

“STEADFASTNESS”

1 Cor 15:58

Martin Luther: Human nature is alike a drunken peasant: Always falling off one side of the saddle or the other. What is needed in life/Christianity – especially discipleship is to stay in the saddle! The character trait that is needed is steadfastness.

I. STEADFASTNESS

A. We live in a very unstable generation: People move from job to job/location/relationships

1. **Fantasy:** Unrealistic expectations of the way things will be/should be
a. Disappointments rock them – not supposed to be like this!
2. **Emotions:** Base decisions on emotion rather than reason/what is right
a. As soon as they don't feel like...they back out on their decisions/commitments
3. **Ego motivation:** Driven to please people – instead of God
a. If their wife/Pastor other people aren't recognizing/responding correctly - they quit

B. This is at work in discipleship

1. Disciples who make decisions based on emotion or hype – go overboard in trying to be a man of God
a. Going to pray for 10 hours a day/Read/study for 10 hours a day/Witness for 10 hours a day/Follow-up for 10 hours a day
b. Going to be Smith Wigglesworth & raise the dead – by tomorrow!
2. The problem is that it's boom or bust
a. Lasts a few days – then nothing: They quickly feel defeated b/c they haven't lived up to this high level

II. THE DAMAGE OF INSTABILITY

A. Instability makes you unproductive: *Unstable are often talkers – they talk most about what gonna do/gonna be*

1. Anything good requires good decisions and hard work – over time!
a. Prov 28:19 He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.
b. Genesis 49:4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel;

B. There is a testimony involved

1. Other people are involved in your discipleship: *1 Tim 3:1 blameless 1 Tim 3:7 good report/have a good testimony...*
 - a. **Your wife:** She doesn't believe your pronouncements, or believe that it will last
1. She's dragging her feet: Sometimes that's b/c you have shown her that you have no steadfastness! Going to go to Ubangi – zing!
 - b. **Your kids:** The good you say becomes negated/despised...they view the church/God incorrectly
 - c. **The church:** They don't get behind you, You've given them reason to doubt

III. STEADFASTNESS

A. What is needed is steadfastness

1. 1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

- a. Word comes from 'seated' – stable/in the same place
2. **Faithfulness** is the foundation of discipleship
a. 2 Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.
 1. Reliable/trustworthy/counted on
 - b. **Steady/constant relationship with God:** Daily!
 - c. **Consistent/repeated good decisions:** Over time – throughout different circumstances

B. This brings a testimony – a dimension in your life that is known by other people

1. A witness/people can testify for you: *Acts 6: men of honest report*
2. Especially critical in your family
a. Phillip: Sensitive to God's spirit; Daughters prophesied – able to build his home as a man of God
1. Gives your wife confidence when you tell her God calling to pioneer/change/Overseas

C. Practical stability

1. **Ask God for a miracle:** This only comes through honesty
a. Psalms 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.
2. **Start small:** The mistake is setting a huge goal – 50 chapters a day! Then condemned b/c can't fulfill
3. **Maybe better to keep your mouth shut:** (if you have a history of announcing, then not fulfilling)
4. **Deliberately do something you don't feel like doing**
 - a. Saying no to your flesh – causes the spirit to gain strength/ascendancy