

If ye Continue (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Farley, J John (1903-1980)

[0 : 00] It is my desire this evening, so far as I may be held, to speak to you a few things at least in connection with a word you will find in the chapter read, the first in the epistle to the Colossians, and part of the verse 23, if ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, chapter 1, the epistle to the Colossians, first part of verse 23.

There's a need for this word this evening, especially to the young, but no less really to all of us.

We live today in very evil times, very difficult times, when evil is glamorized and made almost to appear something desirable.

Satan has tremendous power today, and clothed his temptations with those attractions which are a source of allurements to the natural mind, no less to the young than the older, and the young are so vulnerable to the persuasion of evil companions.

I would advise, if I may, that a little more attention be paid by our young friends to the first chapter, the book of Proverbs, and to a word which may not be there.

[2 : 34] I won't trust my memory. The word is this, though, my son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

Bear that in mind, my young friends, in these evil days, because there are plenty about today just ready to lure you aside, and they will say, come with us.

Come with us. Oh, my dear friends, I would say to you who habitually come here, stay here. Stay here.

The Lord help you to preserve you from being lured aside. This is all included in the exhortation.

Continue. But this is a rambling, as usual, introduction to the subject. I wanted at first, if helped, to confine a few remarks to the first three words.

[3 : 46] They are the words with which I came. Although I do not wish to ignore altogether the words I have read.

But I want to look at least in three different ways of how I hope the Lord will help you young people and children to continue.

Continue. Continue. Continue. Continue. Continue. First. In seeking. It's such an inestimable mercy to be found in these solemn days a seeker after truth.

If, in fact, you do prove to be a seeker after truth, it will presently be revealed to you by the Spirit of Truth that in seeking in this way, you will discover who is the truth and who is it.

Jesus has said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am concerned with his statement, the truth.

[5 : 06] Now, my dear friends, I hope that in your seeking for truth, you will presently experience some of the things which you have sung this evening.

The dealings of the Spirit with a seeker have been sung about. But I do hope that some part of those hymns may remain in some of your memories.

They'll be for your good if they do. And they will tend to direct your thoughts and desires in the right direction. Also, they will preserve you from becoming unnecessarily depressed and cast down if you find the early way that the Spirit begins to deal with you as a seeker disappoints and frustrates your expectations.

What did we sing of? Under the Spirit's teachings, seekers will presently discover they need mercy and need it very greatly because instead of considering other people as sinners, the matter comes home to oneself.

It is I, the sinner, it is God, be merciful to me, which will be the cry as you sung. That is why I believe my mind was led to this because in seeking you will first find it is necessary to have something to seek for, to seek about.

[6 : 55] Otherwise, your prayers will be just saying prayers as they will have been to that time when you commence to seek.

And I might just drop a word here if it is a digression. If you are a seeker, you will wonder at times how you may arrive at this to your satisfaction because I believe you will seek assurance at times that you are among those who are seeking after truth and seeking some interest in Jesus Christ.

How you may say, am I to know this? Well, by my next step, you will seek or do your seeking if you follow along a well-beaten path at what I have already thanked God for this evening, the throne of his grace.

That's where you'll do so much seeking, my young friends, and the Lord help you to be often there. I try to tell my people, young and older, very frequently, that prayer is an advantage, a privilege, that God has given to his people.

It's for their advantage to be found at the throne of grace. No hardship. No mere formality. when once you become a real seeker, you'll be there in the hope of gaining something.

[8 : 40] And you will. And you will. I wouldn't be able to say this if it wasn't supported by the word of God. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or even think.

So, my friends, do seek to be found among those who continue as the word so frequently exhorts us.

Continue in prayer and watch therein with thanksgiving. Do seek to be among those who do not neglect to offer praise and thanksgiving to God.

It's a great mercy to be among those who offer to God thanksgiving. It's a form of worship and this is how we hope that seekers will continue.

Continue in seeking. Continue in prayer. Continue in praise as often as the Lord favors you in answer to your prayers and beyond them.

[9 : 58] I feel I must say that because I believe it's to the honor of God that I should say so. If ever I have really praised God sincerely and acceptably, it is because his extra blessings unsought for have been granted me.

And I can assure you that I've been amazed, surprised and completely broken down sometimes by the yes, I shall have to say it, the loving kindness of the Lord.

I want you to seek young people for a part and lot in this experience. To know what it is to find that God, that great God who created heaven and earth is toward seekers.

I was almost inclined to say especially young seekers. I think I might too. when I remember what Jesus said about them, I think I might say that.

Especially tender and compassionate toward young seekers. I very often get reminded in my poor ministry of how the Lord spoke to Peter just before the Lord was to leave him and return to God the Father.

[11 : 40] he commissioned Peter. So I believe that Peter might not feel that his terrible sin had shut him out of the love of Christ and that he had removed his Holy Spirit from him.

what does he say? Well he questions him whether he still loves Jesus and then he says feed my lambs feed my lambs.

