

WELS COMMISSION ON LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

Dear servants in Christ's kingdom,

You've seen it in the world around you; you've seen it hit close to home. Stress, fatigue, uncertainty, worry, and division have had an impact during the past two years but likely in most years of your ministry. This can take a toll on those who serve. Through it all, you continue to serve faithfully to provide high-quality, Christian education for the children and families entrusted to your care. Through it all, the Lord has been faithful in keeping his promise to be with us in all things. God's love and grace have given comfort and motivation. Unexpected blessings have come through opportunities to serve new families and even new ministries. Over the next five weeks, we invite you to continue clinging to God's promises in his Word through this short series of devotions and Bible studies.

Study 1 – Week of February 14, 2022

YOU NEED ONLY TO BE STILL!

“The Lord your God will fight for you, you need only to be still.” – Exodus 14:14

These are the words Moses told his people when they were backed up to the Red Sea. The spitting mad Egyptian army was barreling toward them. These soldiers had all lost their first-born children to Israel's God. They were thirsty for revenge. The Israelites melted with fear. As men, women, children, grandparents, and people with special needs, what match were they for a well-trained, well-equipped army? Life can be very intimidating. So can ministry. Sometimes the problems that threaten our school and its success come from all sides. Even a once loving parent can turn on us like the Egyptian army.

That's a good time for Moses to speak into our hearts. God fights for his people. He doesn't want us to treat every situation as if it all depends on us. It doesn't. But he does want us to live on mission according to his word. That means we don't let any challenges large or small keep us from pushing forward in ministry. It means we react to situations with grace and candor. It means that the music of the gospel is heard in our tone as well in our words. It means we readily forgive and seek ways to encourage and resolve relationships more than just advance our organized dreams. It means we don't quit, and we stop daydreaming about quitting too.

As we push forward with faith filled character, we can expect God to come through. We don't need to fret and blame like Israel did. Regarding anxiety and blame, we just need to be still and watch the Lord work!

In Moses' story, God miraculously opened the Red Sea. In ours he might miraculously open hearts. He might also create some cool visible solutions as well. Whatever he does, he will fight for us because we are his. But here's the catch: we don't get to see what he's going to do before he does it. So, we can't wait for him to show us how it's going to work out before we decide to move forward in faith. He wants us to move trust and move forward before he blesses. He wants his promise to be enough for us. So, go ahead and trust God. Keep doing the right things. He will fight for you. You can count on it!

Points to Ponder

How do you think Moses' talk with God at the burning bush in Exodus 3 and 4 might have helped him be ready for this moment when he promised God would fight for his people?

How did the recent ten plagues help prepare Moses to encourage the Israelites at the Red Sea?

What is the benefit of more years of experience in ministry when it comes to faith in tough ministry circumstances?

Name for each other some present concerns in your school and among the students and parents. Now tell each other how this story and this promise changes the way you think, believe, and handle the situations?

Reflection

Prayer

Lord, we know you are with us. But we can't see you. That's why we so often forget. Help us to remember you are right here with us. Bless what we are doing here and if you want us to change course make it painfully obvious to us which way you would have us go. Take the specific situations that are challenging us and do what you want with them. Check our hearts and give us the insight to know how to handle ourselves and all others involved. Rally us around your promises and provide the wisdom, the money, the people, and the resources necessary to get this ministry done. Thank you for the privilege of prayer that assures us that we can leave all this in your giant hands! AMEN

Continue to ponder on the thoughts of this study by reading through the following passages at the end of the day or each day throughout the week for encouragement from God's Word.

Exodus 3,4, Psalm 50, Matthew 28:19-20, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Philippians 4:4-9