

Unshakable Confidence
Romans 8:18-39
Pastor Lester Zimmerman

Each year the pastors and elders ask the Lord to give us a theme for the year. Something that would be on God's heart for us to focus on and to live by.

The theme we chose for 2019 is UNSHAKABLE.

We live in a world where everything is shaking, creating great uncertainty and fear. Raging wild fires, massive flooding, severe drought, tornados, hurricanes, earthquakes, drug epidemic, human trafficking, perversions, new diseases, a divided nation, nuclear threats, and wars.

In the midst of all this God wants us to live our lives with unshakable confidence. With unshakable courage and unshakable faith.

We have several scripture passages to go with our theme. The first is **2 Timothy 1:7 "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."**

God has given us the Spirit's power to live unshakable lives. It is not by our might or power but by his Spirit that we stand strong.

The second scripture is passage is **1Cor 15:57-58 But we thank God for giving us the victory as conquerors through our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One. So now, beloved ones, stand firm and secure. Live your lives with an unshakable confidence. TPT**

While the world is shaking, we believers have a firm foundation to stand on. **Jesus is our solid rock.** He is our refuge and strength. In Him we can stand firm and secure, living our lives as victorious conquerors with unshakable confidence.

There are many scriptures that teach us how to live with this unshakable confidence as we face a world in turmoil and an uncertain 2019. Let's open our Bibles and look at a great passage in Romans 8.

Paul is writing to the believers in Rome who were entering a period of intense persecution under Nero. He was a very cruel emperor who loved killing Christians.

Many Christians were killed under Nero. He loved torturing them. He crucified them on crosses. Others he covered in animal skins and had dogs tear them to pieces. Others he tied on stakes and burned them as human torches in his garden as he threw a party. It is believed that Peter and Paul were both eventually killed by Nero.

There was intense suffering going on. Paul gives great advice on how to live with unshakable confidence in this kind of situation? Advice for us today.

We are not facing this level of persecution in America, but it is getting more and more difficult to stand up for truth as believers. We are marginalized and often mocked for our faith and values.

There are other types of suffering as well that we experience. Pain and suffering from natural causes such as cancer, the death of loved ones, consequences of addictions, cultural wars and bad choices of others.

The Apostle Paul encourages us on how to stand firm and be unshakable no matter what kind of struggle we are facing.

READ Romans 8:18-39

Let's look at how Paul learned to be unshakable and how we can too:

- 1. See suffering as producing something eternal in you and not just something to overcome or avoid.**

Vs.18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Paul is telling us to live life with an eternal perspective. If we only see our problems as something temporal to get rid of, we are short sighted. There is something bigger at play in our lives each day.

What we experience in this life has a direct connection to what God is going to entrust us with in eternity. He is preparing us to rule and reign with him someday, thru the things we struggle with here and now.

Paul said when he looks at his struggles and suffering thru the lens of eternity it changes everything for him. It gives him the strength to endure because there is a purpose in his suffering even if he can't understand or see it now yet.

I remember reading a book that helped change my perspective after my father died at age 53, leaving my mom and 12-year-old brother by themselves.

It was called *Don't Waste Your Sorrows- Paul Billheimer*. In the book he explains that in life we always have the choice to embrace our pain with a confidence in God's eternal purpose or to get angry and disillusioned with God.

- He says; Don't waste your sorrow and life being angry with God or trying to figure out why he allowed certain things to happen. Someday you will have your questions answered. But for now, live your life fully for him and trust him.

Paul put it this way in **2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.**

We might not understand why we go through certain things, but we have the promise they are not in vain. They are achieving an eternal glory for us.

2. See yourself as a victorious conquer and not a helpless victim.

Our attitude toward life and its challenges determines so much.

We all have times of doubt and negative thinking we fall into. Poor Me, Why Me Lord. If Only, People are unfair, Life is cruel, I'm unworthy, God loves others more than me. Those are normal thoughts that come our way, but if we get stuck in that way of thinking we are in trouble. **We then begin to define ourselves by our problem instead of by our true identity as his sons and daughters.**

Paul says, remember who you are. You are not a victim of the Nero's in your life. No matter what they may do to you – you are still a victorious conqueror because your Father in Heaven is going to see that these things will work out to your eternal advantage someday. You will win.

