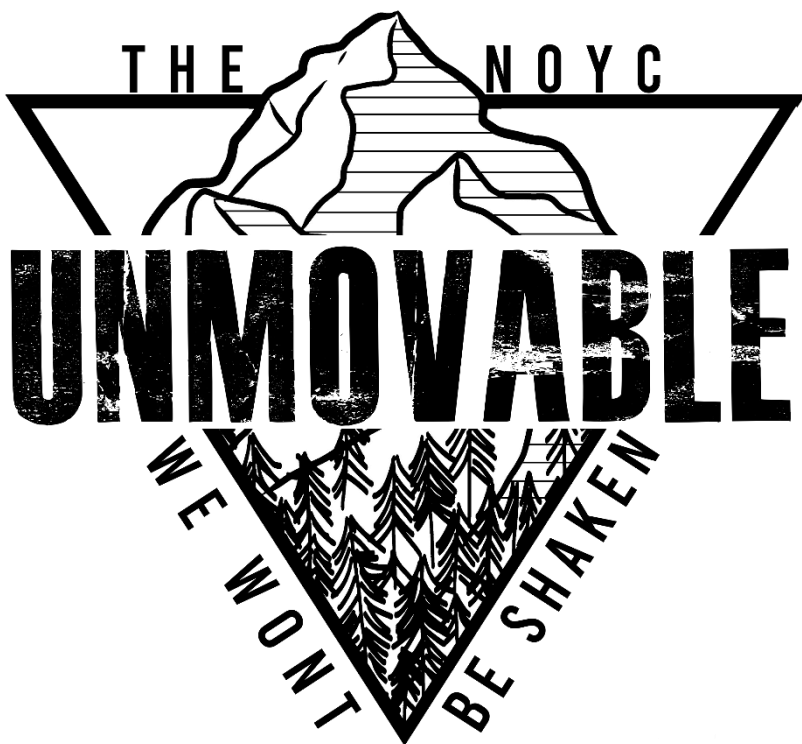
UNMOVABLE MINDSET KEEP GOING ... MINNEOLA MINDSET

WHEN HAYDEN PHILPOT STOOD AT THE FLAG POLE AND PRAYED HE PROBABLY DIDN'T REALIZE THE STAND HE WAS TAKING. HIS INTENTIONS WERE PURE, HONEST, HUMBLE AND MOST OF ALL PRE-DETERMINED. HE HAD MADE HIS MIND UP TO GO PRAY AT THE FLAGPOLE, AND NOTHING WOULD STOP HIM. THE "SEE YOU AT THE POLE" DAY INITIATIVE WAS INTENDED TO BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO GATHER AROUND THE FLAGPOLE AND PRAY FOR THEIR SCHOOL, FRIENDS, FAMILIES, CHURCHES AND COMMUNITIES. AT SOME SCHOOL'S CROWDS GATHERED TOGETHER FOR A FEW MOMENTS OF PRAYER, UNITY AND HONOR TO GOD, BUT NOT AT MINNEOLA HIGH SCHOOL. HAYDEN WAS THE LONE ATTENDEE. NO ONE ELSE SHOWED UP, BUT THAT DIDN'T STOP HIM.

IN THIS RARE DISPLAY OF AN UNMOVABLE MINDSET THE YOUNG MAN STOOD ALONE AND HUMBLING HIMSELF BEFORE AN ALMIGHTY GOD, BUT GOD WASN'T THE ONLY ONE WATCHING. A PASSERBY WHO SAW HAYDEN STANDING AND PRAYING BY HIMSELF WAS SO TOUCHED HE SNAPPED A PICTURE OF HIM, POSTED IT ON FACEBOOK AND COMMENTED ON THE BOY'S BRAVERY. SOON MORE POSTS BEGAN TO POP UP, PEOPLE FROM ALL DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND CULTURES AND EVEN THOSE WHO DID NOT PROFESS ANY FAITH AT ALL COMMENDED HAYDEN FOR HIS COURAGE TO STAND FOR HIS.

HIS PRAYER HAD BEEN SIMPLE, "LORD AS PEOPLE PASS BY LET THEM SEE AND WONDER, LET THEIR HEARTS BE PRICKED." THIS IS WHAT STANDING YOUR GROUND LOOKS LIKE. THIS IS THE MINDSET OF AN OBEDIENT SOLDIER. WHEN NO ONE SHOWED UP, *BAYONETS!*

THOUGHTS CREPT INTO HIS HEAD, WHAT WILL PEOPLE THINK? WHERE ARE THE OTHERS? *BAYONETS!* HAYDEN MADE A CHOICE THAT DAY TO DO SOMETHING DIFFICULT AND BE USED FOR GOD RATHER THAN DOING THE EASY THING AND WALKING AWAY. CHOOSING TO NOT GIVE UP HIS GROUND, IN SOMETHING AS SMALL AS PRAYING BY A FLAGPOLE AT SCHOOL, IMPACTED DOZENS OF LIVES. THROUGH HAYDEN MANY LIVES SAW CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM. BIG WARS ARE WON IN SMALL BATTLES BY OBEDIENT AND PREPARED SOLDIERS. *BAYONETS!*



PART TWO
UNMOVABLE: HANDS ON

FORTRESS OF FAITH

WHICH SHOULD YOU FEAR?

STANDING IN A BOAT- OR - SINKING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OPEN OCEAN?

FLYING IN AN AIRPLANE- OR- FREE FALLING MIDAIR, WITHOUT A CHUTE?

SHELTERING IN A FORTRESS- OR- FACING AN ONSLAUGHT OF FIERY ARROWS?

Having a position of protection strips fear of its influence over us.