So you see I was right wasn't I when I said the Lord has a special concern for young seekers and is very likely to add a portion beyond what they have sought for on purpose to encourage them to come again and to continue in this very favorable matter of prayer.

I might drop a word drop back again to the seeking and just assure you that it won't finish if you're a child of God while you're young.

I might tell you if I may that I'm a keener seeker now than I was before. I'm still willing to be described as a seeker.

[13 : 02] I should feel that something's gone extremely wrong within me if I no longer have anything to seek to God for. I can see far more that remains to be sought for than ever I've been privileged to receive yet although I have been greatly favored of God.

I must say this. He has honored seeking, fulfilled his blessed promise which of course you've been expecting me to come to, haven't you?

They that seek shall find. They're the words of Jesus and you can depend on them. So I must insist this evening if I don't say anything else, do continue to seek especially if you have been seeking for a long while and a certain enemy is saying, now look, this isn't intended for you, you'd better give up, you might just as well not concern yourself any further.

There are a lot of enjoyments in the world, dive into them and don't be quite so concerned about this seeking. Oh my friend, be careful, don't lend your ear to this, turn away from it as soon as you possibly can and seek some more at the throne of grace.

Seek what for? The Lord's preserving mercy. The Lord's preserving mercy. mercy. Oh, may you live one day to sing and really feel it like some of us have who are older and have cause to thank God that it's true, preserved in Jesus when my feet made haste to hell.

[14 : 49] There should I have gone, but thou dost all things well. His love was great, his mercy free which from the pit delivered me.

Do hope that your seeking will presently show you that preserving mercy is to be sought for. My young people heard me try to talk to them on one occasion on a word that will keep coming in because it's so necessary.

I think you are going to hear it now. So brief it is, so much we all need it and shall need it down to the very last moment I believe.

Able to keep you from falling is the word. Seek to him for this, preserving, upholding mercy.

So you see you can keep seeking all the way along life's pathway for this one particular blessing to be kept from falling.

[15 : 59] You may say to me in a certain stage of experience in life I no longer fear falling now. I feel to be in safe hands.

Well, that's a sweet thing to feel while it lasts. But I doubt if you must expect to live there constantly because I believe if this is the case you may find yourself bolstered up by a false confidence.

I'm a preacher of confidence. Oh, I believe in confidence, but not self-confidence. That's proved a pitfall to many and a prop that broke when leaned on to many more.

But my dear friends, to have confidence in him who is able to keep you from falling, is the confidence that I would exhort you seek for.

I was pretty sure that a word of caution would come in at this stage. It's the apostles' warning. I think it's time in these days that it should be more often set before everyone.

[17 : 18] not only the young but including our young friends, and what is it? And let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

You see, when we're young we have very little knowledge of the craft of Satan or his agents either. he's got plenty of agents today that he works and operates through and we need to be on our guard against them.

They have been well instructed by their master how to clothe their insinuations and suggestions so you see there's plenty of reason to be watchful and on our guard is a good word somewhere I wish I could lay hold on it completely.

It tends to show us the necessity of being constantly on our watch. Then there's another that will keep pressing forward in the mind a need to walk circumspectly in these solemn days redeeming the time because the days are evil.

I do hope that you will be enabled to continue in the third thing I had in mind. Let me bring before you the caution first which the apostle gave us in the epistle to the Hebrews.

[18 : 59] Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching it is to continue in worship.

There are inducements today and I've heard them referred to that one can stay atone now. Hear the service atone.

Yes but what service and join in the singing even at home. Yes but is that God's appointment?

It becomes a necessity when age and infirmity prevent one from going where one has been used to going and does love to go.

You'll know why I've dropped this hint I hope. It is to go where you can. The day may come when you won't be able to and that's when you'll want to go most.

[20 : 19] You know that. We find we appreciate our mercies and privileges the more when some of them are taken away from us.

so my advice to you is as God may help you make the most use you can of the privileges of the means of grace.

Don't listen to those who say it's not necessary to go to the house of God to worship God. What did Jesus say?

he gave a promise even if there were only two or three gathered in his name.

May you be among those who continue to gather in the house of God. It's his appointment. He has said there is the establishment of the mercy seat it is shown both in the tabernacle of old and in the temple which followed that.

[21 : 31] And God has seen fit to permit very many who have gathered in the sanctuaries afterward which he has provided for his people to meet with and bless them there while they have been found at the mercy seat.

Now there is to this a simple question but I believe it has a point in it. Would God have so kindly and in some circumstances if you like to be interested in the history of places of worship so mysteriously provided so many comfortable well appointed well maintained houses of God if he had no intention of their being inhabited?

