

"Never Give Up!"

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After the end of World War II, the students at Harrow Academy excitedly waited to hear their graduation speech from the greatest statesman of that time, Winston Churchill, who was a former student at Harrow. It has been wrongly said these words were all he said to these graduates that day, but they weren't. But, these words are remembered and still ring true today. Churchill came to the podium and said in the middle of his speech, *"Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."*

These words are words for the Christian faith. You and I are assaulted on all sides by those who say that following Jesus Christ is a sign of weakness, and of lack of intelligence. But this isn't any different than the original 12 disciples faced when Jesus Christ was here. There were times they were ready to give up and just go back to their old lives!

Turn to Matthew 27. Jesus had been arrested, tried, beaten, and was now being crucified. Throughout all this, one of the people that stood her ground and was there for her Savior was Mary Magdalene. She had followed Jesus since He cast out 7 demons from her. She saw His power and listened to what he taught. Even though she ran the risk of being judged harshly, she never gave up!

Look at verses 55-56, *"There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee."* Then as Jesus was being buried, look at verse 61, *"Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb."*

Even if she would have stopped there, it showed her true dedication and faith, but the story continues! Look on the same page at Matthew 28:1-3, *"Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb."* Then go to verses 5-7, *"But the angel said to the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.'"*

But it wasn't just Mary Magdalene that continued strong so did the disciples! Open to John 15. Jesus knew that the disciples' work for Him was going to be tough! He knew that the disciples were going to face persecution each and every time they spoke of Him.

Jesus knew the world was going to hate them and want to get rid of them too. But, the disciples had a mission. Jesus asked them to preach the Good News of salvation to all. It wasn't going to be easy, but they had to stand firm in Him as they did this work.

Look at verses 18-20, *"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours."*

Even though they faced persecution and hatred, the disciples continued to speak out the name of Jesus. Think about Peter as he stood with the others and preached the message of Jesus Christ to the people that 1st Pentecost. It wasn't a popular message because he told them that they were responsible for putting the Son of God to death.

No matter where the disciples went, the message was the same. Jesus Christ came willingly down to earth to suffer and die in our place and take our sins upon Himself. What He asks is that all believe and serve Him! Even in His Commission, Jesus gave a promise, *"I will be with you always to the end of the age."* He was not going to leave them on their own!

The mission for us is exactly the same. We are to go out in the world around us that will hate us and proclaim Jesus Christ! Believing is not enough! It's not enough to just be sitting here singing, praying and listening to His Word! It's important that we take this Word to heart and have it be our passion! But it has to be more than a personal thing! We need to get to work telling how Jesus has changed us! This of all the things in life, has to take first place!

Please know, you're not in this alone! Jesus promised to walk at your side wherever you go. No matter where you go to preach Him, He will always be there! Listen to Hebrews 13:5-6, *"He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*

Turn to John 14. You can trust Jesus Christ and His presence each day! Take your concerns to Him! Even when things seem impossible and you don't see an end or a solution, He has sent you the Holy Spirit to guide and lead you no matter what!

Let's close with verses 26-27, *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."*

No matter what, never give up! Never give in to the world's temptations! Hold on to Jesus Christ with all your heart! Never give up, He's always there!