- “*The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my shield, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.*” **Psalm 18:2**

David writes of the protection found in the Lord 9 times within this single verse. With a giant exclamation point David says; *I'M SAFE IN HIM!*

How safe you may ask? Consider a few of the words David uses;

- **Rock:** *stronghold, secure space*
- **Fortress:** *not susceptible to outside influence or disturbance.*
- **Deliverer:** *escape, safe, secure*
- **Strength:** *secure, enclose, confine, rock, refuge*
- **Shield:** *protector, defense, the hide of a crocodile (...No really)*
- **Hord of Salvation:** *strength of victory, deliverance, rescue, welfare*
- **High Tower:** *an impenetrable condition of being safe from pursuit, danger, or trouble.*

Those who have placed their faith and trust in Christ are literally untouchable and yes, *even unmovable*. From inside the fortress of our faith we are safe and secure from pursuit, attack, arrows, armies, adversaries, enemies, and everything we could ever possibly fear.

Yet, this safety is only available if we remain *in the protection of Christ*. The moment we step outside of the fortress, we are vulnerable to attacks on every side.

**WHO DO YOU THINK IS BETTER EQUIPPED TO PROTECT YOU IN LIFE;
YOU OR JESUS ?**

**WHO HAS BETTER RESOURCES, KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, MIGHT, AND ABILITY;
YOU OR JESUS ?**

FILL IN THE BLANKS OF THE FOLLOWING VERSES WITH YOUR NAME. AS YOU DO, CONSIDER THE REALITY OF WHAT YOU ARE WRITING. DO YOU TRULY BELIEVE HE IS ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU UNTOUCHABLE AND UNMOVABLE? DO YOU TRULY TRUST IN JESUS TO KEEP YOU SAFE?

- “God is _____’s refuge and strength, a very present help in _____’s trouble.” **Psalm 46:1**
- “In God is _____’s salvation and _____’s glory: the rock of _____’s strength, and _____’s refuge, is in God.” **Psalm 62:7**
-
- “_____ will say of the Lord, He is _____’s refuge and _____’s fortress: my God; in him will _____ trust.” **Psalm 91:2**
-
- “But the Lord is _____’s defense; and _____’s God is the rock of _____’s refuge.” **Psalm 94:22**

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE YOU AN UNWAVERING ASSURANCE THAT ONCE YOU ARE IN- YOU ARE SAFE! PRAY FOR BOLDNESS TO WALK THROUGH LIFE AS A BELIEVER WHO LIVES IN THE FORTRESS OF CHRIST.

HOUSE HUNTERS

There are literally two types of people in life. According to Jesus's own words in **Matthew 7**, we can either have a life that is *stable or a life that is sinking*. A life that is *firm or a life that is falling*. So what exactly makes the difference?

- *“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.”* **Matthew 7:24-27**

Though He was a carpenter, Jesus was not actually talking about houses here. Instead, Jesus is giving us instructions on the way we live our lives, and the results of how we do so.

WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SOLID AND SINKING OF THE HOUSES?

ACCORDING TO JESUS IN MATTHEW 7- IF YOUR LIFE IS UNSTABLE- WHAT IS THE TRUE CAUSE?

We can point the blame at many people in life when things do not go our way, yet Jesus points the finger back at us and says *‘YOU are to blame if you are unstable because you have failed to listen and do as I have said. My Words alone bring stability to any life.’* The waves and waters of life are inevitable so the obvious question that remains is this; *which house, or which life will you choose?*

MAKE A LIST OF THE THINGS IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU HAVE PLACED YOUR TRUST IN WHICH HAVE LEFT YOU SHAKEN. (E.G. FAMILY, FRIENDS, SPORTS, HOBBIES, CAREERS, EDUCATION, ETC.). THEN, WITH A RED MARKER, CROSS OUT EACH ITEM ON THE LIST. AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR LIST, WRITE 'SINKING SAND'

NEXT, FILL IN THE BLANK; *I WILL BUILD MY LIFE UPON* _____.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE YOU A DESIRE TO SEEK HIM AND HIS WORDS. ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU FAITH IN WHAT HE HAS SAID. ASK GOD TO HELP YOU BUILD YOUR HOUSE UPON THE ROCK WHICH IS CHRIST.

GOSPEL GROWL

Fun fact: The lion is the third loudest land animal known to man! That's right- silly Simba is actually capable of roaring at a decibel 5 times the pain threshold of a human. His roar can be heard up to 5 miles away and is actually louder than a jet plane taking off!

FOR WHAT REASON DO YOU THINK A LION LET'S LOOSE A ROAR?

According to smart people who know lions- a lion will roar for 2 reasons; *to provide their location or to prove their strength.*

While the Lion is known as the King of The jungle- Christ is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There is no higher authority, no greater force, no one above Him, *with not even a close second.* **Ephesians 1:22** says that ALL THINGS have been put under Christ's feet. And it is for this reason that Christ never had a reason to fear while walking in this world. Never did a person, a place, or a thing ever intimidate Him- *ever-* even to death; *because He was always greater.*

And the reality of a Christian is that we no longer roam this world alone, we no longer face intimidation or attacks in our own strength and might- but now, we are **IN Christ**. His might is our might. His strength is our strength. The righteous roar of the Lion of Judah is now *our* ROAR.

- *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”* **Galatians 3:27**
- *‘And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus’* **Ephesians 2:6**
- *“...we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.”* **Ephesians 3:12-13**
- *“So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”* **Hebrews 13:6**

Watch the short clip of the lion roar- as you do, consider how the lion stands its ground and will not be shaken- while all other animals run in fear. Consider the *power* of the lion's roar- and it's purpose in proclaiming position and power for all who hear it. **SCAN HERE:**



If a Lion spoke English (...*outside of Disney movies*) no doubt the king of the jungle would roar “*You cannot touch me, I am here to stay for I am unmovable!*”

WHY WOULD IT HAVE BEEN INCONCEIVABLE FOR JESUS TO BE AFRAID OF ANYTHING HE FACED IN LIFE?

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE IN FACING THIS WORLD ON YOUR OWN AND IN FACING THIS WORLD FROM WITHIN CHRIST?

