

"A STEADFAST SPIRIT"

1 Cor 15:58

Why do many men say they are called/begin to do right – but fail to follow through? A problem of instability. Our scrip: What is needed is to be steadfast.

I. THE CURSE OF INSTABILITY

A. Instability is the mark of our generation: People fail to continue doing anything right/good

1. They start well – with emotion/enthusiasm; But they fail to continue over time

a. **Luke 8:13** They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. Jobs/hobbies/resolutions – fitness/finances

2. But very true in the things of God: Many men to begin to seek God's will/do God's will – but fade/stop

a. **2 Timothy 3:3** Without natural affection, trucebreakers... Won't keep their word/won't do what they say/agreed to

1. Up/down - back/forth - Hot/cold - here/gone - enthusiastic/indifferent

B. This causes many problems **James 1:8** A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

1. **Personal frustration:** Men know they have this tendency – hate it, but it depresses them

a. Then any time God deals with them, they think: Why try? It won't last

2. **Lack of productivity and success:** Inconsistent people fail to accomplish anything real

a. Will not continue the effort required over time to accomplish their desires/intentions

1. **Proverbs 28:19** He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty.

3. **Negative impact on other people:** Inconsistent people frustrate those around them – and do damage

a. They let people down b. They set bad examples for family/converts c. Cause their wives to not believe

1. **Proverbs 27:8** As a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man that wanders from his place.

a. Make the family vulnerable spiritually b. Can cause our words/intentions to be despised

4. **Fail to to achieve God's will for their lives:** **Matthew 22:14** for many are called, but few are chosen

a. Not that they aren't called, or are evil: They just won't keep making right decisions/actions over time!

II. CAUSES OF INSTABILITY

A. It's possible instability can be a spiritual curse: A steadfast spirit – suggests there can be an unstable spirit?

1. A healthy home life provides stability: Unhealthy home/lack of home has spiritual effects

a. Some learn instability by example b. Some had rejection produce damage – that caused instability

B. Fantasy produces instability:

1. Unrealistic view of life: I am excited/decide to do right – it will automatically happen I'm there!

a. Fail to take into account the realities of life: Emotion/tiredness/resistance/assault

2. We view setbacks incorrectly: All or nothing...if I miss a day, I am a failure – no point in trying any more; Quit!

a. You have to allow for the unexpected – and not let it become your whole identity

3. We set unrealistic goals: We set goals that are far too large – based on where we are at now

a. Haven't been reading my Bible at all: I will read 20 chapters a day! (in 3 bad days we're 60 chapters down!)

b. I will pray for 3 hours a day!

C. Emotional immaturity produces instability: Many live by their emotions

1. They base their decisions/actions on their feelings – rather than what is right/good

a. **V58** immovable...some let emotions move them/determine their choices/actions

2. You will not feel good all the time – so what then? Do you back off/quit?

a. **Numbers 14:1** And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. So let's quit/go back!

III. CURING INSTABILITY

A. We need to take our instability/inconsistency to God

1. It requires honesty: This is who I am/what I am like – unstable!

2. We need to ask for God's help in this area: **Psa 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

a. We may need to repent: I don't want to be this way! b. A right spirit: Steadfast – constant/unchanging/fixed

3. God wants to give us stability: **Eph 3:17** that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love

B. But there are some things we need to do to cooperate with God: Enable Him to give steadfastness

1. **Make up your mind – with wisdom:** **Psalm 57:7** My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed:

a. Take into account what will be required b. Take into account that feelings/circumstances will change

2. **Set realistic goals:** It is always better to start small – and build up from there

a. Read some every day: A chapter or 2 b. Pray some every day: 10-15 minutes

3. **Take control over your emotions:** You can! Do things you don't feel like – to train your emotions

a. **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. God will help – if we become steadfast!