

I WILL RISE

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Rev. Richard Rogers

Rev. Richard Rogers: Hi, everybody! I am so excited to be with you! So I want to thank everybody for your prayer support, for your love. For your prayers – not only for me – but for my wife, Jill. I'm doing okay. It's like I have a bad cold. I'm up for a little bit, and then I kind of have to go take a nap. But I really wanted to share today's message with you.

So I want to talk about: I WILL RISE. With this idea of how we overcome the bumps in life. You know, last week I talked about moving from the bumps to the blessing. And I'm getting an opportunity this week to really live that. To really live those opportunities that we have to go beyond the situations that we ask for, that we wanted. And, really: How do we make our life great, even when we have to go through the bumps of life? So that's what we're going to talk about today.

And Jesus said, *"In the world, there's tribulation, but be of good cheer; for I have overcome the world."* And what I think is so powerful about that is: He didn't say that stuff's not going to happen. He absolutely acknowledged that, in the world, stuff happens. There's tribulation. There's upset. There's disappointment. There's frustration. But he also talked about that we can overcome those things. And that's where I want to focus on. I want to focus on: How do we move beyond the bumps to – not only be blessed – but to really chart our course for a greater life. To really be willing to move beyond those limited situations – those limited experiences.

Because often what happens when we get bumped, is we ask ourselves the question: *"Why is this happening to me?"* You know, basically that's an ego statement. You know, *"Why is this happening to me?"* Implies it shouldn't be happening. The life that we're living isn't right. We talked about that last week. We talked about judgement.

But what I want you to see is: Every time we're asking the question, *"Why is this happening to me?"* we're actually focused on the wrong aspect of our life. So the question is not: Why are we in this situation we're in right now? But the real question is: *"Where do I want to go? Where am I going to go from here?"* And we actually look forward to a higher, better possibility.

So when we ask, *"Why is this happening to me,"* I want you to turn the focus of your attention – not on this moment; not on the difficulty or the situation that you're in now – but where are you going to go from this.

Because what I promise to each and every one of you is that I WILL RISE from this. You know, many of you know my stories. All of my stories and all of the things I've been through. And the reality is that, with all the things that I've had to overcome in my life – you know, I can think of all of them! Of all the things that I've overcome in my life – that, over and over again, the truth of my soul is: I knew I was going to rise above it. I knew that the power of God in me was greater than whatever was going on in my life.

And that's where I really want us to live from! Is not focusing on the, *"Woe is me!"* or *"Why is this happening?"* and in the disappointment of the moment ... but to really focus on where we're going. And that we will rise again. Because I know that I'm going to rise again.

So let's talk about faith. Hebrews 11 reads, *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not yet seen."* So faith is the assurance of things hoped for! So when we have faith, we actually have a deep sense of assurance in those things that we desire. We actually believe in them; we actually have faith! We have a feeling of gratitude, of joy, knowing that wherever we are right now, we have an assurance of things hoped for. We have an assurance of a greater day.

And the conviction of [things] not yet seen. And what that means is that, sometimes, we have a conviction – we have a faith – in a life that we want to live more than we know how it's going to happen. You know, there's really two ways to live our life. You know, one of the ways that we live our life is through the mental activity. And the mental activity tries to figure things out: *"How is this going to happen? How am I going to make this work?"* And we live from that mental aspect of us. But living by faith is a different operation. Living by faith is that we actually have a vision for our life that we're living into ... even when we're not sure how it's all going to come together. Faith is holding a vision of possibilities, and then actually living into the means, the way, the process ... even when we don't know what the process is!

So when we have a vision for our life – when we see a possibility for our life – we actually move into that vision, even if we don't have the details worked out.

Now, it goes on: Hebrews 11:3. *"By faith we understand that the world was created out of the Word of God, so that what is seen is made out of the things that do not yet appear."*

You know, Charles Fillmore called that "ethers." He said ... and he had this concept of "ethers," which was the spiritual substance that was fully present everywhere. And he believed that faith was the activating power of this spiritual presence that he called "ethers." So these ethers were infinitely present and waiting for faith to activate them to create the next experience ... to create the next thing.

And I just love that imagery! Imagine that you live in this infinite field of possibilities. And I love the way Deepak Chopra coined that idea: this infinite field of possibilities. That we live in this realm of infinite ethers that are waiting for our faith to activate them into the next highest, greatest version of our life. That your faith activates an infinite supply of God's good to create what you have not yet seen.

By faith, we understand that the world was created by the Word of God, so that what was seen was made out of the things that do not yet appear. This is the way Jesus said it in Matthew 17. *"He said to them, 'Because of your little faith ... for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.'"*

What I want you to understand this is from a conceptual place – from maybe even a scientific place. That we live in this field of infinite possibilities. So whatever you have faith in is creating your next experience. So as we begin to have faith in our desires, our hopes and our dreams, we have faith that we are going to move through this situation. As we have faith that we are going to rise again, what I want you to see is that your faith actually activates that next level of experience. It actually creates that which you desire.

So by your faith, you can say to this mountain – whatever the mountain is in your life! You can say to whatever situation – whatever limitation, whatever problem, whatever disappointment – *"You can move from here to there,"* and it will be done! That's the faith that I want you to be calling forth in your life! A level of faith that allows you to move your mountains: to move them into a greater possibility.