HOW DOES FACING THIS WORLD FROM WITHIN CHRIST MAKE YOU UNMOVABLE?

WHY SHOULD THIS LOCATION AND THIS STRENGTH IN CHRIST, GIVE YOU A GOSPEL GROWL THAT REFUSES TO BE SHAKEN?

MAKE A LIST OF THE THINGS YOU FEAR AND THAT COULD SHAKE YOUR LIFE.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTION; *I CAN BE BOLD BECAUSE...*

ASK GOD TO GIVE YOU AUDACITY, COURAGE, STRENGTH, BOLDNESS- AND A RIGHTEOUS ROAR- NOT BECAUSE OF YOUR STRENGTH- BUT BECAUSE OF THE STRENGTH AND POSITION FOUND IN CHRIST. PRAY THAT GOD WOULD REVEAL THE AREAS OF YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU FEAR AND ARE SHAKEN. ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU A GOSPEL GROWL THAT FEARS NOTHING.

GOSPEL GARRISON

Have you ever wondered where the idea for the odd shoes worn in soccer- known as *cleats* came from? Long before the soccer ball ever came along, Roman soldiers wore what was referred to as *caligae* shoes. These leather type sandals fashioned nails and even spikes that would stick out under the sole of the shoe in order to dig into the ground beneath the soldier's feet. Then, the Roman soldier would have iron greaves that would strap his leg, shin, and ankles to the *caligae* shoes. By wearing these shoes- the soldier would become unpush-able, stable, sturdy, and yes- *unmovable*.

- *“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil... Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. **Stand** therefore... And **your feet shod** with the preparation of the gospel of peace;” Eph. 6:11-15*

Paul tells believers to *stand, stand, stand, and stand some more!* Then, Paul tells us to shod our feet with the gospel of peace. The word *shod* literally means *to bind from with under-* or to secure your feet to what you're standing on. To what should we bind our feet to? The Gospel that brings peace.

WHAT DO YOU *KNOW* ABOUT THE GOSPEL?

IN WHAT WAYS SHOULD THESE FACTS GIVE YOU A SOLID GROUND TO STAND ON?

WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE TO BIND YOUR LIFE TO THESE FACTS? HOW WOULD IT CHANGE ANYTHING YOU MAY FACE IN LIFE?

When we dig in deep, have firm faith, and a solid stance upon the facts of the gospel- we cannot be shaken- and we will not be moved. Yet, if we attempt to stand in our own might and ability- we will be easily pushed around.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD HELP YOU TO BUILD YOUR LIFE UPON THE GOSPEL- FOR THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE. ASK GOD TO HELP YOU FACE EVERY TRIAL IN LIFE FROM THE SOLID STANCE OF YOUR FACTS OF FAITH. PRAY THAT HE WOULD MAKE YOU UNMOVABLE IN WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED.

OVERFLOWING FAITH

What's the difference in a pond and a waterfall?

Though both are wet with water, a pond is intended with a limit to what it can hold. What lies inside often becomes stagnant, slimy, and stale. Yet, a waterfall is intended to be over flowed. A waterfall is always moving, constantly gushing with fresh water a plenty- in fact waterfalls by definition are *abundant*. How abundant you may ask?

The Niagara Falls pours an estimated 681,750 gallons of water over its brim *every single second of every single day*. That is more than enough water to overflow an Olympic sized swimming pool by the second! That means that within the span of one single day 58,903,200,000 gallons of water gush over the falls. That's the enough to fill over 56 of the Dallas Cowboy Football Stadiums to the brim each day!

WHICH WOULD YOU MORE COMPARE *YOUR* CHRISTIAN LIFE TO; A POND OR A WATER FALL?

- *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.” Romans 15:13*
- *“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14*
- *“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10*

Jesus describes a relationship with Him as a fountain that gushes up from within. Paul describes the life of a Christian as someone who God has filled to the brim with Himself. So the remaining question is this; *how full do you want to be?*

Imagine walking up to the Niagara Falls, with the billions of gallons of water gushing all around, and in your hand, you hold a teaspoon.

If you place your teaspoon under the water's flow, do you suppose your spoon would become filled?

The fact is, Jesus desires to not only fill your life but to abundantly overflow your lives in *obnoxious proportions*. To the point where He becomes a gushing fountain that overflows from within. Serving Jesus is like holding a teaspoon at the Nagara Falls every moment of every day, and saying '*Here Lord, fill my life.*' This is the fulness the Bible describes as the life of a Christian.

FOR WHAT REASON WOULD A TEASPOON NOT BE COMPLETELY FILLED AT THE NIAGARA FALLS?

WHO WOULD BE TO BLAME; *THE TEASPOON OR THE FALLS?*

WHO'S TO BLAME IF YOU LACK ABUNDANCE; *JESUS OR YOU?*

ARE YOU EXPERIENCING JESUS IN AN ABUNDANT, SPRINGING UP, AND OVERFLOWING FASHION IN YOUR LIFE?

HAVE YOU FULLY SURRENDERED YOUR SPOON TO HIM TO FILL?

PRAY FOR THE STRENGTH TO SURRENDER YOUR LIFE FOR HIM TO FILL. ASK HIM TO TAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM TO THE NEXT LEVEL WHERE YOU WOULD NOT BE PARTIALLY FILLED, NOT FULL, BUT TO THE PLACE WHERE HE WOULD OVERFLOW YOUR LIFE IN ABUNDANCE. ASK GOD TO GIVE MORE OF HIMSELF TO YOU IN PLENTEOUS PROPORTIONS.

