

Still Others

by Alan Martin

Alan Martin's sermon emphasizes the importance of enduring trials as a means to grow in faith and receive God's promises.

Scripture: Exodus 34:7, Psalm 90:12, Psalm 119:18, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 10:28, 2 Timothy 4:2, Hebrews 11:36

Topics: "Others"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by acknowledging the Lord's goodness and righteousness. They emphasize the importance of humility and recognizing our dependence on God. The speaker then turns to Hebrews chapter 11, focusing on the 'hall of faith' and the examples of various biblical figures. They highlight the faith and triumphs of individuals like Gideon, David, Elijah, and Samson. The sermon concludes with a prayer for wisdom and a desire for God's presence to be revealed through preaching.

Transcript

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, we already have acknowledged you in song and testimony by our presence. And we know that you know whether that's been a contradiction or inconsistent with how we've walked before you in fear and trembling all week.

Knowing you hear every word and we're going to render account for it. Knowing you know not only the thoughts and intents of the heart. You know the motives behind everything we do.

Nothing is hidden from you. We know we're going to give an account for everything. We know you're just and you're going to render unto every man according to their deeds.

That's why we repent. That's why we confess. That's why we agree with your spirit when you point out to us we've missed the mark.

We have fallen short of your glory. We're not going to make our own standard. In fear and trembling, we declare, we agree with you, your word is right.

The ways of the Lord are right. The righteous walk in them. The rebellious stumble in them.

You've made the way of the righteous smooth. It's a level path. It's a good way.

And those who walk in it find rest under their souls. It's the disobedient, the way of the transgressor is hard. We confess with you that your yoke is easy.

Your burden is light and you have given and you do provide rest for our souls. What's hard for us is fully learning the simplicity of just agreeing with you in everything. Deliver us from our own carnal, limited human understanding.

That's dark without your light. The entrance of your word gives light. It gives understanding to the simple.

Not only that, good and upright is the Lord. You're good and upright, therefore you instruct sinners in the way. Boy, we qualify this morning, Lord, to be instructed in your way.

And you guide the humble in what's right. And all we need, Lord, to be humble is to see you. Because compared to you, we're nothing.

And we can do nothing. But that's fine. You give your grace to the humble.

And you dwell with those who are of a broken and a contrite spirit. And who tremble at your word. Father, for your own namesake, blot out our transgressions.

Forgive our iniquity. Show mercy. Show the strength.

Let the strength of the Lord be displayed. That you, O Lord, are loving. And that you, O Lord, are kind.

That you are the gracious, compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness. Forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Even while you do not leave the guilty unpunished.

Thank you for your complete justice. That only those will be condemned who have refused your every attempt to be gracious and merciful. To turn us from our own wicked ways.

Thank you that you offer every wicked man, every sinful man. You tell them that if they turn from their sins, sin will not be their downfall. So, Father, instruct us.

Teach us. Give unto us a heart of wisdom so that we can... Help us to number our days aright, like Moses prayed. So that we can gain a heart of wisdom.

We are utterly dependent upon you to make your word living. Lord, we don't want to study a dead letter. We don't want to just look at a written commandment.

We want life. And that life is you, your presence. And we believe that you can operate through the gift of preaching.

You can reveal yourself. You can strengthen your saints. You can confirm your word.

You can bring encouragement. You can bring reproof. You can do the many wonderful things that your grace is able.

You can tailor it to every person's need here today. In only a way that you can and no man can. And we acknowledge that.

And we ask for your help. We ask, like David, open our eyes. The eyes of our heart that we may behold wonderful things in your law.

The things that bring us into a real relationship with you. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

If you will turn up to Hebrews chapter 11. The hall of faith. Hebrews chapter 11.

Well, there's a lot of people we could read here. And I want to skip right down through. If you don't mind.

I want to... The first part of the chapter, I think, has more of the people we enjoy reading about. But I want to skip down to that. The others.

Where it starts, still others. See if you can find that. Verse 36.

Still others. Kind of a change. You know, we can rejoice at Gideon.

We can rejoice at David. We can rejoice with Elijah. We can rejoice with Samson.

We can rejoice with many of those who saw spectacular deliverance. But what about the still others? Verse 36. Still others had a trial of mockings and scourgings.

Yes. And of chains and imprisonments. Let me read this to you from a direct word to word from the original language.

And others of mockings and scourgings took up a trial. Took up. Received.

You know, the same word is used in Matthew 10.28. Don't turn there. I just want to read it to you. If you want to mark it down.

Well, I say don't turn there. Excuse me. If you want to turn there.

It's your Bible. Your conscience. I just don't want to press you to do so.

But Matthew 10.28. 10.38. The same word is used. Matthew 10.37 says, The one loving father and mother more than me is not worthy of me. Neither is the one loving son or daughter above me worthy of me.

