

## Staying Fresh

**1 Samuel 30:1-6** David ...*found strength in the Lord his God, or encouraged himself in the Lord.*

This is a very necessary skill for you and I in these times in which we live.

In a state of severe trial and stress, David managed to strengthen himself in the Lord. How did he do it? The passage does not reveal this, but we know David from his Psalms, and can speculate a little. There will be times in life when, like David, we must encourage ourselves in the Lord. This is a very necessary skill to acquire.

Our response to each new day is important and sets the tone for the day. Lets be honest, each day is not the same, and when you are facing challenges, it is tempting to press snooze on the alarm and turn over!

So tonight we will look at 7 actions we can do to encourage ourselves and motivate us to having a positive attitude and stay fresh each day.

**Isaiah 58:11** promises *The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.* There is a supply of refreshment available to us in God when all around is desert.

Let's draw inspiration from these verses, and see what steps we can take to keep ourselves fresh.

### 1. Be Still

When the storm is raging and turmoil is all about you, there is a rest that can be found in the Lord. This is graphically illustrated in **Mark 4** where Jesus and his disciples encounter a severe storm on the Sea of Galilee. The disciples were in fear of their lives – Jesus was asleep! After the disciples woke him, He rebuked the storm and said to the waves “Peace. Be still!”

There is something very powerful, which happens when we withdraw from the situation in pursuit of the presence of God. **Psalm 46:10** says ...*Be still and know that I am God.*

This positions us for the task ahead. We draw strength from God who has all that we need. We remind ourselves that He is on the throne, the world in His hand, our life in His hand, and all is well. As **Psalm 91:1** reminds us, if we ... *dwell in the shelter of the Most High, we will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*

So what if it all seems to be falling apart around me? God's not falling apart. Heaven is not caught off guard the alarm is not ringing! God the Father is still on His throne and Jesus is still at his right hand interceding for us. All is well!

There is a tendency to react quickly in a tough spot and immediately jump into some plan of action. Sometimes that's exactly what's needed – if your kitchen is on fire, you need to smother the flames! But as soon as possible, get aside with the Lord, and start from His presence. Pursue His presence, and experience His peace in the stillness. Be Still.

### 2. Go to The Rock

**Matthew 7:24-25** *Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.*

Acting on the Word is building our life upon a solid rock and when the storm comes, we stand strong.

So we get an unexpected bill, which knocks our finances – we go to the rock, which declares in **Psalm 23** that ...*the Lord is our shepherd, and because of that we lack nothing.*

We suffer a setback in our career, and we go to the rock: **Jeremiah 29:11** *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.* We trust the word over our setback. God holds the future, and the bible says that He is upholding all things by his powerful word.

*The steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord. Psalm 37:23*

So if I have submitted my life to God, I can expect Him to guide me, to order my steps out of trouble.

Feel alone. The Rock says *"I am with you always". He puts the lonely into families.*

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. God's word is literally truth on which we can build our lives. Build your life on the rock.

### **3. Sing a New Song**

David was a worshiper, as we know from the Psalms. I am sure that he worshiped the Lord in this situation. Worship brings God on the scene, and does amazing things in us.

**Acts 16** Paul and Silas had been stripped, severely flogged, imprisoned in the inner cell and their feet were fastened in stocks.

**Acts 16:25-28** *...About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"*

Worship brings the supernatural into the natural realm. Can you imagine the scene – the earth moving and prison doors flying open. Remember this the next time you worship God in your prayer closet.

Feel imprisoned in an area of your life? Enter into worship and see the chains fall off. In the heat of the battle worship the Lord. When the pressure is on, worship.

Worship changes us and the circumstances – us because we are encouraged and strengthened, and the circumstances as the Lord works in them on our behalf.

**Psalm 8:2** *...From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise (Strength) because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.*

**Isaiah 54:1** *...Sing O Barren woman, you who never bore a child, burst into song, shout for joy...*

Sing a New Song to the Lord.

### **4. An Attitude of Gratitude**

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** *...Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Give thanks IN all circumstances, not FOR them. No matter what we are facing, we can be thankful, because we are not alone. The Lord is with us and He has all that we need.

This is God's will for us – that we are full of joy, people of continual prayer and being thankful in all circumstances.

Giving thanks diffuses our immediate problems and centres us in God. It lifts us out of present circumstances and helps us gain a new perspective. It helps us acknowledge all that God has provided in our lives.

Our salvation, heaven as our destination, friends, family, a place to live, food to eat, a job, blue sky, green grass, flowers - there is no end of things for which to be thankful.

I believe it is difficult to move on into something better until we appreciate what we have. Want a new job – then appreciate the one you have now. A new house, same principle.

**Ephesians 5:19-20** ...*Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I may not know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future.

Be thankful.

## 5. Press On

The apostle Paul said in **Philippians 3:13-14** ...*one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

Learn from the past, keep pleasant memories from the past, but don't live in the past. The present is where it's happening, and our actions today influence our future.

There is a need to "press on", sometimes we are moving against a prevailing wind, or it seems like life is an uphill struggle. We have to press through with a focus on God's calling and plans for our life.

Paul said in **Hebrews 12:1** ...*let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance that race that is set before us.*

Satan wants to weigh us down with distractions to get us off track. Notice sin can easily entangle us. So we need to be alert and have a close walk with the Lord.

*looking unto Jesus* the word looking here means "looking away", looking away from the lesser issues and looking to Jesus, who is our life source.

*the author and finisher of our faith* He's the one who supplies our faith that will enable us to overcome and progress

*who for the joy set before him endured the cross* He had such a vision of what lay ahead, that He did not focus on the suffering of the cross, but saw beyond it to the salvation of mankind.

Facing something in your life tonight? You can press on. Events come to pass – they will be behind you before you know it. Focus on the day – confess I can do all things through Christ (**Philippians 4:13**) and keep walking!

Never give up! Press On!

## 6. Reach Out

Reach out and touch someone. There is nothing more exhilarating than blessing someone else. It energises us.

**Galatians 3:14** *The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbour as yourself."*

**Philippians 2:3-4** ...*love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.*

"We rise by lifting others".

You don't have to look far. Someone would appreciate a phone call, needs a helping hand, prayer. Get involved with people – engage. This is one of the reasons why we are here on earth. We are designed to be part of a community, contributing to the needs of others.

You have something to give, to impart. God wants to use you to bless others.

## **7. Finally, get Physical!**

**Romans 12:11-12** ...*Don't burn out; keep yourselves fuelled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder.*

We have a body, which houses our inner man. Look after your body. We are no good to anyone if we are burnt out.

Food, exercise, and rest together with times of fasting are all important ingredients for a healthy lifestyle. Our body needs fuel both spiritually and physically.

**1 Kings 19:3-8** ...*Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food he travelled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.*

God knew that Elijah needed sleep and food. Life here on earth is both spiritual and physical. We cannot attend to one without the other.

If you are burnt out, then there is a reason for that which needs to be addressed, and ideally take action to prevent future burn out.

**Ephesians 5:15-16** ...*Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. The devil would love to get us so busy that we burn out, but we are to walk in wisdom.*

Examine yourself – and do what works for you.

We have a race to run. **1 Corinthians 9:24-25** *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Eternal perspective.*

Look after yourself!

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3. Sing a New Song
4. An Attitude of Gratitude
5. Press On
6. Reach Out
7. Get Physical