FAITH THAT FILLS

When we get saved, many people claim that they have made the decision to “*Give Jesus Their Heart.*” And a lot of times, just because we have said a prayer at an altar, we will say that we have given our life to Jesus. As time goes by, you may notice the feeling of conviction or guilt when you sin. So, you give up the small sins in your life to Jesus. And a lot of times, because we are surrendering sins, we think we have given our life to Jesus. If you are saved, we are told that we should read our bible, pray, and attend church in order to grow closer to Christ, and with that, if we are saved, we give some of our time to Him. And a lot of times, because we do Christian-y things or religious things, we will say that we have given our life to Jesus. You might find yourself going to the Lord when you face difficulties or struggles in life, and so you give them to Him. And a lot of times, just because we go to the Lord with our needs, we will say that we have given our life to Jesus.

And yet, God is not impressed with giving Him just our hearts, just our sins, just our time, or just our trials- instead, *He desires that we would give Him our all-* He wants to be able to fill **our** whole **life**. Every moment, every decision, our choices, our future, our talents, our home life, our hobbies, our careers- every moment, every millimeter, every nook and cranny of our lives- given to Him to fill. He desires that we would give Him our whole and entire life to fill completely, holding no space whatsoever as off limits for Him to fill. Jesus is our fulness, He desires to fill us to the very tippy, tippy top.

- “[Christ]... *the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*”
Ephesians 1:23
- “...*And of his fulness have all we received...*” **John 1:16**

WHAT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE HAVE YOU *NOT* YET GIVEN TO JESUS?

WHY HAVE YOU NOT GIVEN THESE AREAS TO HIM?

CAN YOU HONESTLY SAY YOU HAVE GIVEN YOUR LIFE TO JESUS WHILE HOLDING PARTS BACK FROM HIM?

IN WHAT WAYS HAVE YOU TRIED TO FILL YOUR LIFE WITH THINGS OTHER THAN JESUS?

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD SHOW YOU THE *THINGS* YOU HAVE TRIED TO FILL YOUR LIFE WITH. PRAY FOR COURAGE TO EMPTY YOUR LIFE, SO THAT CHRIST CAN FILL AND OVERFLOW EVERY PART OF YOUR LIFE. ASK THE LORD TO POINT OUT AREAS THAT YOU HAVE YET TO GIVE HIM ACCESS TO.

WORRILESS WEEBLE WOBBLE

Have you ever heard the advice a coach will give to a boxer while he's in the ring? '*Square your shoulders, bend your knees, tilt your head, jab, punch, duck, flex, fight!*' Within a matter of mere minutes a boxer is ordered to make many movements in order to remain upright and avoid being thrown down on the mat. And as a result, boxing makes a boxer exhausted from exertion! This is the way that many of us live our Christian life; giving all we've got to remain upright and, in the count,- at the expense of exertion and exhaustion!

PICTURE PUTTING A WEEBLE WOBBLE INTO THE BOXING RING...

What is the difference between a boxer who *tries* to get back up and a weeble wobble that *allows* what's inside of him to get him back up?

- "*For in him [Jesus] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.*" **Colossians 2:9-10**

Here we are as Christians trying to get back up, we're ducking, and bending, and squaring our shoulders trying to remain in the fight of faith- and its wearing us out! All the while, the entire fulness of God- every bit of His strength, power, and ability has been placed within us and it makes us complete. As Christians we are complete; *lacking, wanting, or needing absolutely nothing*. Because Jesus is our fullness.

Instead of *trying* to get back up and stay in the fight- Christians *can't help* but bounce back because of what fills us; *the fulness of Christ*.

WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE BLANK;

" _____ **IS COMPLETE IN JESUS, HE HAS GIVEN ME EVERYTHING I NEED**"

WRITE A PRAYER OF COMMITMENT TO STOP TRYING TO FIGHT IN YOUR MIGHT, AND START ALLOWING WHAT HAS FILLED YOU TO KEEP YOU UPRIGHT. ASK GOD TO SHOW YOU HIS FULNESS IN YOUR LIFE. PRAY THAT HE WOULD GIVE YOU ENOUGH TRUST IN HIS ABILITY AND POWER TO STOP TRYING AND START ALLOWING

COMPLETE IN CHRIST

WHAT DOES IT TAKE FOR A HUNK OF WOOD TO BE A BOAT?
NAME AS MANY PARTS OF A BOAT AS YOU CAN.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAN A SHIP AND MAKE IT SAIL?
NAME AS MANY CREW MEMBERS AS YOU CAN.

WHAT ALL COULD YOU LOAD ONTO A SHIP?

- *“In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory...That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be **filled with all the fulness** of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,”*
Ephesians 3:12, 17-20

Paul uses the word *fulness* to describe our completeness in Christ. The Word in it's original form is *pleroma* meaning; *a ship and all that fills it including sailors, rowers, soldiers, oarsman, freight, merchandise, etc.* Or in other words - *Jesus IS everything it takes to be a Christian.*

He's the boat, He fills the boat, man's the boat, and drives the boat, and He steers the boat. He is everything it takes for a boat to do what a boat does; *sail*. And Jesus is everything it takes to do what a

Christian does; *live like Christ*. Not a single ingredient, not a necessity, or need, nothing is missing in Him- for Jesus is our *fulness*.

All that is left for a full ship to do is to hit the open seas and do what it was made for. In the same way, we are meant to press on, believing we have everything we need to live a life of godliness through the fulness of Christ (*2 Peter 1:3*).

Yet too often we stall and stammer in our faith believing that we will not have what we will need or what it takes for whatever comes next. This leaves us to worry and waffle and ultimately stalls out our ship...*err* Christianity. Though we have everything, we fear we're missing something. All the while we are fully filled and full in Jesus.

MAKE A LIST OF ALL THAT JESUS IS FOR YOU. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST WRITE THESE WORDS "*JESUS IS EVERYTHING I NEED.*"

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD HELP YOU TO TRUST HIM AND TO BELIEVE THAT NO MATTER WHAT MAY COME OR GO IN LIFE- HE IS EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO MAKE YOUR BOAT SAIL AND EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO LIVE A LIFE OF VICTORY. PRAY FOR ASSURANCE THAT HE IS ENOUGH. PRAY FOR CONFIDENCE THAT YOU ARE COMPLETE IN HIM.

