

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

“Be Ye Stedfast”

John Isaac Edwards

Christians in the first century were exhorted, “...*be ye stedfast...*” (1 Cor. 15:58). “Be ye” means be me! A problem with Israel of old was that of not being stedfast. They are described in Psalm 78: “...*a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God*” (v. 8). “*For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant*” (v. 37).

1) Too Many Are Wishy-Washy. Do you know what it means to be wishy-washy? Feeble or insipid (lacking vigor or interest) in quality or character; lacking strength or boldness. Some characteristics of wishy-washy Christians:

Half-hearted. We must love the Lord with “*all*” of our heart, soul, and might (Duet. 6:5; Mt. 22:37). The Lord requires that we serve Him with “*all*” our heart and soul (Duet. 10:12).

Apathetic and indifferent. This is perhaps the greatest problem facing the church today. Too many show or feel no interest, enthusiasm or concern. Are we like those in Jeremiah’s time? When the city sat “*solitary*” that was “*full of people*”, that was “*great among the nations*” had become “*tributary*” and “*Judah is gone into captivity*” — “*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?*” (Lam. 1:12). They did not care! We ought to be like Nehemiah who “*asked*” concerning the Jews and when he learned they were “*in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire*” (Neh. 1:3), “*sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven*” (Neh. 1:4). It was his desire, “*...that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers’ sepulchres, that I may build it*” (Neh. 1:5).

Uncommitted. Not Paul! He said, “*I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him...*” (2 Tim. 1:12).

Indecisive. At the golden calf incident, “*Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? let him come unto me*” (Ex. 32:26). Would you have stepped forward? Remember Joshua’s appeal? “*...choose you this day who ye will serve...*” (Josh. 24:15). When Israel was between God and Baal, Elijah declared, “*How long halt ye between two opinions?*” (1 Kgs. 18:21). Make up your mind!

Lack knowledge. Hosea 4:6 says, “*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...*” Too many, due to lack of study and proper teaching, do not know “*the difference*” (Ezek. 44:23). “*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*” (Isa. 5:20). Jesus said, “*And ye shall know the truth...*” (Jn. 8:32).

Uninvolved. It takes “*every joint*” supplying and “*every part*” working (Eph. 4:16)!

No zeal. Why not say, “*Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord*” (2 Kgs. 10:16)? Be “*zealous of good works*” (Titus 2:14).

Lukewarm. Such is distasteful to the Lord! “*So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth*” (Rev. 3:16).

2) We Must Be Stedfast. The Scriptures often make their appeal to stedfastness (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 15:58; Col.

2:5; Heb. 3:14; 1 Pet. 5:9). To be steadfast is to be resolutely or dutifully firm and unwavering. Steadfast Christians are not wishy-washy, but:

Abound. “...always abounding in the work of the Lord...” (1 Cor. 15:58). “As ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also” (2 Cor. 8:7). To abound is to be filled to the brim and running over!

Give diligence. I like the attitude of King Artaxerxes: “*Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done...*” (Ezra 7:23). Too many are dilatory when it comes to spiritual matters! Peter penned, “...giving all diligence...” (2 Pet. 1:5).

Work. Work for the night is coming! (Jn. 9:4). “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12). Remember Epaphroditus? “...for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death...” (Phil. 2:30). He wasn’t wishy-washy!

Make sure. Too many do not put forth the effort to make sure. “*Make it as sure as ye can*” is a good principle for us in lots of areas (Mt. 27:65). Peter taught, “...make your calling and election sure...” (2 Pet. 1:10).

Rooted and stablished. Some “*have no root in themselves*” (Mk. 4:17). A little wind blows and they are “*tossed to and fro*” (Eph. 4:14). We must be “...rooted and grounded in love” (Eph. 3:17). Colossians 2:7 teaches, “*Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith...*”

Stand. The backbone has left the church in far too many places! There is no one who will stand! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood (Dan. 3). Paul stood (2 Tim. 4:16-17). We need members of the church who have courage to stand for truth and against error. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1; 16:13; Ephesians 6:11, 13-14; Philippians 1:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:15. Now, get your feet on the ground!

Fight. We are in an all-out war! “*War a good warfare*” (1 Tim. 1:18). “*Fight the good fight of faith*” (1 Tim. 6:12). “*Earnestly contend for the faith*” (Jude 3).

Faithful unto death. It is said of Hebrews 11 people, “*These all died in faith*” (Heb. 11:13). Will you? “...be thou faithful unto death...” (Rev. 2:10), and you will! Revelation 12:11 reports, “*They loved not their lives unto the death.*” What an example!

If this finds you without Christ, we appeal to you to obey the gospel and be a steadfast Christian. If a child of God already, but wishy-washy — **be ye steadfast!** ■



Value & Conduct

By Steven F. Deaton

When we pay a lot for something, we have high expectations, whether it is a car, computer, house, tool, animal, etc. If it fails to perform the job we desire, we become upset, even angry at times.

Christians have been purchased at a high price, the blood of Christ (1 Cor. 7:23; Acts 20:28). As such, they are valuable and a certain level of “performance,” or conduct, is expected of them (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Not all are required to produce a “hundredfold,” but all are expected to live up to their potential (Matt. 13:23; 25:14-30).

Christian, are you conducting yourself in a way that reflects the price paid for you? Do you resist temptation (Jas. 4:7)? When you sin, are you remorseful and repentant (2 Cor. 7:10)? Are you searching the scriptures and growing in faith (Acts 17:11; 2 Pet. 3:18)? Have you tried to reach the lost (Lk. 19:10)? – *Collegevue church of Christ Bulletin*, January 13, 2019. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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