The answer is simple isn't it? He provided these houses as I've said at times most mysteriously brought them to pass when it seemed an impossibility to man but they've been built and they've been maintained because God desired a gathering of people there.

Let me bring this matter home a little closer. Quite kindly think of the years that God has honoured this particular place of worship.

Why is he so honoured it? why has he caused it to be maintained when so many other places of worship have collapsed and are in a terrible state of repair and yet you have this wonderfully maintained beautifully appointed place of worship to stand empty to be neglected to have no worshippers in it?

[23 : 34] Certainly not. Oh God has been pleased to bring together a people here and maintain them through the years. May you regard this as a place of God's appointment where you may go and find benefit.

Don't regard the house of God as some hardship to be endured for an hour or so and long for the time to get out of it. Rather come seeking that while there the Lord may meet with and bless you in it.

Oh what a wonderful thing it would be if my young friends here this evening lived to learn to love the house of God. Psalmist did didn't he?

Wish I could get hold of the word exactly. Lord I have loved the habitation of thine house. the place where thine honor dwelleth loved it.

Yes and I believe some of us do because we have found there the God of love. He has revealed to us in our journey here below the loving kindness already referred to.

[24 : 55] This is what we desire for you. Godly I believe many prayers go up from godly parents godly friends ministers who seek your spiritual welfare that you may come to love the house of God and be there through love to God because I do feel that if there is a right love to the house of God there will be a love to God because come back to the gift of the house I have had it impressed on my mind sometimes in the form of a question what makes any building this building the house of God what makes it so I mean it's just material that you find in the average house what makes it the house of

God one said this to help me out what is the house to me unless the master there I see it's the master that makes the house of the house of God because of his presence there but there's also the other aspect of it you see there is a hymn wish I could get hold of this too such ever bring thee when they come and going take thee to their home what does this mean doesn't it mean that the spirit of God dwells in his people and that he actually comes in his spiritual presence the house of God becomes such because the children of God are there and God meets with them and presences himself among them as he said he would be now why do we want you young people to continue because the older ones will presently be removed there will be the gaps that are caused and it is our desire that the worship of

God continues in the houses of God we want to see you coming along with desire to follow them who through faith and patience do now inherit the promises that's what we want to see some evidence of the spirit's work drawing you with greater diligence to the house of God listening keenly to what is spoken there taking place sincerely in the singing that is offered there to God so that there is some evidence of a felt interest time was I know when young people and children were lightly regarded it was chiefly the desire apparently of the grown-ups in past days that young people should keep quiet and well behaved and well I used to hear quite often not speak unless spoken to and so on but young friends

I venture to say that today there is a rather different feeling abroad I am privileged to notice it as I go around from place to place and no longer is this the common feeling of grown-ups toward the young they are welcomed in the house of God they are prayed for and I believe this is in secret too before God in fact I will say that I know that some servants of God enjoy more liberty in prayer in private than they feel in public they are very earnest at times in seeking the welfare of the young and they hope they will remain well behaved in the house of God and I have much cause to be thankful in this respect where I attend and to whom I speak much favoured I am in this but I don't expect them to be models of good behaviour

I don't expect them to be kept in the background I like to welcome them as my friends and I ask them to regard me as their friend so this is why we hope you will continue to gather together in the house of God believing that the one desire among God's people today is to see a generation growing up to love and serve and worship God their desire well I think I've rambled on about enough on the first three words let us look a little now at the remainder that I read if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled well you see there are various uses made of the word faith faith in one sense is the gift of

[30 : 54] God and we are saved by grace through it through faith it is a close relation faith in that aspect to hope because faith is the substance of things hoped for if you have a real hope you certainly have a small modicum of faith because that is the substance of your hope but in this case the faith that you are exhorted to continue in is the form of belief sometimes called by some people the creed the form of belief that you have been instructed in if you continue in the faith well it's the faith in this house of prayer that is vested on the work and person and merits of Jesus

Christ he is held before the hearers here in this place as the one and only source of salvation his name is proclaimed as the way by which a petitioner may approach to God and ask through that name that is the faith that we seek you will continue in looking alone to Jesus Christ and avoiding spurning every form of belief and practice every kind of creed which does not set on high the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and seek seeks to set before the hearers the worship of God through Christ if I put that simply I do hope so those of you who have attended here regularly

I feel persuaded to have heard this except to man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven emphasized further down the chapter with this word ye must be born again this isn't explainable by reason but it's an essential and basic truth in the faith that we seek you may be enabled to continue in and prove to be in the faith grounded and settled this speaks of course of stability and it should indicate a necessity of growth and a procedure forward I've suddenly come to a word I expected to bring before you earlier on

I have been taken up with other thoughts other things but I want you now to join with this word if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved away the word that God gave to Israel through the mediation of and lost the word I want through the means of Moses as the spokesman at that time the Lord said to Moses speak unto Israel that they go forward that words being in mind with me all day that they go forward I feel