SMOOTH SAILING

Here's a riddle for you; *where can you stand without moving your feet, where your body is tossed and your legs get beat.* The answer; *a boat.*

If you've ever been out to deep sea you know that you can have your feet firmly planted in one place, yet still be tossed about. The reason, is that at times, the most unmovable position is to be flexible. As you see a wave coming, lean into it instead of resisting it- and you'll be able to maintain your stance.

- *“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”*
Hebrews 11:6-7

The very thing that condemned the world- saved Noah and his family. It was because of Noah's fluid faith- willingness to trust God through the flood and waves that he was ultimately saved. Those unwilling to believe and trust God through the waves perished.

DO YOU TRUST GOD THROUGH THE WAVES OF LIFE?

Too often we are willing to be flexible for *other* things in life such as hobbies, sports, careers, or friends- but when it comes to our faith, we lack a willingness to be flexible.

IN WHAT WAYS CAN YOU BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN YOUR FAITH?

IN WHAT WAYS HAS YOUR UNWILLINGNESS TO *MOVE OR TRUST*, HARMED YOUR FAITH AND RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS?

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE YOU A FAITH THAT WILL GO WITH HIS FLOW. PRAY FOR A FAITH THAT IS FLEXIBLE AND IS WILLING TO GO WHERE HE GOES AND STAY WHERE HE STAYS. PRAY FOR A WILLINGNESS TO MOVE, BEND, STAND, SIT, OR FLEX IN PURSUIT OF JESUS.

FLUID FAITH

Without faith it is not challenging, difficult, or even hard to please God- *but without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God.* As God led Israel out of Egypt, it would seem that God set His people up for failure as they were immediately cornered at the Red Sea. Yet, God's answer for Israel was not to build a bridge over the sea, not to dig under the sea, or to find a route around the sea. God told Israel to walk *through* the Red Sea. Where Israel saw a sea of impossibility, God saw a freeway of faith- as He said *take the next step and trust me.*

Many of us face impossible situations all of the time, and God's instructions to us are the same as He gave to Israel; *take the next step and trust me.* When we face the impossible in our lives, we see a Red Sea and we think it can't be done. Yet God says *take the step and trust me-* and if we believe Him, the impossible becomes possible. *Our job is not to know how, but to trust that He will.*

- *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6*

In order to please God, you have to diligently seek Him. Yet our God walks on water. If we will follow Him through the impossible, when answers are unseen, He will reward our faith by coming through. You cannot please God without faith. Instead of trying to *find another way, strong arming a solution, or cowering in fear-* we please God by taking the next step in faith that He will make a way.

HOW HAVE YOU ATTEMPTED TO *BUILD BRIDGES* OVER THE RED SEAS IN YOUR LIFE?

IF YOU COULD SEE THE ANSWER, YOU WOULD HAVE NO NEED FOR FAITH, AND YOU COULD NOT PLEASE GOD. WHY DOES GOD REQUIRE FAITH IN ORDER TO PLEASE HIM?

WILL YOU FOLLOW HIM, EVEN WHEN YOU CANNOT SEE?

WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP OF FAITH?

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD GIVE YOU A DETERMINATION TO BE STRENGTHENED THROUGH THE WAVES. ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE YOUR FAITH, AND TO HAVE MORE TRUST IN HIM. PRAY THAT HE WOULD HELP YOU TO STOP TRYING TO CONTROL AND START ALLOWING TO TRUST.

MOVABLE MOMENTS

Let's all be honest, *we hate anything that makes us uncomfortable or inconvenienced*. Whether it's quarantine, face masks, a job loss, losing a friend at school – or any other trouble in life, *we don't like it*. Many times, we claim that God is enough to get us through, and what we often envision is God dragging us by the back of the collar of our shirt as we lay hopelessly on the ground. What we need to recognize is that Moveable Moments, well...*move us*.

- *For our light affliction, which 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.”*
2 Corinthians 4:17-18
- *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”* **Romans 8:28**

Often, we think that hunkering down and gritting our teeth through a trial is the calling of a Christian. We do our best to suffer through until it's over with, hating every single second of our struggle. And yet as a Christian, the low points in life are *but for a moment*. Yet, God uses the low places in our lives to give us what we will need to get to the highest points in our life. When we go through difficulties and dilemmas in life- we are given what we will need to rise. We can endure and even be thankful for the difficulties and dilemmas, knowing that it's working for our good and producing faith and trust within us.

Just like Joseph, what we obtain at the low points in life are used by God to raise us to the highest points. Had Joseph not been in the pit, he never would have made it to the palace. Had Joseph not endured the false accusations, he would never have known authority in Egypt. His betrayals led to his benefit and his misfortunes worked toward his might.

The fact of faith is that we must be willing to go down if we want to one day go up. We have to remember that the down moments are only temporary, yet the work it does in our life will last forever.

WRITE A PRAYER- MAKE SURE NOT TO ASK GOD FOR ANYTHING IN THIS PRAYER- BUT INSTEAD, USE ONLY THANKS FOR THE TRIALS, PROBLEMS, BURDENS, AND DIFFICULTIES HE HAS BROUGHT YOU THROUGH IN THE PAST.

CONSIDER HOW HE HAS WORKED EACH OF THESE DIFFICULTIES FOR GOOD.

FIRM FOOTING

Have you ever tried running across a beach full of sand? Every step is slightly different as your foot lands on soft, softer, and even more soft spots. This is a drastically different experience than running across concrete which has no give at all.

- *“And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea... And Peter...said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he **walked on the water**, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and **beginning to sink**, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, **wherefore didst thou doubt?** And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.” **Matthew 14:25-32***

Though there was never more than water beneath the feet of Peter at any time, one moment Peter’s feet were firmly planted, and the next they were suddenly sinking. If the water beneath Peter’s feet never changed- *what did change?*

Anyone, even a non-believer can walk on concrete, but *only a Christian has the ability to walk on the waves of the water*. Too often we think that it’s okay to sink during storms, we convince ourselves that only when life is going well are we expected to walk upright like on concrete- yet, what need is there for faith in Jesus when walking on concrete?

