

# HOLDING STEADFAST

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Holding steadfast is one of the all-important attitudes in our Christian life, and in all our dealings with God. It is the dividing line between the doubts, fears and oppressions of Satan and God's light, and grace, and strength.

The greatest perplexities in an early Christian's life are—why does the Devil work as he does—and how little help I get from God. They wonder why it is so hard to get answers to prayer and victory over the Devil. And especially so when God promised to answer every prayer we offer.

God says, *"ask and ye shall receive. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and the door shall be opened unto you."* And then He gave us this unanswerable argument *"if you being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him."*

Then Jesus said *"if you, being evil (meaning under the control of the Devil, and still having the old evil nature) would have a son who would ask you for a piece of bread, would you give him a stone? If he asked for a fish would you give him a serpent? Well, if you know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good things to them that ask Him."*

You can imagine, after reading that as a young Christian, how baffled they would be when they don't get all their prayers answered. Well, God will answer those questions and it will all come through holding steadfast. As we hold steady in the Truth, God will reveal to us that all our dealings with Him, are exactly the same in principle, as all our dealings with man. In worldly business we can't do a thing until our decision is final.

It is the same in the Truth, when we have settled it finally to give these lives to God, and have settled it finally to hold steadfast whatever comes. God will then expose and reveal the why and wherefore of our being baffled, and the cause of why any of our prayers are not answered. He will expose every hiding-place of the Devil.

One of the great reasons for unanswered prayer is that we have never settled it to depend on God alone, never finally settled it to be steadfast in seeking from God a full deliverance out of any difficulty we may be in. It is a wavering heart that is the only thing that gives the Devil the chance to baffle us in getting the answers to our prayers,

The very moment our decision is final to go through in dependence upon God for our victory, that moment the Devil will be rebuked in the doubts and fears that he puts in our minds, and also rebuked in the trouble he is making for us. And a real divine confidence from God will come in and enable us to receive our full deliverance.

That's what Paul means when he said *"the peace of God that passeth all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds thru Christ Jesus."* That peace is the fruit of a divine confidence. It is the same in all our dealings with God. The very moment we have settled it, to place all our troubles in His hands, and have made a final decision to go through with Him, that will enable Him to deliver us from the doubts and fears of Satan, and fill us with His own peace and rest.

It is only by holding steadfast, that God is enabled to bring us to the place where He can show us just where the Devil is hindering us, and just what gives the Devil a foothold. That is what enabled God to deliver Job. He is the best example in the Bible on the value of holding steadfast.

James refers to Job in the New Testament when he says "*behold, we count them happy who endure.* (He means, we count them happy, very happy, who hold steadfast). *Ye have heard of the patience of Job*"-he means, ye have heard of the endurance, or the steadfastness of Job-"*and have seen the end of the Lord's dealings with him; how that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.*"

Job was one of the toughest cases in the entire Bible for God to reach. He was full of self-righteousness. That is, he was firmly convinced by the Devil, that he could live a righteous life, and that he could serve and please God, all in his own strength, and by his own self-efforts.

Job had the idea that honesty, and sincerity, and self-effort, was all that God would require. He depended wholly on himself to try to live a true spiritual life. And if ever there was a sincere person, Job was that one. But he was filled with self and the Devil.

He was so set in his ways, and so filled with self-confidence, that's the reason why he had to go through all that he did before he found out that he was nothing, and could do nothing, on the divine plane.

Then God came on the scene. And He soon convinced Job that he had those two hidden and wicked enemies in him, self and Satan. And that he was a wicked man.

Then God asked him-"*if where you are now, your right hand can save you, go ahead and try it. If you are so wonderful, and are so able to live right, you are now welcome to have a full chance to try and deliver yourself!*" But all Job said was, "*I have heard about you by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*"

It was only by holding steadfast that God was enabled to deal with Job, and to bring him to the place where he could see that it was his ignorance of God. But when he was willing to lay them aside, take his place, and give God His place, his captivity was turned without Job even praying for it. It is by holding steadfast that God is sure to reveal the cause of our troubles, and give us the light and strength as well as our victory.

Jesus Himself gave us a story on the importance and necessity of always holding steadfast. It says, "*He spake a parable unto them that men ought always to pray and never to lose heart.*" It is the story of the poor widow and the unjust judge. And it reveals just why our prayers are not answered, and just why Satan can baffle us.

It is of the utmost importance that we hold steady in finding out from God just where Satan is hindering us. The Devil has convinced the so-called Christian world that God won't answer prayer any more. And that He won't deliver them out of their troubles, as He did His people in Bible times.

