

THE FORT OF FORTITUDE

“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.”(Col. 1:11)

“Strengthened with all might” – Wow! That sounds like Superman. Well, God says that we are “fortified with all might” and that does not make us supermen or women but it does make us supernatural in that we are promised, for spiritual warfare, His “glorious power”. That means that we are fortified with fortitude.

“Fortitude” means “Patient endurance of trouble and/or pain; courage.” These are not days for the faint of heart. These times demand fortitude and persistence in adhering to eternal God-principles. You can be fortified with God’s fortitude!

It's human nature to fear what everyone fears, and it may or may not be wise business practice as well. But such groupthink is disastrous for our souls. A kind of group psychology may be setting in, likened to people running for the fire escape because everyone else is. Conventional wisdom is seldom wise with regard to the ways of God.

We find the point repeated throughout Scriptures, from the wholesale rejection of Noah's imminent flood to the crowds ignoring pending judgment in the book of Revelation. Few and far between are the heroes who defy the masses such as a Moses standing up to Pharaoh or a Stephen facing down the Sanhedrin.

The fact is that courageous conviction in the face of criticism is essential to going on with God. Consider George Washington who became Commander of the Continental Army. He promptly lost his first battle and so many others that a serious move was made in 1777 to remove him from office. After a quarter of his troops died that winter at Valley Forge, many thought the War for Independence was lost. But fortitude won the day.

Theodore Roosevelt struggled with asthma as a child, sleeping on pillows or slouching in a chair. When he graduated from college, his doctor warned him that his heart could not stand a life of strenuous activity. After his first wife and mother died on the same day, he abandoned public life in New York City for ranching in the Dakotas. When a harsh winter wiped him out, he was forced to return home and eventually re-entered politics. Only after President McKinley was assassinated did he ascend to the Oval Office. Once again, fortitude won the day.

It's not failure to fall down, but it is failure to stay down. Is discouragement whispering in your ear to give up? Don't do it. Remember that "Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt" (Read the "From Sodom To Sodium" story in Genesis 19). When Peter turned his eyes from Jesus to the wind he was afraid and began to sink (Matthew 14:30). So will you! Remember, God is our fort, our fortress and our fortitude and in Him we are “Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.”

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