Struggles, difficulties, and trials are guaranteed in life- this is never going to change. Yet, it is the way you walk through those trials which prove what you are standing on. If you find yourself walking in faith- you will walk above the waves- if you walk in your strength, you will certainly sink.

Faith, or trust in Jesus is the only thing that will allow us to walk with stability through life. When we trust Jesus and His Word- we find firmness beneath our feet, we stand on solid ground. Yet, when we

doubt, worry, question, or fear the waves and the storm around us- we lack trust in Jesus, and it makes us fumble and fall. The waves have not changed, our circumstances have not changed- *only our trust in Jesus has changed*. Wouldn't you rather walk upon the waves than sink below them?

WRITE A PRAYER ASKING GOD TO GIVE YOU FAITH TO WALK FIRMLY THROUGH THE STORMS THAT WILL COME IN YOUR LIFE. ASK HIM TO KEEP YOUR FOCUS UPON HIM. ASK HIM TO HELP YOU WALK ON WATER, AND NOT SINK DURING YOUR NEXT STORM. PRAY THAT GOD WOULD MAKE YOU UNMOVABLE IN YOUR FAITH- EVEN DURING THE STORMS, STRUGGLES, TRIALS AND TROUBLES OF LIFE.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Have you ever played a rousing game of Red Rover? The concept is pretty simple; stand shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand with your teammates- as one at a time your opponents will charge your line in an attempt to break through. In this game there are only two perceivable advantages one can hope for; *a good formation & the biggest players*

Do you think having an arm linked- shoulder to shoulder with Jesus would make you any good at Red Rover? It may be a silly question, yet in reality this is the life of a Christian. We are linked with Him- and as we stand, shoulder to shoulder next to Christ- we have the absolute solid and steadfast mindset that we will NOT be moved- regardless of the enemy barreling our way.

Just like in a rousing game of Red rover, the only possible way that a person can break through your line- *is if you let go*. As long as we are found holding on to Christ- nothing can break through- but the minute we are persuaded to let go - we become vulnerable to the attack of the world and our enemy.

- *“For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, delighted to see your good discipline [as you stand shoulder to shoulder and form a solid front] and to see the stability of your faith in Christ [your steadfast, reliance on Him and your unwavering confidence in His power.] Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, having been deeply rooted and now being continually built up in Him and established in your faith...See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of mere men, following the elementary principles of this world, rather than following Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form. and in Him you have been made complete [achieving spiritual stature through Christ...].” Col. 2:5-10*

We are to walk in Christ; continue in solidness, have an unmovable mindset- knowing that *He has your back...or side rather*. The longer you walk in Christ, the more He will be *built up inside of you*, the more you will be *rooted in Him*.

Because *in Christ*, we are complete. He has the power and authority over every creation in heaven and on earth- there is nothing permitted to pass by Him - *period*. So, the obvious thing for us to do is; *hold on to Him and strengthen our grip*. It won't stop the enemy from trying. It won't keep the world from pushing you around, from charging at you, from trying to convince you to let go. However, as long as you grip Christ firmly, *you-are-unmovable*.

ON THE ABOVE LISTED VERSES, UNDERLINE THE ACTION WORDS FOUND IN THE TEXT (E.G. WALK). THEN, CROSS OUT THE WORDS WHICH COME AGAINST US (E.G. PHILOSOPHY).

MAKE A LIST OF THE *OPPONENTS* THAT ARE BARRELING TOWARD YOU AND YOUR GRIP ON CHRIST.

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD HELP YOU TO REMEMBER THE HAND OF JESUS WHICH GRIPS YOUR LIFE. PRAY THAT GOD WOULD MAKE *THIS* YOUR FOCUS, AND NOT THE OPPONENTS THAT CHARGE YOUR LIFE. PRAY FOR STRENGTH, STEADFASTNESS, AND STABILITY.

TWO FEET FAITH

Picture the scene; as the dramatic music plays, the camera zooms in as we find the main character gripping the ledge of a rooftop from a burning building. As the fire begins to mount, the man's grip begins to fail as his face winces with desperation. Yet, as the flames fan higher and it appears the man is about to face sudden doom- not a moment too soon, another man swoops down with a helicopter. The hero climbs down the rope and urgently grabs a hand of the clinging man. We hear the hero herald; *"You have to let go- the building's about to blow!"* And in the moment our main character has a choice; ***keep clinging to what is temporarily saving him now- or let go in order to grab hold of what can save him forever.***

When it comes to having faith in Jesus, too often we tend to place our trust in more than one place. We trust Him, but all the while placing faith in our family, career, education, hobbies, sports, finances, etc. Yet, what we often don't recognize, is that just like the clinging man, we are actually hindering our faith in Jesus when our trust is divided. Unmovable faith in Jesus only comes by placing *undivided trust in Him and Him alone.*

- *"And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."* **Mark 3:25**
- *"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."*
James 1:6

IF YOU WERE THE MAN CLINGING TO THE EDGE- DO YOU HAVE ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THAT YOU COULD TRUST JESUS'S HAND, AND THAT HE WOULD NEVER LET YOU FALL?

**FAITH IS NOTHING MORE THAN TRUST- WHICH DO YOU TRUST MORE;
THE LEDGE OR THE SAVIOR?**

WHY DO YOU THINK DIVIDED FAITH MAKES YOU FALL?

MAKE A LIST OF THE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD FULLY TRUST JESUS.

