

YOU MUST GO ON

by Jackson Morro

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YOU MUST GO ON

Today, I want to share with you the great truth that when you come to one of those places in life that you think it's all over and you feel so beaten down by circumstances that you just want to crawl into a hole and die or just give up, God has a special word for you: YOU MUST GO ON! God is with you – He'll bring you through – but you must do your part: YOU MUST GO ON! Even when you think you don't have the strength to take another step, put that right foot out in front of you and you'll feel the strength of God come upon you to help you keep going.

The Bible is filled with the history of individuals who had come to the end of what they could do, and suddenly, at the critical moment, God opened a way where there seemed to be no possible way. The Apostle Paul had learned this secret when he wrote in Philippians 1:6: "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." In our churches, we sometimes sing a little chorus:

*God is going to finish everything He started
Even if the waters have to be parted.
Lift up your head, don't be brokenhearted,
God is going to finish what He started in you!*

We have a wonderful promise from God that He will never give up on us. We see the faithfulness of God through the life of the wonderful Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, God will never give up on you as long as you never give up.

Turn to the Book of Philippians, Chapter 3, in your Bible and we'll read the words of the Apostle Paul. You might think that the Apostle Paul, who had received a direct call to the ministry from the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, would have things easy in life because he had been so spiritually blessed. You might think he had a "hotline to heaven," a private phone line to God. Yet, there were times when Paul admitted his life was tough. There were times when he had to actually press into God's will for his life; he had to put his will into action and push through the difficult ordeals of life. Paul once wrote:

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14)

I think back to the time in my own life many years ago when I lost someone very close to me. They died from cancer. I watched them go from perfect health to wasting away in a very painful death in a very short time. I had been their caregiver while keeping a full work schedule. This took place several years before I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord.

After this loved one passed away, I went through a period of time when I myself was quite physically ill. But worse, I was very bitter and down in my spirit. So, I went to my family doctor, a wonderful elderly Jewish doctor that I highly respected. I thought the world of him. This wise old doctor realized that my physical problems had a lot to do with another serious problem – I was down in my spirit.

This doctor began having a heart to heart talk with me about how he had come from a very poor family background. But growing up, he worked hard as a young man and studied hard in school and between his savings and scholarships he was able to get accepted at a decent little medical school in Brooklyn, New York. After a successful first year, he was suddenly called home on an emergency just after beginning his second year. His mother was dying of cancer. He cared for her and watched her die a very painful death. Shortly after her funeral, his father also died suddenly of a heart attack. This young man was devastated. He immediately dropped out of medical school and became a door-to-door encyclopedia salesman.

One day, this young man had a visitor at his apartment. It was a professor from the medical school who had come looking for him. They visited, chatted, and had a coffee together. As it came time for the professor to leave, he looked at this young man and said, “You weren’t born to be an encyclopedia salesman, you were born to be a doctor. You must go on!” Then the professor took his fist and pounded on the young man’s kitchen table and shouted at him, “YOU MUST GO ON!” Then he left.

The young man searched his soul, went back to medical school, and became a doctor. And he looked at me that day after sharing this private, sacred part of his life and said to me, “You must go on!” I’ll never forget his words or that moment as long as I live. I think of the providential goodness of God, how at this critical moment in my life, when I didn’t even have Jesus Christ as my Lord, God still made sure this precious man crossed my path and spoke those precious words so I’d make it through!

The Apostle Paul faced many problems in his life and ministry. He was very blessed in many ways. But he also faced many battles: persecution, shipwreck, arrests, beatings. Furthermore, he suffered these things not because he did anything wrong, but because he preached the Gospel. And he

always had the memories of his own past when he had been a great sinner who had caused the death of many Christians back when he persecuted the church. Sometimes he got weary and tired and was tempted to give up and quit. But then he would hear a voice in his heart, the voice of the Risen Jesus Christ, quietly saying, “Paul, you must go on. Paul, you must go on.” So, Paul made a determination that he would go on and never quit. He wrote:

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14)

Paul would GO ON by doing three things:

1. FORGETTING THE PAST – If we have some mistake or sin in our past that is holding us back, we have to simply give it to God. Jesus suffered and died to pay the price for that sin or mistake so that we could walk in the power of the Holy Spirit without any condemnation in our lives (Romans 8:1). Jesus is big enough and able enough to forgive our sins. Likewise, if there is some grief, or sorrow or hurt, we must give it to God, trusting Him to heal the wounds in our life. Yes, they may still hurt or ache for a while, but God’s grace will give us the strength to move on and the trust that God will work out anything bad for our good (Romans 8:28). We simply must let the past be the past and leave it with God.

2. REACH FORWARD TO WHAT LIES AHEAD – God has a plan for your life. You are on earth for a purpose. God does not have you still living on this planet just to take up space. Find out from God through prayer what your purpose is and then get with the program! Once you find out, reach forward to accomplish what God wants you to do with the rest of the years He’s given you to live on this earth.

3. PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE PRIZE – Put your heart and your soul, your will and your body, into working toward God’s plan for your life. Paul did just that in years after he wrote Philippians 3:13-14. Many years later, Paul could look back and say with confidence and satisfaction, “I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7) Become a man with a mission or a woman with a mission! Become a man or woman of faith! Determine that you will fight your good fight and finish your course!

So, my friend, I speak to you today and just as my doctor sowed a good seed in my life about 35 years ago, I want to sow a good seed in your life:

My friend, in spite of what you have faced or are facing: **YOU MUST GO ON! YOU MUST GO ON!**

But you're not alone. God is with you. The resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, the One Who conquered death, is with you. As you press forward and take that one more step, you'll find His strength and power coming upon you, bringing you through. The Apostle Paul could go on because he had a secret weapon – he had the power of the Risen Christ within him and Paul could say in that same letter to the Philippians, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Philippians 4:13)

If you don't know this Jesus, I invite you to pray with me now and invite the Risen Lord, the One who conquered death, to come and live inside your heart:

“Dear God, I come to You today with all my faults, sins, hurts, sorrows, and I place them at Your feet and at the foot of the cross of Your Son Jesus. I ask forgiveness for my sins, healing for my hurts and sorrows, and Your strength in me to go on. I ask You, O God, for the gift of salvation and eternal life. And through Your strength, I'll live the rest of my life to please You. Amen.”

And now, my friend, I pray for you:

“Almighty God, in the name of Your Son Jesus, I pray for my friend that the power of the Holy Spirit will confirm, strengthen, perfect and establish him/her and he/she will have a revelation that not only he/she go on, but can and will go on. I pray this in the name of the Mighty Risen Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

It's been almost 35 years since I heard those words from my doctor (which, really, was a command from God, as I look back now) that I had to go on. I want to encourage you to know that God has an exciting future, a good future for you. Back at that moment, I was so down, I didn't even have any concept of what a future was, never mind a future for me.

I tell you, though, when I made that decision to go on, I began to walk into a future that God had planned for me and it has been exciting. I've had my battles and my victories; I've had my problems now and then and on occasion made mistakes. But I know God is carrying me through and I have

seen so many more victories. It's all been worth it, serving Jesus Christ, and I wouldn't trade one moment. So remember:
YOU MUST GO ON!

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We invite you to send any prayer requests you might have for prayer at our chapel prayer meetings. Send to:

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