

**Intro**

~ Martin Luther, William Tyndale – firm in God's will yet they were going forward in God's work

~ Henry Martyn (18 February 1781 – 16 October 1812) was an Anglican priest and missionary to the peoples of India and Persia. Born in Truro, Cornwall, he was educated at Truro Grammar School and St John's College, Cambridge.[1] A chance encounter with Charles Simeon led him to become a missionary. He was ordained a priest in the Church of England and became a chaplain for the British East India Company.

~ Martyn arrived in India in April 1806, where he preached and occupied himself in the study of linguistics. He translated the whole of the New Testament into Urdu, Persian and Judaeo-Persic. He also translated the Psalms into Persian and the Book of Common Prayer into Urdu. From India, he set out for Bushire, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Tabriz.

~ Martyn was seized with fever, and, though the plague was raging at Tokat, he was forced to stop there, unable to continue. On 16 October 1812 he died. He was remembered for his courage, selflessness and his religious devotion.

~ There's the paradox of standing firm yet going forward

~ Solid in doctrine and solid in our labor for the Lord

~ Advancing in the Lord's work

~ Paul describes our work for the Lord in two terms – work and labor which means we put forth effort for God

~ we should **therefore** prove our assurance and our thankfulness by being **steadfast, immovable** [negative] and **always abounding** [positive] **in the work of the Lord.**

Outline

1 The Negative Command – Stay Firm in God's Word & Will

- Steadfast
- Immovable

2 The Positive Command – Go Forward in God's work

- Abounding (God's work)
- Laboring (Our labor)

**Text**

Therefore – the call to action here. Appears 105 times from Romans to Philemon. 21 times in 1 Corinthians

My beloved brethren – Paul loved this church

~ This is remarkable because this church wasn't kind to Paul

~ They thought little of Paul, even though Paul was the one to establish this church

- They treated Paul's apostleship as nothing
- They accepted false apostles above Paul
- They said Paul's speech was of no value (2 Cor 10:10)
- They said Paul's appearance was weak (2 Cor 10:10)
- Paul said he was rude in speech and not eloquent (2 Cor 11:6)
- Paul didn't speak with the eloquence (1 Cor 1:17; 2:1)
- Paul said he was base in appearance (2 Cor 10:1) lowly, cast down and humble

~ Despite this Paul said they were his beloved brethren

~ "my beloved brothers," live in the context of community and "be steadfast." The Christian's motivation for steadfastness is not his own winning, but the winning of Christ. Our focus is winning Christ and this keeps us steadfast and unmovable

~ My beloved brethren puts this verse in the context of the body (the local church)

~ Lenski – My beloved brethren voices Paul's own tender love for them, yet, at the same time Paul appeals to the Corinthians to show themselves worthy of being addressed by such a title.

Be (ginomai) to cause to become

~ "From now until death be and remain steadfast!" is Paul's admonition.

## 1 The Negative Command – Stay Firm in God’s Word & Will

### Steadfast (1476 hedraios) to sit, to be sedentary, immovable, seated

- ~ perhaps with an allusion to a statue (Bloomfield); or perhaps to wrestling, and to standing one’s ground (Wolf)”
- ~ Col 1:23 is similar to what Paul is saying here, *“If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister”*
- ~ Barnes - perhaps with an allusion to a statue (Bloomfield). Be not shaken or agitated with the strifes, the temptations, and the cares of life. Be fixed in the faith, and let not the power of sin, or the sophistry of pretended philosophy, or the arts of the enemy of the soul seduce you from the faith of the gospel.
- Hedraios (steadfast)* literally refers to being seated, and therefore to being settled and firmly situated.
- ~ stand firm, to hold firmly to the word he had preached to them, to guard their belief in the gospel and in the resurrection of believers.
- ~ Lenski - The adjective ἑδραῖοι means “sitting,” established in a seat, and thus fixed, settled, firm, solid.
- ~ Fix our heart on Christ and nothing else
- ~ It refers to our inner faith and conviction
- ~ In the context don’t be moved by false teaching
- ~ JFB - not turning aside from the faith of the resurrection *of yourselves*.