I must emphasize that the condition of the children of God is one of movement we are warned that one particular people failed because they wanted to settle on their lees and be at ease and this is the natural tendency of many of us to cease to strive and to cease to struggle when so often this is a large part of the experience of the people of God in continuing in the faith grounded and settled and in regard to the exhortation and be not moved away it is that you should continue to go forward I want before I sit down to emphasize the reason for this going forward if only it may be kept in mind

[36 : 12] I want to say a word or two about the hope of the gospel now this is dealt with and I do want to put it simply for your further enlightenment in at least two different ways the hope of the gospel for which Paul was persecuted so much was hope in the resurrection he was faced with a set of people who boldly avowed that there was no resurrection and because he preached so strongly a risen Christ and the fact of the resurrection this raised their enmity to such an extent that they sought to have his life taken from him he tells the ruler of that time and the governor of that region before whom he made his defense that it was for this hope that he was bearing that chain that he was a prisoner because he had hope and had preached this hope of final resurrection and that

Jesus as I've already said was a risen savior but there is another hope which is set before us in the gospel and Christ is set before us as the hope of his people and to have hope in Christ and hope through Christ is to enter sweetly and experimentally and to your soul's satisfaction my young friends if you can feel you have this hope in this aspect of the hope of the gospel that your hope is in Christ you will find this to be a well grounded hope you will find this to be a hope that anchors a hope that will hold you in all the storms of life however high the billows may rise at times or however strong the storms of life may be and the waves and the winds together battering you and seemingly halting you in your journey of life but if you are the possessor of a

God given hope you will be found seeking yes you will seeking yet again to the God of hope that he will keep that hope lively lively you read of this don't you in the epistle of Peter that it's the work of God to give and maintain hope lively within us a hope that will prove steadfast and at hand and to hand when most we need it so I would say seek to be enabled to continue in the faith grounded and settled and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye have heard now I must appeal to you young friends and all my friends have you really heard the gospel there is such a thing as hearing it in the immediate receiving of it in the ear that isn't sufficient have you heard to prophet have you heard in another way a way that is set before us in the word of

God under this exhortation we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip how does the margin render this prove to be as leaky vessels running out as fast as it ran in or nearly so that's what it means have we heard and profited I know it's been heard by the outer ear in this place of worship times beyond numbering oh that it might be the day when suddenly in your case young people you hear the word and it proves to be from God with power power a word that will remain and finally prove to be in your experience as you journey through life a word that is often mentioned in this way or at least having this effect proving to be an unctuous light to all that's right and a bar to all that's wrong if you continue in the faith grounded and settled seeking for divine instruction seeking carefully by prayer and supplication to commit yourself and your concerns to God

I would wish for you young people as I come toward the close of my little talk with you this evening that you might be found with their older friends and myself in the condition of the apostle before your end comes and mine oh it's such a blessed condition to arrive at and to attain to what is it it is this I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day oh to be there now that same gracious instructor I still got time to give you a word which in his great wisdom he gave to Timothy

[43 : 37] I believe you'll find it in the second epistle chapter three after warning him about the perils of the last times the dangerous times that would come and the deceivers that would abound and that they would continue and grow worse that's the trouble today and isn't it true that they do but he comes to this you know finally to Timothy for whom I believe he had a great love it was even fatherly love because he said my son Timothy he says but continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and has been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them I want you to come there continue in those things that you've heard and been assured of now the other promise

I'm glad it's come to mind still a time just a time for this continue in the way of profession considering the end of it if you are among those who are continuing the faith of God's elect you will be found following Christ this is so important it sounds so simple to just say follow me as Jesus did to his disciples but it's a lifelong thing a lifelong thing something that must be continued in if any man fall away my soul shall have no pleasure in him but the apostle writes we are not of those who turn back unto perdition but of them that believe to the saving of the soul

I'm going to ask you one question very briefly where is Jesus now where is he where do you believe he is he's in heaven at the father's right hand in the position of authority and power and if we're followers of him that's where we shall presently be you see the Lord will not leave his people at Jordan he was in the middle of Jordan in his actual presence as it then was till they had all passed safely over he'll be the same even now he'll be in the river in his gracious presence to support till all his people have passed over and reached the promised land as I've already hinted that's where the way ends and this is why we want you to continue think how fatal it would be to go part way seem to have an entrance into a few of the privileges and then turn back like many did and walk no more with him how terribly sad because their end it's going to be exceedingly solemn you see because they did know better that hymn about the heathen has suddenly come back you know and the question am I any better than they you're in a worse condition my friends if you have partially learned the ways of God and then forsake them some very solemn things to be read in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the

Hebrews and other places too concerning those who prove reprobate and turn back this is why I hope the Lord has sent me this evening with this word if ye continue in the faith that's what I hope you will do now I must close thank you