Vs.37 In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

3. Rely on the Holy Spirit, all the more, in these last days.

In **Vs 26** Paul says, *“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.”*

The Holy Spirit strengthens and sustains us through times of trial. He makes us unshakable even in our weakness. The Holy Spirit prays for us and through us.

We rely on the Holy Spirit by praying about everything all the time. **Prayer makes us unshakable.**

Whether our weakness is physical, emotional or spiritual he helps us be strong.

4. Soak your mind and heart in God's Word and you will find strength to be unshakable.

Those in the underground church and persecuted in prison draw their strength from the scriptures. It is like gold to them. It assures them of God's love and commitment to his children.

One prisoner who was in a communist prison writes: *"I knew many Scripture passages by heart and believed His promises. In times of suffering, in moments of loneliness, of complete isolation and exclusion, those Scriptures helped me to remain faithful to God."*

Another, in one of Stalin's slave camps, wrote: *While Bibles were banned, imprisoned pastors from numerous countries had memorized whole chapters of the Bible. They would teach the precious Word in secret parts of the coal mines.*

We draw amazing strength from God's word. **You will not be unshakable if you don't have God's word in your heart and mind.**

Listen to God's Word -

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ... Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

What comforting and powerful words. They make you stand firm no matter what.

If God is for me!!! Then I can be unshakable.

5. Be convinced in your heart of God's goodness and love toward you.

Again, and again in his writings, Paul declares this passionate bold statement. "**I am convinced!**" *I am convinced of the power of the gospel. I am convinced of his unfailing love.*

Paul had this deep conviction. A deep settled state of mind – He was unshakable in his mind about the goodness and faithfulness of God.

- Even when he was stoned and left for dead, imprisoned, shipwrecked

Verse 38-39 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Settle this in your heart. No matter what happens, God is good! Not just some of the time – all the time. The enemy will try to get you to accuse God.

- **Job's wife** tried to get him to curse God – but Job was convinced that God is a good God – “even if God lets me die, I will never deny him”
- **David would complain** at times but always come back to the conviction in his heart that God was just, good and faithful in all his ways
- **We have the testimonies of many who were martyred for their faith.** Refusing to deny Christ. Continuing to call him faithful and good until the end.

They were convinced. It was settled in their soul. They couldn't be shaken.

We are unshakable in him when we are convinced of his goodness!

6. We are unshakable when we have strong relationships with other followers of Jesus.

We need each other. Don't wait until you are in a crisis. If you have not invested in relationships, you will find you are alone and vulnerable. Build your community of support now.

This is one of the purposes of our Life Groups.

- Loving, caring and growing together in God's Word.

Beginning in February we will be kicking off a new 6-week Series on the theme “Unshakable” using 2 Timothy for our bible study.

I explain it further in this video.....

LEADER SIGNUP VIDEO (During Video Prayer Minister’s move to side)

INSTRUCTIONS: If you’re interested in going through the UNSHAKABLE series with a group of your friends, or finding out more about how to do that, join Pastor Brian (and me) in a few minutes in this right front corner and we will explain how you can do that.

- We will only keep you a few minutes as we explain how we can help you make it happen.
- If you need a bit more time to think about it, contact Pastor Brian Flewelling later this week.

2019 New Year’s Blessing:

May you grow with unshakable confidence this year

May your trials, disappointments and sorrows develop more of God’s eternal glory in your life as you trust him thru the unknown and pain

May you see yourself more and more as a victorious overcomer in all things

May your relationship with the Holy Spirit and Prayer grow deeper in your life this year

May the scriptures and the promise that God is with you and for you make you unshakable in your spirit

May you know that you know that you know, with a deep conviction in your heart, that God is good and loves you deeply no matter what

May you find friends to walk with you and grow with you in your spiritual journey with God.

May God bless you with good health and prosper the work of your hands and make you a blessing in 2019.