### Immovable (277) unmovable

- ~ Ametakinetos (immovable) carries the same basic idea but with more intensity. It denotes being totally immobile and motionless.
- ~ JFB = “not turned aside by others (1Cor 15:12; Col 1:23)”
- ~ He exhorted the true believers to let nothing move them because those who denied the resurrection undermined the gospel itself.
- ~ This refers to outward solicitation and attack. Foes are always ready to assail our faith.
- ~ Psalm 112 *“the righteous will never be moved.” He will be immovable. He will “not [be] afraid of bad news.”*
- ~ *Be not carried away by divers and strange teachings: for it is good that the heart be stablished by grace (Heb 13:9)*

### Keys to stability and immovability

But we should not move a hairbreadth away from His will, continually being careful not to be “tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14)

- ~ Lenski - Doctrine is a statement of the divine facts. When these facts are apprehended they automatically shape the life. Take away the doctrine with its substance of divine facts, and the life drifts and is blown about by every wind of (false) doctrine, Eph. 4:14, which ignores or denies the facts.
- ~ Eph 4:7-16 things that contribute to stability 1) gifts 2) maturity 3) teaching 4) the body
- ~ Doctrine makes us stable and firm
- ~ Solid doctrine makes for a stable soul - Be firm in your conviction of the resurrection

## 2 The Positive Command – Go Forward in God’s work

- Abounding (God’s work)
- Laboring (Our labor)

### Abounding in the work of the Lord

- ~ Abounding = to cause to superabound or excel
  - Always engaged in doing the will of God; in promoting his glory, and advancing his kingdom
- ~ Perisseuō (abounding) carries the idea of exceeding the requirements, of overflowing or overdoing. In Ephesians 1:7–8 the word is used of God’s lavishing on us “the riches of His grace.” Because God has so abundantly overdone Himself for us who deserve nothing from Him, we should determine to overdo ourselves (if that were possible) in service to Him, to whom we owe everything.
- ~ Work – toil or action, deeds
- ~ Labour (G2873 kopos) a reducing the strength, pains, weariness.
- ~ The result of our work is reduced strength, pain and weariness
- ~ Rest is reasonable, important and necessary. But if we should err it should be on the side of doing more work for the Lord, not less.

~ MacArthur, "Leisure and relaxation are two great modern idols, to which many Christians seem quite willing to bow down."

~ Some of God's faithful saints have lived to old and productive age but many others have had their lives shortened for the very reason that they were abounding in the work of God.

- Henry Martyn, (18 February 1781 – 16 October 1812) died before he was thirty-five.
- David Brainerd, one of the earliest missionaries to American Indians, died before he was thirty.
- Robert Murray M'Cheyne (21 May 1813 – 25 March 1843) was a minister in the Church of Scotland from 1835 to 1843
- We know very little of Epaphroditus, except that he was a "brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier" of Paul's who "came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life" (Phil. 2:25, 30). He became so lost in godly service that he literally became sick unto death because of it.

### Our labor isn't in vain

~ Based on the context of the Lord's return every Christian should work uncompromisingly as the Lord has gifted and leads. Our money, time, energy, talents, gifts, bodies, minds, and spirits should be invested in nothing that does not in some way contribute to the work of the Lord.

~ Behold, I am coming quickly," Jesus says, "and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done" (Rev. 22:12). We have God's own promise that our toil [labor to the point of exhaustion] is not in vain in the Lord.

~ Paul also exhorted them to give themselves fully to the work of the Lord, knowing that their labor in the Lord was not in vain. Paul reminds them they are the result of his work in the Lord (2 Cor 9:1)

~ All our work tends toward the forward/advance of the gospel

~ Firm yet forward - Tireless diligence

~ We're not called to be idle and mere enjoyments of our benefits in Christ but to diligence in the Lords work

### Isn't in vain

~ Vain = empty, no purpose, no value

~ Our labor in the Lord is highly productive

~ While the Lord's work sometimes seems unimportant, unnoticed and unappreciated the Lord makes a declaration about the work we do for him –it's not vain

~ *Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

~ *1 Thess 3:5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.*

~ There must be a word of caution regarding our work in the Lord. Sometimes our labor can't be measured by sight. For this reason we walk by faith and serve by faith (2 Cor 5:7). Sometimes we can grow weary and discouraged because we start to measure our labor by what we see but we don't really know the end until we get to heaven and the Lord rewards us. I love to paint something like my garage or a room in the house because it's progress I can measure. I like to do electrical work because it's something I can measure. But when it comes to our labor in the Lord we must be patient with the results aspect and let the Lord determine the outcome because if we measure by sight we may get discouraged.

### Verses on not growing weary

1 Gal 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

2 2 Thess 3:13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

3 Heb 6:10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

4 Heb 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

### **Conclusion**

~ *1 Cor 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*

~ Firm yet Forward

~ Henry Martyn was known to say, "Let me burn out for God". An indication of his zeal for the things of God.