



MINISTRIES

In the spring of 1982, I was given the first opportunity to share a message from the pulpit of my home church. I was fourteen years

old and knew little about preaching except what I had heard from pastors and youth ministers. As I approached the day, I prepared as best I could. The passage the Lord had given me to preach was from Isaiah 40:28-31. This was a very exciting time in my life, and I had several people around me who helped me prepare, encouraged me, and prayed for me.

That Sunday was a crazy day. I was fulfilling the role of pastor during Youth Week along with a couple of others from my student group. I was the youngest and felt way under-qualified. I taught the older men's Sunday School class during the early hour and then prepared to preach at 11:00. I remember meeting with my youth pastor in his office beforehand and will never forget his words: "Remember you are



standing behind the cross when you preach. Let the people see Jesus and hear His words from your heart and leave the results to God!" These words have remained in my head and heart. Each time the opportunity

came to stand in front of anyone to share, I recalled the moment in his office praying and being encouraged by these words. Thank you to Steve Hammack for being such an awesome role model and mentor for those early years and throughout the years that have followed. I have called him from time to time when I've needed a word of wisdom, and God has continually used him in my life.

The amazing thing is that the Lord brings people into our lives to walk this journey with us. He knows what we will need when we will need it. It is not a one-size-fits-all model. Each one of us has a unique journey that takes twists and turns, and the Lord is providing help all

along the way. Recently, I have wrestled with this journey because of the changes in our world with the pandemic. I have had to restructure my days because of the inability to travel and lead teams the way we once did. Yet, even in this uncertain time, the Lord has provided people who have helped me walk this road.

The Isaiah passage I preached those many years ago has a very significant truth that helps us all. The Hebrew word for wait is not a passive word. The word, KAVAH, demonstrates the idea of weaving a rope together to hold on! Our instruction from Isaiah is to actively pursue the work of faith in order to hold on to Him. Waiting in our culture oftentimes is thought of in a line expecting to receive something I have ordered. Or maybe it is standing in line to get into a show or ride that we want to experience. The Hebrew concept of this word means to be working to make something to hold on to that will help us reach the final outcome of our desire or moment. There is so much more in this passage than this, but this truth is a big concept to grasp. Am I waiting well? I have to consider if I am actively pursuing the Lord daily in order to establish a faith that will provide the faithful journey I desire. Isaiah teaches us to wait with faithfulness in order to soar like eagles, run without getting tired, and walk without becoming weary. Are you weary today? Are you tired? Is your perspective small and limited? Remember, if we wait actively pursuing the faith we need, we will rise above the small things and see from His

perspective.

We will run with perseverance, and we will walk without becoming weary!

Take a leap of faith today and trust His heart and hand. He will be faithful to complete a work He has begun in you! Let's press on to reach this world and teach His Word until He comes or calls us home!



In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry (2 Timothy 4:1-5). This was a letter to Timothy, as he was being instructed to carry on Paul's work. Paul was giving an important charge from his cold, dark prison cell.

He said to do the following: Preach the Word; be prepared at all times; correct, rebuke and encourage; and have great patience and give careful instruction. This also applies to each of us. We are to proclaim the gospel, as children of God, in everything single thing we do. This wasn't a suggestion but the command of Jesus.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19-20). He tells us to do these things with complete patience, sound teaching, and honest passion. We don't find it hard to become passionate about other things in life, but can we honestly say we are as passionate about sharing Christ? We are supposed to do it whenever the opportunity arises. We are to be ready to serve because we are passionate about sharing the Gospel.

Verse 3 tells us that a time is coming when people will only want to satisfy the "itching in their ears" ...in other words, "what feels good for them." They will hear what they want to hear, only listening to people who will tell them what they want to hear. They will not listen to people who are giving them sound doctrine. Friends, we are in this time NOW. We must be ready to share. People are looking for answers, we must stand firm with the truth. The fifth verse says to always endure suffering. We are to keep our heads about us and fulfill our ministry: the work that God has called us to do. Press on in trying times and never, ever give up!

Ask yourself this question: "What is standing in the way of what God has called me to do?" We all have distractions, reservations, fears, that prevent us from fully surrendering our ALL to him. Find out what is keeping you from that 100% commitment. When He calls us to something and we meet adversity or opposition, then that is the enemy trying to discourage us. We may have to give up something to be fully in. Fear, worry, discouragement, unbelief are not things that we have to worry about anymore because we are a child of him.

So, how can we overcome these adversities?

- Trust in the Lord - He always has and He always will direct our paths.
- Hide the word of the Lord in our heart. Allow it to live there, grow and we can use it. It will be the light for that path that He leads us on.
- Don't grow weary of doing good deeds. He says we will reap what we sow if we don't give up. Know that some of the most important deeds will go unnoticed.
- Be renewed. Don't conform to the world. In this, we will be able to discern what is of God and what is of the world.
- Step out of your comfort zone. Do the most difficult tasks because we will grow our faith, as well as be in line with Him.

A Christ-like life is not an achievement but a goal to be more like him. When we choose to be believers, it's not a one-and-done decision but a life-long decision. Our life is not our own, it is God's. The things of this world have no eternal value. We must be obedient and faithful and **PRESS ON!** - Karen Katchuk