PRAY THAT THE LORD WOULD SHOW YOU THE LEDGES IN LIFE THAT YOU HAVE PUT YOUR FAITH IN. ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU ENOUGH TRUST LET GO OF ANYTHING ELSE YOU MAY BE TRUSTING IN, APART FROM JESUS. PRAY THAT HE WOULD INCREASE YOUR TRUST IN HIM, WITH ASSURANCE THAT HE WILL NOT LET YOU FALL.

FLINCHLESS FAITH

No matter how big and bad you are, there is a built-in human instinct to protect yourself when danger comes hurling your way. No one has to tell you; you don't have to be reminded- when something harmful is approaching your direction- your body knows exactly what to do; *flinch*.

- *“No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.”*

Isaiah 54:17

- *“I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.”* **Psalm 16:8**

Though we have been given the promise that no weapon shall prosper against us, though we have been given everything needed to be successful in spiritual battles, and although we have been told that we have already won the war- ultimately, each of us choose to flinch in our faith. We worry, we stress, we convince ourselves that this time- we're done for. When every time, God comes through on our behalf.

What would it look like to have a faith that refuses to flinch? What if we believed the redeemer more than reality? No matter what the enemy may hurl in our direction- *what if we will not flinch*.

WHY DO YOU FLINCH IN YOUR FAITH- WHAT IS THE TRUE, ROOT REASON?

GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF FLINCHLESS FAITH

READ OF A FEW PEOPLE IN THE BIBLE WHO HAD A RIGHT TO FLINCH, BUT HAD ENOUGH FAITH NOT TO.

- **Moses:** *pinned between the mightiest army in the world and an ocean- refused to flinch.*
- **Joshua & Caleb:** *faced with an impossible secret ops mission against a mighty and impossible to beat army- refused to flinch*
- **Elisha:** *while alone faced an impending attack by a mighty military force- refused to flinch*
- **Gideon:** *with a measly and miniscule army holding no weapons, took on a huge army with limitless resources- refused to flinch.*
- **Esther:** *faced the annihilation of herself, her family, and her people -refused to flinch*
- **David:** *faced a behemoth of a bully that was twice his size, whom the entire army and king of his country feared- refused to flinch*
- **Jesus:** *faced betrayal, ridicule, embarrassment, torture, death, hell, and the grave- refused to flinch.*

(YOUR NAME HERE): I MAY FACE _____ - BUT HERE TODAY I STAND, AND I REFUSE TO FLINCH.

ASK GOD TO GIVE YOU THE MINDSET, THE SOLID STANCE THAT REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE CIRCUMSTANCES, SITUATION, OR EVEN THE REALITY YOU FIND AROUND YOU- BECAUSE YOU KNOW, AND YOU BELIEVE WHAT GOD HAS SAID. ASK GOD TO GIVE YOU SUCH SOLID FAITH THAT NO MATTER WHAT YOU MAY FACE NEXT IN LIFE- YOU WILL REFUSE TO BOW, BUCKLE, BEND, OR BREAK- BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, ASK GOD TO GIVE YOU THE RIGOR TO REFUSE TO FLINCH.

ALL ABOUT ARMOR

Through this book you have been told that you can and should be; *unmovable!* And although this is absolutely true, there's a chance that you have misunderstood how this is actually made possible. If you go back home and attempt to grit and bear your teeth and try with all you've got to not be shaken during the next struggle you endure; *still you are likely to be shaken.*

- *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. **Stand** therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”*
Ephesians 6:12-18

Many of us are very familiar with the armor of God- and yet we miss the big picture. We often read these verses and we think as long as WE wear this bulky armor then WE will keep US safe. And yet the truth is, WE are incapable of keeping us safe.

Notice what Who's Armor this verse tells us to put on- not our armor, *but God's*. When life gets bumpy and trials are troublesome- we do not have what it takes to be unmovable. Yet, if we will put on this armor- then *the armor* will keep us safe. Or in other words- being unmovable *is all about the armor!*

MAKE A LIST OF EACH PART OF THE ARMOR.

Each and every piece of this armor is supplied and sustained by Jesus; *He is truth, we have His righteousness, He gave us His peace, our faith lies in Him, our Salvation is found in Him, His Spirit dwells within us, and His Word is hidden in our hearts.* The Armor of God is in fact about being clothed in; **Jesus**. And if we are clothed in Jesus at *all times*, truly we will forever and always remain safe; *unmovable, and unshaken!*

When does the Bible say would be a good time to remove this armor that protects us from attack? Answer: *NEVER!* The Bible tells us to *put on* this armor, put on Christ, and no where do we read a command to *take it off*. Wear it to school, to work on the car ride, while playing baseball, folding laundry, watching TV, scrolling through Facebook-even as you lie in bed, *wear the armor*. This is the *only way* to ensure we are unmovable- *not from our efforts, but by His protection.*

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD HELP YOU RECOGNIZE THE TIMES AND PLACES IN YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU STEP OUT OF THE ARMOR OF CHRIST. ASK HIM TO SHOW YOU THE IMPORTANCE OF REMAINING IN HIM, AND JUST HOW ILL-EQUIPPED YOU ARE TO KEEP YOU SAFE.



The Northern Ohio Youth Camp has proudly provided a week of life-changing summer camp to the youth of Ohio and surrounding states for over a decade. Beginning in 2010, the NOYC! was formed out of a desire to involve the youth of local churches throughout the state in actively serving the Lord. Since the camp's beginning, God has done a great work in this ministry each year by adding in attendance, worship, and lives changed for Him. Now located in the beautiful rolling hills of Warsaw, Ohio, at the Warsaw Retreat Center, the NOYC! hosts around 300+ during our annual week of summer camp.

In addition to an amazing week of camp, the NOYC also provides additional events such as youth conferences and sporting events throughout the year as well. Since 2016, the NOYC has also ministered by offering Christian content and resources such as custom curriculum book/ video series & The NOYC GODcast that specifically challenge young people to live the victorious Christian life In Christ.

