

To all the Saints that are listening for God's voice and are ready to respond,

SCRIPTURE:

1 Samuel 3:8c-10 (NIV) – Larger reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

STORY:

A man was sleeping one night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with light, and God appeared. The Lord told the man he had work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to Push against the rock with all his might...

So, this the man did, day after day. For many years he toiled from sunup to sundown, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all his might! Each night the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain. Since the man was showing discouragement, the adversary (Satan) decided to enter the picture by placing thoughts into the weary mind: (He will do it every time)! "You have been pushing against that rock for a long time and it hasn't moved." Thus, he gave the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure. These thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man.

Satan said, "Why kill yourself over this? Just put in your time, giving just the minimum effort; and that will be good enough." That's what the weary man planned to do, but decided to make it a matter of Prayer and to take his troubled thoughts to the Lord. "Lord," he said, "I have labored long and hard in Your Service, putting all my strength to do that which You have asked. Yet, after all this time, I have not even budged that rock by half a millimeter. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

The Lord responded compassionately, "My friend, when I asked you to serve Me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all of your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now you come to Me with your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. But, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back shiny and brown; your hands are callused from constant pressure, your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition you have grown much, and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. True, you haven't moved the rock. But your calling was to be Obedient and to push and to exercise your Faith and trust in My wisdom. That you have done. Now I, my friend, will move the rock."

OBSERVATION:

Stories have a power all there own. I collect stories because they can convey a Kingdom truth in a style that is memorable and long lasting. A preacher can preach an excellent sermon with many fine points, but it will be the stories that the listeners will remember ... it is the stories which will linger within their memory bank and might just help them recall the main theme and purpose of the sermon.

We all face difficult situations in our lives. Some face cancer, divorce, relocating to a new community, a loss of a job, depression, the death of a friend, an unkind and thoughtless word, being a butt of a joke, bullying or a thousand and one other problems that can face us on a daily basis. How to handle those difficult situations is the real challenge.

Then a story comes along which brings together both the difficulties we face, a way to remember how to face those difficulties ... and we have a winner. Such was the case with the story above about a person, a huge rock and the instructions from God to push. This story spoke to my pastor’s heart because in all that I attempt to do I’m attempting to respond to the instructions from God ... not to win someone else’s approval. I’ve never been afraid to share my doubts or my struggles. I don’t have it all worked out. My faith is just like yours ... a work in progress ... it’s a journey ... not a finished product ... a destination. Just remember, after all is said and done, we are God’s people, this is God’s church ... and each of us are God’s servants. We need to P.U.S.H.

At times, when we hear a word from God, we tend to use our own intellect to decipher what He wants, when actually what God wants is just simple obedience and faith in Him. By all means, exercise the Faith that moves mountains, but know that it is still God who moves the mountains.

- When everything seems to go wrong.....Just P.U.S.H.
- When the job gets you down.....Just P.U.S.H.
- When people don't do as you think they should.....Just P.U.S.H.
- When your money is “gone” and the bills are due.....Just P.U.S.H.
- When people just don't understand youJust P.U.S.H.

- P = Pray
- U = Until
- S = Something
- H = Happens

Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, everyone can start from now and make a brand new ending! Friends are like quiet angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

Just Hold ON!!! P.U.S.H!

QUOTE:

When we pray, remember: 1. The love of God that wants the best for us. 2. The wisdom of God that knows what is best for us. 3. The power of God that can accomplish it. - William Barclay

PRAYER:

Help us to understand that it is you who is in charge and we are to be obedient to your voice and your instructions. Others might criticize and find fault, but it is a journey ... a faith journey ... it is our faith journey. No one else can travel it for us ... so, therefore, when you tell us to push ... push we must. Continue to shape us into the person you have designed us to be. You are the potter, we are the clay.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim

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