

Lt. Colonel Brian Armstrong:

In times like these Lynn read for us words of promise, words of comfort, words of perseverance, words of sustainability. In times like these, I wonder how many times my grandfather uttered these words. My maternal grandfather was born at the turn of the century. He would have lived through World War I, the Spanish influenza, the Great Depression, World War II, all by the time he was in his mid 40s. And I really do an injustice by just listing those events as if they were just passing moments. These were times of destruction, of death, of devastation and despair. My grandfather would live another 60 years beyond those events.

What is it that keeps people going in times like these during difficult times, troubling times, uncertain times, living in a VUCA world, a phrase that was introduced in 1987 in leadership theory. And it still is a buzzword in the world today. Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity. What are we looking for in leadership in times like these? We certainly need good leaders to take us through these times. This is not a time to criticize people in leadership positions because of the fact that going forward is so unpredictable. There's no perfect answer to the way forward. There's also no one person that's able to do this on their own. We need to do this together.

Often as people of the light or people of the day, as Christians are referred to in 1 Thessalonians 5, we are called upon to lead. How do we lead in times like these? Let me suggest that we need to be a listening people. God spoke to the prophets who are listening people. I need to correct that. God spoke through the prophets who were listening people. No message delivered to the profits was ever intended for them alone, it was a message that was intended for the people. In times like these just as the prophets were attentive to God's message, we have to be listening.

How do we lead? When Solomon became the King of Israel after his father David, he was given the opportunity to ask for anything. His request was not for riches or power, but for wisdom to lead God's people. And God was very pleased with this leader's request. In times like these, we need to ask God for wisdom. When the children of Israel were scattered because of the Exile and were in great danger of being annihilated because of racial hatred, a young woman dared to speak up and risk her life that others might be saved. Hadassah, Esther. She came before the King with courage to speak on behalf of the people and was recognized for her leadership for such a time as this. In times like these, we need the courage to speak on behalf of others.

In the days of the Judges, Israel found themselves in this cycle of going their own way and displeasing, God falling into difficulty, and then calling out to God to send them help. A liberator, a redeemer, a savior. In times like these, we need a savior. There's a story in 1 Chronicles where people were having to make a decision of where they needed to be, for who they should make alliances with. And together as community, as one army, with 200 chiefs, they made the deliberate decision to align themselves with King David. They were recognized as men who understood the times and knew what to do. In times like these, we need to be like the men of Issachar and understand the times. In times like these we need to be listening, we need to be asking God for wisdom, we need the courage to speak up for others, we need to understand the times. We need to do this together.

Many years ago, I asked my maternal grandfather Corps Sergeant Major Peter McBride, "What's your favorite song?" He recited "Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and his love." The old, old story. It's amazing how the old, old story never changes. The old, old story never gets old. To we, who believe God is the solid rock, in a world of shifting sands, in a VUCA world. As we journey through times like these, be wise, be safe, bring a word of encouragement often and do your best to understand the times so that we can respond to God's prompting and cling to the solid rock.

This transcript was exported on Jul 14, 2020 - view latest version [here](#).

The hymn writer wrote "In times like these, you need a savior. In times like these, you need an anchor." Be very sure. Be very sure your anchor holds and grips the solid rock. Hear the word of the Lord that was spoken through the prophets that was read a little bit earlier. Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. May you take these words deep into your heart.