Though many things have changed in the past decade of ministry, one constant has remained and that is the motivation to see lives changed and set on a course of newness of life in living for Christ. In the past ten years we have watched as the youth who first attended our camp many years ago, are still faithfully serving the Lord and even bringing their own families, now as adults, back to camp. Many of these same young adults can be found now working in the camp as counselors, worship leaders, game directors and more.

Although the NOYC is geared directly for youth, the NOYC is so much more than your typical youth camp. At the NOYC youth and adults alike set their differences aside and come together in childlike faith in pursuit of a more genuine and authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. Over the years we have seen hundreds of lives changed

by attending camp, many even resulting in salvation, answering a call to ministry, and becoming more devoted to Christ.

A typical day at the NOYC will include 3 amazing home cooked meals per day (plus snack!), 2 Bible classes, 2 sport activities, wacky games, 4 prayer stations, crafts, music class, the Amazing NOYC Race, an out-of-this-world camp church service, and much, MUCH more! Every day we make it a priority to saturate the campers and counselors in as much Bible teaching and spiritual activity on a personal level as possible. Strong preaching, God-glorifying singing, and great fun are all in store for you at the NOYC!

Even though our top priority is closeness with Christ, at the NOYC we fully believe that life, especially for the believer, is meant to be a blast! For this reason, every moment at the NOYC is intentionally planned and prepared for the utmost fun- down to the detail. Beyond the exciting daily activities, the NOYC also offers several special events during our week of camp which attendees can look forward to including; the Mestival (over 300+ lbs of slime), kiddy pool kick ball, the Nerf War Arena, and the NOYC one-of-a-kind Escape Room, and more!

Above all at the NOYC, our desire is to reach a generation who has seemingly turned their back on God. Through God's provision we have witnessed a miracle take place each year at camp- as young people are turning their attention to the things of the Lord. Many churches and ministries have sadly turned their back on this seemingly rebellious generation that seems impossible to teach or understand, yet the truth is this generation is desperately seeking *Truth and authentic Christianity that works*. The NOYC is far more than a youth camp, it is a joining together of like minds, in unity of the desire for God's Word- which will show us His plan for each of our lives. This is why you will find people of different denominations, belief systems, backgrounds, walks of life, and even generations coming along side one another, united in one mind for the cause of

Christ at the NOYC. We greatly encourage individuals, groups, families, youth leaders, pastors, and more to join our NOYC family and witness what God can do. **WE INVITE YOU TO COME EXPERIENCE A LIFE CHANGING, SOUL SAVING, RIDICULOUSLY FUN WEEK AT THE NOYC!**



WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

CONTACT OUR HELPFUL STAFF MEMBERS WITH ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BOOK, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, SUMMER CAMP, AND MORE.

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TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT

People are saying about the NOYC!

"There's no place I'd rather spend an entire week...Lives have been changed. I'm looking forward to see what God has in store for us all throughout the year, so that we could grow closer to God." - *Molly F.*

"In all ways I feel like I am so much closer to God. The whole day is just amazing. Everything is so well organized!" - *McKayla T.*

"Although this is a 'Youth Camp' it challenges us adults spiritually." - *Chris F.*

"Best week of the year for my family. I really enjoyed it all." - *Mike S.*

"Wow, this week has really been an eye opener for me. Seeing our church kids coming together, supporting each other, loving each other, and worshipping God." - *Kim B.*

"This week is a great way to 'disconnect' and grow closer to God. The NOYC finds many ways to challenge you spiritually, to get inside yourself and closer to God." - *Patty M.*

DAILY SPORTS,
GAMES, PRIZES,
COMPETITIONS, AND
RIDICULOUS FUN!

fun

2 DAILY
DEVOTIONS, PRAYER
STATIONS, AND
WOW WORSHIP
SERVICES

faith

MEET AND MAKE
NEW FRIENDS
FROM ALL OVER
THE STATE

fellowship

LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT GOD IS DOING AT THE NOYC! WWW.THENOYC.COM



NOYC

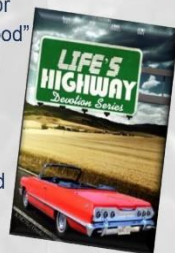
Resources

If you have been involved in youth ministry for any time at all you recognize that there is a great void when it comes to high quality, Christ centered, spiritually challenging, and yet life applicable materials. It is for this reason that the NOYC is proud to offer several one of a kind curriculum series in both DVD and Book formats. Each of our resources are written, directed, and produced by the NOYC! A preview trailer as well as the full video series can be found at our website & YouTube channel. Whether for personal use, small groups, Sunday school classes, or youth groups- NOYC productions are sure to bless and challenge your youth and adults alike. Each resource features a lesson, hands on activity, memory verse, and more!



Just like the “#” connects so many people on social media- “Struggles” connect all people from different walks of life. We all have them, let’s talk about *#Struggles*.

All things work together for good- but at times the “good” is hard to find in our lives. When the road we’re on takes a sharp turn or an inconvenient detour- sometimes it’s hard to find the meaning of *Life’s Highway*.



What if Jesus actually meant what He said when He asked for anyone willing to follow- to take up their cross and follow Him? What if we can only keep our life by first laying it down? Learn how to live a surrendered life of victory with the viral series; *White Flag Faith*.

It happens to the best of us. Unexpected, devastating, and in an instant your life now lies in pieces on the floor. Shattered reminds us that God never breaks anything for nothing. Every single broken piece is intentional by God. Find out how to see beauty from brokenness with the timely series: *Shattered*.



The NOYC is now excited to offer a weekly Podcast/ Blog for youth! Checkout the NOYC GODcast or the NOYC Blog for challenging and Christ centered Christian content as well as considerable quotes, featured music, camp memories and much more! You can find the NOYC GODcast on all major podcast platforms or sign up to receive the NOYC weekly Blog to your inbox by visiting www.thenocyc.com

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You've got to be JOYking me
The NOYCO Godcast — November 3,

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