The reason for this is, that when professing Christians find out they aren't getting any answers to prayer, or any manifestations of God's power-instead of letting God show them what was the matter, they let the Devil settle it for them. They accept the suggestions that he puts in their mind, that God has changed. And that the reason and fault was in God, and not in them.

It doesn't matter how ignorant, nor how weak and helpless a person is, if they will hold steadfast in seeking their light and help from God, He will reveal the cause of their trouble, and lead them to perfect victory.

God tells us this in Philippians 4:6, 7, where He says--"*be careful for nothing*"--that means, where any of us lack wisdom, or are in any kind of trouble in everything, "*be careful for nothing.*" Now that means that we are not to worry about anything.

"*But in everything*" that covers everything that could happen in our lives--"*but in everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God.*" That means, that we are to tell the whole story to God, and to seek all our light, all our wisdom and all our understanding directly from Him.

Then, it says "*the peace of God that passeth all understanding, shall keep your minds and hearts in union with Jesus Christ*"--that is, in perfect victory. And it means that God will not only give us a full deliverance out of the trouble, but He will give us the grace and strength to receive it from Him.

The Bible makes great promises. It tells us that every prayer we offer in Jesus' name will be-and IS, answered. It tells us that God is always standing at our door and knocking. And that, if anybody hears His voice and opens the door, He will come in and feast with them, and they with Him. And Jesus tells us that if we ask the Father anything in His name, He will give it to us.

These are very broad promises. And it has perplexed many people, especially in the early stages of their Christian life, when they have asked in Jesus' name, and haven't got what they prayed for.

That may seem very perplexing at first, but there is a reason for our not receiving the answer to our prayer, when we ask in Jesus' name, and that is, we allow the Devil to come and take that word and promise right out of our mind, and put his word there instead.

No one could ever receive anything from either God, or man, with such an attitude-believing the lies that Satan puts into our mind, and doubting God's written Word. That's the attitude Adam took, that's what put the world where it is today. And that's the cause of all the trouble that we, or any other human being, ever had.

God will not have us in His teaching very long, before He will teach us that it is just as necessary to burn our bridges, in all our dealings with Him, as it is in all our dealings with our fellowman. There is no difference at all in principle, in dealing with God and in dealing with man. We can't get anybody down here on earth to help us, if we don't put the job in their hands to stay. That's a principle that neither God nor man can change.

It is one of the first principles that a real Christian has to learn in being successful in their praying, and that is, to hold steadfast, and make their decision final to depend on God alone.

Jesus said in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of John, that "*if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*" That's a very broad statement, but it doesn't mean the first day we become a Christian. Because we have to have much teaching and training, and much developing by God.

Jesus says that if we continue to abide in Him, that is, if we will only hold steadfast, as a branch abides in the vine, we will come to the place where we will be taught how to pray, and how to get answers to our prayers. And we will come to the place where we don't believe the Devil's lies, but believe God's Word.

Jesus gives us a parable that illustrates all this. He says, "there was in a certain city an unjust judge which feared not God, nor regarded man. And there was a poor widow who came to that unjust judge for a deliverance out of her trouble. She asked him to avenge her of her adversary, to right a wrong.

Jesus said that the unjust judge would not do it for a while. But then he said within himself—*"though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."*

Then Jesus says *"HEAR what that unjust judge said."* He meant, just look at this whole transaction, between a poor widow and an unjust judge. This widow got one-hundred-percent deliverance from a wicked devil-controlled man, just by holding steadfast, by not giving up, by being determined that she would hold steadfast until she got her full deliverance.

Then Jesus applied it to us. He says "and shall not God (such a one as God is, so perfect, so pure, so unselfish, so merciful, so changeless in His love—and so overwhelming in His eagerness and His desire to work for us) how could it be possible that such a One as God is, wouldn't hear and answer the prayers of His true children, and deliver them out of all their troubles. *"I tell you He will avenge them speedily, though he bear long with them"*—like He did in His dealings with Job.

Jesus meant that God bears long with our ignorance and our spiritual blindness, and He bears long with our proneness to listen to the thoughts that Satan puts into our minds. He means that God will deliver us, although He has to wait until He can bring us to where He can give us the light and strength to burn our bridge, and make our final decision to go through trusting in Him alone. Jesus said the moment we reached that place it would enable God to "avenge us speedily." Then He said something that bears witness to what we have heard many times—*"nevertheless when the son of man cometh, will he find faith on the earth."*

He meant in these closing days of the Gospel Age, would He truly find anyone holding steadfast? Anyone going to God, dealing with Him personally, settling it to go through trusting in Him alone, for what they need and desire for this present life?

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