And I want to share a Scripture from Mark 9:20. It says, *"And they brought this boy to Jesus, and his spirit saw him, and immediately the convulsions in the boy began. And he fell to the ground and he rolled around, and he foamed at the mouth. And Jesus asked the father, 'How long has this been happening to him?' And he said, 'From childhood. And it often casts him into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if you are able to do anything, have pity upon us and help us.' And Jesus said to him, 'If I am able? All things can be done by he who believes.' And immediately the father cried out, 'I believe! Help though my unbelief!'"*

And I want you to really see the possibility here. Right? The possibility right here is that we can honestly look at the places in our life where we have faith in the thing that we desire. But we also have faith,

often, in its opposite. We have faith in our self-doubt. We have faith in our concerns. We have faith in our worries. And I want you to really look at: it only takes the faith of a grain of mustard seed to move the mountains in your life! But sometimes we actually have more faith in what we don't want than what we do want! Right?

So, when you look at the life that you really desire – whether it's relationships or finances or health or maybe a new position, or maybe it's an abundant retirement ... When you're looking at the things that you want to experience, do you have more faith in the desire that you have, or do you have more faith in its opposite? Are you more concerned or more in self-doubt? Or are you standing really in the power that allows you to declare the thing you want? To say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will be done?

And I think that one of the spiritual qualities that is often overlooked – that I really want us to see is a transformative spiritual quality – is the quality of spiritual will. You know, will is that power that allows us to direct the infinite warehouse of God's good. This is what Charles Fillmore said about the spiritual quality of will: *"The will is the executive faculty of mind. The determining factor of man. What man wills or decrees comes to pass in his experience. 'Thou shalt decree a thing and it will be established unto thee,' from Job 22: 28. The will is the center of mind and body, around which results all activities that constitute consciousness. It is the avenue through which I am an expression of pure potential. This will may be said to be 'the maker of men,' because it is the directive power that determines the character formation. When man wills to do the will of God, he exercises his individual will and wisdom, love and spiritual understanding that builds spiritual character."*

What I want you to see today is that, until you fully activate your will, you're never going to get all the good that God has for you. Because you were given free will, you actually have to activate your will to move into the highest level of good. It's not just enough to want it; it's not even enough to believe that it's possible. But you have to activate the "I WILL." That "God in me will" opens the door to you truly experiencing all the good that God has for you.

Charles Fillmore went on and said this: *"Desire is reaching out of the mind for satisfaction. Will is the controlling, directing factor of the mind. One must not only have the desire to be well; one must also have the will to be well."*

And that's what I really want you to see today: is I want you to really look at, not only what you desire, but what are you willing to make happen in your life? Because nothing comes into your life – nothing good comes into your life – until you are open and willing to experience it.

Now, it doesn't always happen at the conscious level. But every aspect of your life is asking you to be willing for something greater. And so I want you to activate that spiritual quality of will in your life. I want you to really look at: How willing are you? What are you decreeing? What have you decided? How is your life going to turn out? Because when you decide, all heaven and earth begin to move on your behalf.

I want you to take a deep breath. And I want you to really think about your homework for this week. Your homework is not only to activate the power of faith, but to align it with the full power of your will. And I want you to make some decisions. I want you to decide this week: What are you willing to experience? What are you willing to declare? What are you willing to decide on your life? Because when you decide, heaven and earth opens up.

You know, one of my favorite poets is Maya Angelou. She's got a poem entitled "And Still I Rise." And I'd like to share it with you today:

*You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,*

*You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.*

*Does my sassiness upset you?
Why are you beset with gloom?
'Cause I walk like I've got oil wells
Pumping in my living room.*

*Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.*

*Did you want to see me broken?
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?*

*Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my own backyard.*

*You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.*

*Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?*

*Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.*

*Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.*

And today, what I want you to see is that, whatever you're overcoming in your life – whatever the situation; whatever the condition – whether it's health or finances or a relationship or it's at work ... No matter what it is in your life, what I want you to decide is that your personal will, activated through

faith, actually allows you to open doors and move mountains in your life and in your world. That there is no limit to the good that you can create.

You know, so many of you have been praying with me. So many have sent me text messages and emails and been on Facebook. And I can hear a level of concern. I can hear that you're a little afraid for me. And what I want to absolutely guarantee to you is: I WILL RISE. Yes! Am I tired right now? Yes. Do I have this Covid condition? Yes. Is my body healing it? Yes. Do I take more naps than usual right now? Yes. Am I up for a little bit, and then I put myself back to bed? Yes. Am I separated from my wife in the opposite end of the house? It's me and the cats in this end of the house; yes. And I want to thank you – thank you! – for your prayers. Thank you for your love. Thank you for your support. But what I guarantee is: I WILL RISE.

This will not define me. This is not a death sentence. This is me transforming and becoming a greater man, a greater minister, a greater person for having gone through this situation. And I get to decide today who I'm going to be because of this situation. Situations don't define us; we define us. I WILL RISE.

God bless you, friend; have a great week! And I look forward to seeing you soon.

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