And he who does not take up his cross and follow after me. He's not worthy of me. It's the same word.

These took up their trial. They picked it up. And so these took up their trial.

Chains and imprisonments. They were stoned. They were sawn in two.

They were tempted. They were slain with a sword. They wondered about in sheep skins and goat skins.

Being destitute and afflicted. Tormented. Of whom the world was not worthy.

They wondered in deserts and mountains and dens and caves of the earth. And all these having obtained a good witness through faith. Did not receive the promise.

These are people by faith even without receiving the promise. Took up their trial. It says that God had provided something better.

Something better for us. So that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Are you going to take up your trial today, saint? Or are you going to think it's strange? Does the trial from God mean you're doing something wrong? Turn to 1 Peter.

No, it doesn't mean that. 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 3-7. 1 Peter 1, verses 3-7.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again into a living hope. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. That does not fade away. Reserved in heaven for you.

Who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation. Ready to be revealed in the last time. And in this, in this great salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

You greatly rejoice. Though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials. But these various trials have come in verse 7. So that the genuineness of your faith.

Being much more precious than gold which perishes though refined by fire. May be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Who is that praise and glory and honor going to go to for that person whose faith has been found genuine? To that person.

They're going to share in the honor and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Entering into the joy of the Lord. But for now, you're going to face all kinds of trials.

You know it says that all those that still others that took up their trial fire. They didn't receive the promise because God had something better. So that they would not be perfected without us.

How does God perfect His sons? All of God's sons are perfected by suffering. Now if you didn't realize that that's what you were called into. Someone preached to you a false gospel.

Jesus said the way is narrow. Means tribulated. And it's hard.

That is the way. Because that is the way we're perfected. In Hebrews chapter 5 verse 8 and 9 it says, Although He was a Son, He, Jesus, learned obedience through the things He suffered.

And once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. Christ Himself was made complete through the things He suffered. And God still makes you and I complete by a designed plan of suffering.

To make our way difficult for now. For a little while. So that we can live by faith.

And that we can receive the salvation kept in heaven for us. Ready to be revealed. But it's kept there.

For now though. We have our own season of trial. Now how is one perfected through suffering? Turn to Romans chapter 5. You should be familiar with this.

This will not be new to very many of you. Does it matter? I like what John says. I write these things to you.

Not because you do not know them. Because you do know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it was Peter who actually said that.

He goes, but it doesn't matter. I want to make every effort to see that you are always able to remember these things. Of course Peter said after his departure.

I'm not ready to depart. So, I don't want to, I skipped that part. Romans chapter 5. Verse 1. Therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. But not only do we rejoice in that.

But we also glory in tribulation. Because we know that tribulation produces what? Endurance. Alright.

And endurance, character or experience. And experience hope. And that hope does not disappoint because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

So, here's how it works. Tribulation leads to endurance. And endurance leads to proven character, experience.

And that proven character and experience leads to hope. And that hope does not disappoint us. See, this tribulation, this fiery trial we forget is part of our baptism.

You know, we ask people, do you preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit? I'm asked that. Have you been baptized with the Holy Spirit? Why don't they ever say, have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire? Where's the and fire part? And when the one shall come after me greater than I, he shall baptize me with the Holy Spirit and fire. If you want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, yeah, but you better be asking for more than to speak in tongues.

You better be asking to be perfected. Fully perfected in the image of Christ. By these trials God will design to perfect you.

Even as he did his own son. This is a baptism, we desperately need this baptism of fire. You know, I love that song from a foundation.

One of the verses says, when through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, my grace all sufficient shall be thy supply. The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine. It's a blessing.

It's been granted unto us, not only to believe in Christ Jesus, but to suffer. With him. That's a gift.

Now, look in 1 Corinthians and see another purpose of this fire. 1 Corinthians chapter 3 if you would. 1 Corinthians chapter 3. Find verses 13 and 14.

This is what fire does. It's baptism of fire. Each one's work will become clear.

For the day will declare it because it will be revealed by what? Fire. Fire will reveal the work. And the fire will test each one's work of what sort it is.

And if anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. So, what is the fire designed to really reveal? Whether your work will endure. Pretty important.

Just how important is... Well, Jesus said, didn't he say to his disciples? I have chosen thee that ye should go and bear forth fruit. Bring forth fruit. And that your fruit should remain.

Remain. Get this. Remain, in the Greek, is the word minnow.

If you take the word minnow and add the Greek preposition hupo, which is under. But hupo, minnow, remain under, you get the word endurance. Endurance means to remain under.

To remain under what? The fire. The trial. The suffering.

That's what it means. That's where we get the idea. How vital is endurance to the Christian life? He that endures to the end shall be saved.

