

Sunday, January 16, 2022

1 Timothy 4:13, “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.”

First Steps With God

Series: The Journey of Faith

Text: Exodus 13:1 – 14:1 – 31, 1 Thessalonians 1:1 – 10

Purpose: I want to PERSUADE my congregation to BELIEVE that God has an individual and corporate will for each believer and fellowship group.

Introduction:

Last weeks devotional was entitled “Starting the Journey of Faith,” and the key text was from Exodus 12:1 – 14:

1. The Journey of Faith Requires a Lamb
2. The Journey of Faith is Personal
3. The Journey of Faith Delivers from Death and Slavery
~ 1 Thessalonians 1:1 – 10 gives some practical counsel on daily walking with God:
~ vs. 3, “your work of faith” – vs. 9, “you turned to God from idols”
~ vs. 3, “labor of love” – vs. 9, “to serve the living and true God.”
~ vs. 3, “steadfastness of hope” – vs. 10, “to wait for his Son from heaven”

1. The First Daily Step is – Turn to God:

~ Last week we considered Israel’s cry to God to be delivered from the slavery of the Egyptians; the Israelites were given instructions regarding a lamb per household in preparation for the passing of the death angel over the land.

~ As Israel now begins the journey out of Egypt into the promised land they are confronted again, with the need to simply walk in/by FAITH.

~ 2 Corinthians 5:1 – 7, vs.7, “for we walk by faith, not by sight.” This requires a continual turning from my own reason and perception to God!

~ Exodus 13:17, “When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, “Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.”

~ Exodus 13:22, “The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.”

~ Followers of Christ Jesus have the Word of God and the Spirit of God:

- Matthew 4:4, “But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

- Colossians 1:27, “To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

- John 14:16 & 17, “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper; to be with you forever; (17) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

2. The Second Daily Step – The Labor of Love:

~ Exodus 14:2, “Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea.”

The “labor of love” is simply to obey and follow the Lord God Almighty, even if it makes no sense in the natural. In the natural it is not wise to put yourself (2,000,000 plus) in a valley with a sea in front of you and an enemy coming up behind!

~ Exodus 14:10, “When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD.” The “labor of love” seeks to respond in faith rather than fear.

~ Reminds me of Matthew 14:28 – 32, “And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water. (29) He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. (30) But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” (31) Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

3. The Third Daily Step is – Steadfastness of Hope:

~ Exodus 14:13 – 15, “And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. (14) The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” (15) The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward.””

~ Philippians 2:12 – 14, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, (13) for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work his good pleasure. (14) Do all things without grumbling or disputing,”

The “steadfastness of hope” frequently calls me to repentance!

~ Romans 8:28, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

The “steadfastness of hope” continually reminds me that when (not ‘if’) I mess up God is faithful to forgive (1 John 1) and still works out his purposes for me; consider the Apostle Peter!

Conclusion:

Luke 1:38, “And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word...”