You don't want to be saved, don't endure. It's a matter of salvation. It's not just a matter of maturity.

He that endures to completeness. The is not in any of the original manuscripts. This verse is five times in the Gospels.

He that endures to the end shall be saved. Twice in Matthew 24, once in Luke, once in Mark. It is not in any of the manuscripts.

He that endures unto end. Completion. Fullness.

Perfection. To be finished. To the finish shall be saved.

Now, we're told it's this quality of endurance we must run by. Look in Hebrews chapter 12. Back close to where we began, Hebrews chapter 12.

Remembering these still others who took up their own trial of fire. They also are part of these great cloud of witnesses. You know what? Too many times the great cloud of witnesses in our mind is David and Samson and Gideon.

All these people who saw these miraculous deliverances. But hey, these people that took up their fiery trial and wondered about in goat skins and sheep skins. Living in caves.

The scum of the earth. You know, in the world's eyes. But of whom the world was not even worthy.

They're also part of these great cloud of witnesses. And we're to remember that we're encompassed about by them. Hebrews chapter 12 verse 1 says.

And verse 2 says. Well, I better read all of verse 1. Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us.

And let us run with endurance. The race that is set before us. Looking away unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Who for the joy that was set before him did what? He endured the cross. He took up his cross with endurance. Just like the people before took up their fire of trial with endurance.

Just like you and I are called to not be thinking strange at this fiery trial we're undergoing. But to take it up. To take it up with endurance.

And run. Looking to Jesus. Seeing that he took up his cross.

He endured his cross. How did he do so? How did Jesus endure his cross? Before the joy set before him. Okay.

Let me ask you a question. What's another way of saying a joy set. Or another word for a joy set before us.

What would be another expression? A joy set before us. Something we don't have. But we're conscious of it.

Hope. Hope. Says who hopes for what he already has.

But if he hopes for it, what's he doing? He's waiting expectantly. Eagerly. If he's eagerly anticipating something and it's bringing him joy.

He has hope. He has hope. And we need this hope to endure.

Without this hope. Because it says. So do not throw away the steadfastness.

The firmness of your hope. After ye have done the will of God. Then ye shall receive the promise.

But ye have need of endurance. The scripture says. And let's just look at this in a couple of places.

Look in Romans chapter 4. Our natural father of the faith is who? Abraham. And how did our natural father in the faith, Abraham, endure? Let's read about it in Romans chapter 4. Verse 18 and following. Abraham, who against all hope, in hope, believed.

And so became the father of many nations. According to what was spoken, so shall your offspring be. And not weakening in his faith.

He disregarded the fact that his body was as good as dead. And that Sarah's womb was also dead. And yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God.

But was strengthened in his faith. Giving glory to God. Being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he promised.

And then it says, therefore, in verse 22. It was accounted unto him for righteousness. God considers everyone who endures in hope, by faith, righteous.

It's the righteous who are going to be saved. And the righteous live by faith. And this is the victory that overcomes the world.

Even our faith. To everyone who overcomes, the promises of God are for them. The ones who endure to the end.

And this is also for us that shall be imputed to us who believe. In him who raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead. Let's look at it in another place.

Romans chapter 8, verse 18. Romans 8, 18. Wonderful passages if you're going through a time of difficulty.

Romans 4, 18. Romans 8, 18. Beginning with verse 18.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Do you realize that just puts you in the same category? The glory which will be revealed. All you have right now, brothers, is a deposit of this glory.

That's all you have. You have not received it fully yet. It's kept in heaven for you.

Waiting to be revealed in the last time. So you can be just like the still others who took up their trial. Not having received that together with them we'll all be perfected in that day.

When we get to be like Him. When this light and momentary affliction is over. And those who endure to the end get the full inheritance that our deposit guarantees.

We have, for I consider not that the present sufferings of this present time are worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Verse 19. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly awaits for the revealing of the sons of God.

For the creation was subject to futility or to bondage. Not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope. Even the creation was only subjected in hope.

Because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pains together until now. Not only that, but we also who now have the first fruit of the Spirit.

Even we ourselves groan within ourselves eagerly awaiting. What's eagerly awaiting? Hope. Eagerly awaiting for the adoption.

The redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope. But hope that is seen is no hope.

For why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. You see, hope produces perseverance. Endurance.

It enables you to endure. Because you're not fixed upon what you see. One of the passages that speaks powerfully to this is in 2 Corinthians chapter 3. Actually chapter 4. 2 Corinthians chapter 4. This was touched upon in our earlier time in the Word this morning.

Which was wonderful. Verse 7. 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 7. But we have this treasure. The treasure that we have is spoken of in verse 6. The fact that God has given us the knowledge of the light of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Having that knowledge is our treasure. We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. Now this describes Christians.

We are hard pressed on every side. But not crushed. We are perplexed but not in despair.

Persecuted but not forsaken. Struck down but not destroyed. We always carry about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus.

Anyone ready to sign up? You want to be a Christian? All it means is you're going to always carry about in your body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Sign up. Anyone want to be a disciple today? I do.

Because it's through dying that we live. That's the mystery of the gospel. We always carry about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus.

That the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who are alive are always delivered to death for Jesus sake. That the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

That means now. His life manifested in us now. That though we are pressed, forsaken, abandoned, persecuted.

All these things we still love the Father. Nothing can move us from that faithful confidence in God's promise. Verse 12.

So then death is at work in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith according to what is written. I believe and therefore I spoke.

We also believe and therefore speak. Now that's a quotation. Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what's written.

I believe and therefore I spoke. Where's that verse found? Psalms 116. Let's turn there.

This will be the last place I think we turn to. Of course I say that a lot. I think.

Shouldn't think too much. Psalms 116. Read with me a good portion of this psalm.

I love the Lord for He heard my voice. He heard my cry for mercy. Because He turned His ear to me.

I will call on Him as long as I live. The cords of death entangled me. The anguish of the grave came upon me.

I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the Lord. Oh Lord save me.

The Lord is gracious and righteous. Our God is full of compassion. The Lord protects the simple hearted.

When I was in great need, He saved me. Be at rest once more oh my soul. For the Lord has been good to you.

For you oh Lord have delivered my soul from death. My eyes from tears. My feet from stumbling.

That I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living. And then here's the verse. I believe therefore I said.

I'm greatly afflicted. And in my dismay I said all men are liars. Now this is interesting.

Notice this. The spirit of faith says. You know what the spirit of faith really says? When you're in faith and when you're at rest.

You say the Lord has been good to me. You know what you say when you're dismayed? All men are liars. You know why? Because you're not seeing God anymore.

All you got is two big natural eyes. Focus on a lot of natural problems. And when you have lost vision and lost faith.

All you know is your truth. That there ain't nobody good. They're all liars and none of them are real.

But that is your dismay speaking. When you're at rest in faith. You're looking away from those things unto Jesus.

And the only way to overcome discouragement and weariness. Is take your eyes off men. And put them back on Christ.

And then you'll find that the Lord has been good to you. And your soul will be at rest. Because He didn't promise you it would be easy in this life.

His promise is kept in heaven for you. Waiting to be revealed in that day. And if you live by this hope.

You'll find endurance unto the end. And you'll be saved. Alright.

Don't give up anything. The opposite of remaining under. Is this Hebrew word.

Where it translates the NIV says in my dismay. The King James says in my haste. The American Standard says in my alarm.

The Hebrew word means to be out of place. Don't let anything move you out of the place of abiding. Stay under.

Stay under in hope. Against all hope. In hope.

Believe. Do not waver through unbelief regarding God's promise. Be strengthened in your faith.

God has power to do what He's promised. And He didn't promise to deliver you out of every trial. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.

When you pass through the fire, I will be with you. He's with us in our affliction. And He'll be with us to the end.

I will never leave you. Nor forsake you. For lo, I am with you always.

And that's it. Having Him with us. Seeing Him clearly.

We find rest. We find endurance. Through faith and hope and rest.

Let's pray. We look to You Father. Just like Your Word says.

I want to read it, Father. Just before You. Your Word tells us that we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of those who are weak and not to please ourselves.

Each of us should please his neighbor for his good to build them up, even as Christ did not please Himself. But He said that the insult of those who insulted Him had fallen upon You, Father, had fallen upon Him. And You said that everything You left us as a writing, Father, was written so that we could, through endurance and the encouragement of these writings, we might have hope.

And then You say, Your servant Paul prayed, May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you a spirit of unity among yourselves. Father, deliver us from the unbelief that only knows that all men are liars. And instead, fill us with the compassion of Christ.

Who can take up the cross and take up the reproaches upon Himself of those who reproach You. Help us bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Bring us to the place, Father, where we can endure whatever difficulties dealing with men cause us to face.

Make us like Your Son, who, though being rich, became poor, so that we, through His poverty, might be made rich. Lord, grant us a spirit of endurance with each other. We ask in Jesus' name.

Amen. OK. Any announcements that we need to make before we're... We'll talk about those on the prayer list momentarily.

OK. We will. This Thursday? Friday.

Excuse me. Friday. We also need to remember Vestor Nations.

I received a call from his son. He has been told, really he's entering hospice care now. And if you don't understand hospice, hospice is the point where they no longer treat, except for comfort.

They only try to make a person comfortable. And... OK. Be a good opportunity for all of us who can, maybe stop by and see Roger.

Nine pounds. OK.

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